

PENNSYLVANIA

# Turkey talk



2018 FALL Edition  
Volume 44 Number 1



**NWTF**

Conserve. Hunt. Share.

**PANWTF.ORG**

A Publication of the PA State Chapter of the NWTf

## Message From The President



Fellow Members,

I hope this issue's message finds you all doing well and enjoying the fall splendor of colors as well as time afield with family and friends. At the time I am writing this message it is Labor Day weekend and the sweltering heat is absolutely crazy!

I find myself looking ahead to the upcoming cooler weather in anticipation of my favorite season, Hunting Season! In that same thought I am reminded of the "Good Ole Days" as I hear them called. Back when I was a kid I lived in a village located at the base of the Conococheague mountain called

Kistler. From there you could see where the main road crossed the top of the mountain and that area was full of hunting cabins that sat empty most of the summer, they started getting active in the fall.

It looked like a small town appeared on the mountain as night fell during hunting season with all their lights on. Now most of them have become year-round residences as next generations didn't hunt so they were sold and converted to homes. Many of you can relate or tell similar stories as it is no secret hunting and fishing has seen a large decline over the last few decades.

Those of you who are reading this have likely withstood the storm and like most are trying to help change that trend. Personally I am surprised our hunting heritage has taken this downward swing so fast when I think back to the past mentioned earlier. Brings about many questions of what happened and why? I wish I knew the exact answers but I think it is more important that we look at what we as concerned outdoorsmen and women can do to change this trend.

I believe those of us with the ability to introduce others to the outdoors need to do all we can to make that happen. This needs to be more than a one-time introduction such as a youth field day or

hunting seminar, we need to get these folks out multiple times. I guess the old saying: Actions speak louder than words, would be a good example of that approach for us to take. Whether it is a youth, coworker, old friend or even a senior that has no one to lend a hand getting around we need to get them outdoors! This is so much more than helping our hunting heritage, it will also amaze you with the feelings in your heart when you see the smiles on their faces as you share your knowledge afield. This is being focused on by many outdoor organizations and you will hear it referred to as R3 (Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation)

We need to join forces with these other likeminded groups going forward to help change the current direction of our hunting heritage. If you have the chance to mentor another person interested in the outdoors please step up or reach out to these groups to help you get these folks afield this fall.

Have a safe and memorable season afield.

Share your Passion



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COVER PHOTO: Derek Brown shot this bird on Wed, May 9th on his family farm in Athens Township (Bradford County). He took this photo alone using the timer on his phone.



**NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION MISSION STATEMENT:**  
*Dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and preservation of our hunting heritage.*

# PANWTF.ORG



# Turkey TALK

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Send us your articles and high resolution photo submissions to:  
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For sending digital photos, follow these guidelines:

- Digital images **must be 5x7 inches at 200 dpi** for use in Turkey Talk.
  - Always try to identify the person(s) in the photo.
- Photos taken from a cell phone are not print quality and may not be accepted.

**Deadline for submitting articles for the  
2018 FALL Issue of Turkey Talk is NOVEMBER 5**



## Ruffed Grouse Help Lead the Way to Healthier Forests

*Editor's Note: Reprinted from Audubon PA 2018 Newsletter*  
 Photo credit: Lindsay Stedman/ USFWS

Ron Rohrbaugh joined Audubon Pennsylvania in late May as our Forest Program Manager to lead our efforts in enhancing forest habitat for birds in Central and Western Pennsylvania. Below is Ron's reflection of his recent visit to Allegheny National Forest to meet with partners to discuss creating a forest management demonstration site.

"Wait! Stop," yelled Linda from the backseat. At the same moment, I saw several mottled brown "ping-pong balls" bounce from the left shoulder of the dirt road. Even before the U.S. Forest Service vehicle rolled to a stop, superhero Linda was out and attempting to shoo a momma Ruffed Grouse and her brood of at least six little ones to safety.

Grouse chicks are precocial, meaning that they leave the nest almost immediately after hatching when they are about the size of an adult's thumb. They are surprisingly mobile and can move up to 1/4 mile per day by the time they are three or four days old. They begin flying around day five and resemble giant bumble bees in flight. In the first 10 days after hatching, the hen may lead her brood up to four miles from the nest to a summer brood range. Chicks grow rapidly, increasing from about 1/2 ounce

fuzz balls when hatched to nearly 20-ounce, full-grown birds by 17 weeks of age.

My encounter with the young grouse happened in early June while doing a "windshield tour" of Audubon Pennsylvania's forest management demonstration area in the Allegheny National Forest with Collin Shepard, who is a Forest Ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service (USFWS), and Linda Ordiway who is a Regional Wildlife Biologist with the Ruffed Grouse Society. The demonstration area is part of an exciting new project that is funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and includes partners from the USFS, Ruffed Grouse Society, National Wild Turkey Federation, American Forest Foundation, Audubon New York, and the Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture.

The goal of the project is to improve landscape-scale forest health for birds and other wildlife through engaging private landowners, training foresters in bird-friendly practices, and recommending management actions on private and public lands. We work first in demonstration areas that serve as outdoor classrooms for learning and allow us to test and refine management prescriptions. The demonstration areas then provide

knowledge and leverage to work statewide.

The Ruffed Grouse we encountered on the Allegheny National Forest is a good example of the importance of our work. Many forest species, like the grouse, Wood Thrush, and Golden-winged Warbler, require forests of multiple ages within a relatively small area to complete their breeding cycles. Many forests in Pennsylvania, however, tend to be even aged after re-growing from forest clearing 80-100 years ago. Our work, which manages forests through strategic timber harvesting, will create healthy, resilient forests with age and structural conditions that better meet the needs of birds and other wildlife.

As Linda returned to the backseat after her heroic grouse rescue, I said, "Nice work, Linda!" With a smile of pride and accomplishment, she said, "that's my job!" We all laughed, as in the truest sense, it really was Linda's job to protect Ruffed Grouse! Safeguarding bird populations isn't always as easy as shepherding youngsters from the road, but our growing, multi-partner initiative ensures that we have capacity to make lasting, landscape-scale changes that improve forest health statewide.

# YOUNG BIRDS



## NOT YOUR TYPICAL TEENAGERS

BY ASHLEY BENDER

The following is an article written by Ashley Bender, who attended the Pennsylvania Gobblers field school, offered by the Wildlife Leadership Academy, this past summer. The mission of the Wildlife Leadership Academy is to engage and empower high school age youth to become Conservation Ambassadors to ensure a sustained wildlife, fisheries and natural resource legacy for future generations. The Academy offers high-achieving youth, ages 14-17, a comprehensive study of specific wildlife species, including classroom and field-based, hands-on education. Led by experts, including biologists and educators from across the state and beyond, the program also engages participants in team work, friendly competition, and an awareness of their natural world.

The Wildlife Leadership Academy has opened its exclusive Youth Conservation Ambassador nomination process to the public and is currently seeking referrals of motivated students ages 14 to 17 to become Certified Conservation Ambassadors. Nominations are now being accepted online at [wildlifeleadershipacademy.org/nominate](http://wildlifeleadershipacademy.org/nominate).



It's 2018, and the video game plague has taken over teenagers in the world. However, there is still a fraction of the population who'd much rather take in the beauty of the outdoors. For those who'd much rather be one with the wildlife, there is an academy for you! The Wildlife Leadership Academy aims to engage and empower youth to become Conservation Ambassadors. At the academy, you will get to understand ecosystems and aspire leadership skills. There is a total of six different field schools you can choose from including: ruffed grouse, brook trout, white-tailed deer, bass, turkey, and black bear. I was chosen to participate in the turkey field school. While we were there, we learned an abundance of information. However, we did a lot of hands-on activities as well! One of the first things we did when we got there was dissect a turkey. I found this to be very educational, yet fun at the same time. Throughout the week, we learned about turkey habitat

and food. To make sure we retained the information we were learning, we took short quizzes. Don't worry though, they aren't as difficult as you're probably thinking. As the week went on, we learned about telemetry, how to sex and age a turkey, turkey field research techniques (specifically rocket nets), and more.

Now comes my favorite part, turkey calling training and contest! I found it fascinating to learn all about the yelp, cluck, and purr. At WLA, we used the box call, slate call, and mouth call. At the end of our training, we had a contest. My team won! We also went down to the Scotia Range for some shooting. Because I never really got into hunting as a child, this was my first time shooting a gun. We shot clay birds using a shotgun and target practice with a 22 rifle. Although I was not really good at it, I kept trying! Along with learning a profuse amount of information all about turkeys, we were taught

leadership skills. We learned how to engage with the media, participated in team building activities, built communication skills, and were taught leadership skills through friendly competitions. As the week came to an end, we put together an educational tri-fold to take home with us for a part of our outreach.

Although our time at WLA was over, we continue our journey each and every day educating our communities. We can do this through five categories: education, service, media engagement, the creative arts, and outdoor mentorship. The most important thing I took home with me from the amazing week I had was the networking. I met people within the field who can help me grow as an individual and in my career. WLA is truly an amazing program that really changed my life.

# THE TURKEY VEST

## MAMMOTH MULTI LIGHT

In today's world of hunting from a treestand or blind - two usually end up in the backpack - aside from essentials to make that successful harvest - flashlight and the cell phone.

What if you had a light that also could charge your cell phone? The Mammoth Multi Light jumps out of the many products who offer hunters both these options and a little more.

Water resistant, this light is wrapped in Realtree camo and is pretty rugged, with a perfect addition for it being waterproof. At only 9 inches in length and flat instead of rounded, it fits perfectly in a hunt pack or even a cargo pocket.

Shining at 150 lumens from its end (like a traditional flashlight) or its side head at 400 lumens it's bright enough to seemingly flag down a small aircraft in the pitch black. The flexible head is what stuck out the most about this light. Being able to move it around - up and down - it makes it so much better to be able to see while moving in the tree stand. And the retractable hook on the end lets you be able to hang it for hands free use.

Run time before a full charge is from 35 hours from flashlight to about 18 hours from the side - I didn't get to test it out yet to see if this was true. The Mammoth runs on a lithium-ion battery.

Devices can be charged from a USB port and on the other side of the head it features a solar panel.

A retractable 110/220 wall plug-in can be used at home, camp, car - wherever there is an outlet for charging.

The Mammoth retails for \$69.95 and more information can be found at <https://hybridlight.com>.



**Hunter Eck • Jersey Shore, PA**  
Harvested youth day 4/21/2018  
in Lycoming County PA

# Accessibility to the Outdoors

Learn about organizations that provide opportunities for disabled individuals.

Meet with vendors that specialize in adaptive gear.

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**January 19, 2019 • 10 a.m.–3 p.m.**  
Cabelas, 100 Cabela Dr., Hamburg, PA

*Cabela's*



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# NWTF, Sportsman's Club Host Annual Field Day

By Michael Carothers

Editor's Note: Reprinted from the Lewiston newspaper, The Sentinel.



The Shade Mountain Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation held its 20th annual Youth Field Day and JAKES event on Aug. 11 for 55 youths ages 8 to 15. The event comprises nine stations that the youth are rotated through to receive instruction and hands on experience. The Shade Mountain Chapter could not continue to put this event on without the great support of the volunteers and organizations that make the event what it is. Each year we are thankful for the kids that show up to participate, and equally thankful for the parents and grandparents that are willing to set time aside and bring their kids (all participants are required to have an adult escort throughout the day). The excitement that is produced when these participants get to actually have hands on experiences is contagious and you can see that in the proud parents and grandparents that I am sure hear about the favorite stations all the way home. The stations are a unique opportunity for the participants to get solid instruction and actual supervised hands-on opportunities.

*This year, the stations were:*

**Trapping:** The Pennsylvania Trappers Association runs the station, which always has samples of various pelts and the kids are taught about responsible trapping. Brad Taylor, the Shade Mountain Chapter vice president, came up with the idea to remove the springs or coils from leg traps, which allows each participant to try their hand at making a good trap set in a safe controlled environment.

**Fly tying and fishing stations** are run by volunteers from Trout Unlimited. Larry Winery and his crew do a great job of interacting with the kids teaching them about fly fishing, the importance of clean water and instruction on fly tying, allowing each participant to tie a fly from scratch. The kids go down to the pond and fish, with even more Trout Unlimited folks there to offer instruction and helpful encouragement.

The Standing Stone Muzzleloaders run the black powder station where each participant learns about the different

types of black powder firearms, some history and then the opportunity to fire black powder firearms down range at targets.

Amanda Issett of the Pennsylvania Game Commission offered her expertise teaching participants about firearm safety and wildlife crime scene investigation. The BB gun station is always fun for the kids, especially if they come in groups of friends or siblings, as they all try to see who is the best shot. For some reason it has been my experience that the girls tend to shoot better than the boys — nothing could be worse for a brother than to be outshot by his sister, but they do.

John Czerniakowski, the shade Mountain Chapter youth events coordinator, explained that when the chapter first started this event we tried using shotguns and thrown clay birds, but many of the kids were intimidated by the shotgun, so chapter member Don Geedey built a helium balloon release system and we now use .22 rifles shooting bird shot to allow the participants the opportunity to get the idea of tracking a target. Jim Buchanan does a great job as he continues as the head cook and meal coordinator assisted by Barb Geedey and Pat Corbin.

Each participant walked away with a JAKES membership, an event T-shirt, a grab bag containing game calls and various other outdoor items. In 1981, the National Wild Turkey Federation saw a need to get youth outdoors and began the JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship) program. JAKES programs are dedicated to informing, educating and involving youth in wildlife conservation and the wise stewardship of our natural resources. NWTF chapters provide youth ages 17 and younger chances to explore their outdoor world through fun events that help pass on the traditions of responsible hunting, teach the principles of habitat management, hunting ethics and safety.





# FAIR QUEEN TALKS TURKEY AT FC LIBRARY

*Editor's Note: Reprinted from The Kittanning Paper, August 31, 2018*



**2018 Dayton Fair Queen  
Laurie Enders**

The recently-crowned 2018 Dayton Fair Queen gave a talk about wild turkeys to young children assembled at the Ford City Library last night.

Laurie Enders, 16, is from Bethel Township. She is a Junior at Armstrong High School. She is fascinated with wildlife for many years with some encouragement from her parents.

"My dad, Dale, and I go hunting and fishing together, and I have been to a couple of 4H events that have helped move that along and get me to where I am today."

Enders has attended the Wildlife Leadership Academy based in Williamsport over the past several years.

"The camp I selected to go to was all about gobblers, so I learned about the Eastern Wild Turkey, management practices used to control them, and leadership essentials."

In 2017 the public provided 19,617 turkey sightings to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, down from 30,184 in 2016. Still, Enders maintains there is a "good amount" of wild turkeys in Armstrong County.

2018 Dayton Fair Queen Laurie Enders prepares for her turkey children's seminar last night at Ford City Library.

"They survive the winter well. They don't like it when it's wet. It's not very good for the turkeys. But throughout the winter, they seem to do pretty well."

While Enders did give a few statistics, she said the real interest of children came in turkey calls.

"I will mainly focus on turkey calling, because it gets the kids the most excited. There are multiple different calls you can use. I brought some box calls for the kids to use – they are easier for kids. It gets them excited about the outdoors and wildlife."

She has taken her talk to Lenape Elementary fourth and sixth grade classes this past year. Her future includes becoming a wildlife biologist.

"My dream is to go to Penn State DuBois for two years and get my wildlife technology degree. Then I will go to Penn State Main Campus for another two years to get my degree in Wildlife and Fishery Sciences."

Enders has also been in 4H for 12 years and has her own club called Midnight Riders.

"Recently we have been getting a lot of new members. I try to do an activity with each of the members. It is a way for them to participate in 4H projects. They range from doing photography to raising a dairy cow. If there is not a project book for something they would like to do, they can do a self-determined project where eventually they can enter it at the Fair."

Last night's event was a program initiated by Sheri Humenik's group, Children's Discovery Observation Learning Series. If parents are looking for a free weekly event for their children, email [asksheri4@yahoo.com](mailto:asksheri4@yahoo.com). Please provide parents' names, child's name, and cell number. You will be added to weekly text reminders of each event.



**A.J. Cathers, 5, Angelina Humenik, 5, LayLah Savona, 9, with Laurie Enders, 16 from the Wildlife Leadership Academy**

# Embracing *Nature* Around Us

By Taylor Sherman

*Keep reeling ...*

*The pond water ripples as the spinning of the fishing rod's reel turns and turns.*

*Keep reeling ...*

*The ripple gets bigger and a fish breaks through the water.*

*You got it!*



The feeling he gets from watching someone reel in their first fish is unmatched for Geno Blair of Whole Life Services, Inc., a local agency in Hermitage that provides service and support to individuals with disabilities. Geno serves as the director of Get 2 Work Productions, the production leg of Whole Life Services, where he works with individuals each and every day ... and has for 13 years. At the agency, Geno has found his fit and loves spending time with the people around him.

So, when he has the opportunity to share his second passion, the great outdoors, with some of his friends at Whole Life Services, he jumps on it. "I grew up spending time outdoors," Geno said. "Looking back, most of my happiest memories are with my dad. He passed in 2005. He was an outdoorsman and always liked to fish and hunt. Spending time with him was always great. I'm more of a turkey hunter, but fishing and hunting with my dad is probably the reason," he said.

As an outdoorsman himself, Geno is always ready to swap stories from the

woods or pond with others. But amongst his favorite is sharing his sport with those who have never before done so.

"I've always wanted to get the kids [from Whole Life Services] outside; it was a passion of mine," Geno said. "There was a young woman, Kimmy Baker, who came to Whole Life for about two years. She had very limited vocal capabilities and was confined to a wheelchair. Her dad and brother are both sportsmen, so I connected with her on that; we had a similar background. Once, I said to her, 'Kimmy, we really need to get out of here and go fishing.' We joked about it, but



Kimmy Baker

then I talked with her mom and we thought that we really could do it. We would plan and then plans would change and plan again. It never happened," he said.

At 23 years old, Kimmy got sick with pneumonia and passed away before she and Geno could take their fishing trip. Kimmy's passing was tough for Geno, and he realized that life is too short to wait to do the things you love.

A member of Shenango Valley Beards and Spurs, a local chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Geno knew of NWTF's annual events for people with disabilities to explore the outdoors through local hands-on activities and hunts, called "Wheelin' Sportsmen". So, he decided to bring the program to his home region.

"I met with the western Pennsylvania representative of NWTF, Skip Motts, and it was a blessing from God. The man is just the definition of professional," Geno said.

With help from Skip, Shenango Valley Beards and Spurs, local volunteers and support from Whole Life Services' CEO Cindy Vogan, Geno's dream became a reality.

In summer 2017, Whole Life Services and NWTF partnered to host an Outdoor Gathering event for members of Whole



Life Services. Hosted at the Hubbard Conservation Club, 1760 Wick Campbell Road in Hubbard, Ohio, Geno and volunteers provided more than 70 attendees with stations to fish, archery shoot and enjoy a presentation on Birds of Prey, courtesy of Birds of Flight, Warren, Ohio.

“I didn’t know what to expect, but it turned out great,” Geno said. “Some people fished and caught their first-ever fish. Some people shot archery with Skip. Some just sat under a shaded tree and enjoyed being outside. My goal was for people to enjoy themselves; to go out and

have fun, and everyone did.”

The success of last year’s inaugural event kept a buzz within Whole Life Services through the rest of the year. “I had people come up to me every day to ask when we’re going fishing again,” Geno said. “Just hearing that, we knew this was something to keep up.”

In December 2017, Geno started planning for the second annual Outdoor Gathering for summer 2018. “Planning for this year’s Outdoor Gathering, I wanted to raise more awareness about the outdoors. There was so much excitement to go out and catch fish, to see real hawks and owls,

could attend as I could get.”

On June 1, 2018, the second-annual Outdoor Gathering took place at the Hubbard Conservation Club. “This year we had fishing, archery, an outdoor themed craft of decorating tote-bags (run by Whole Life Services’ Studio C), a donated lunch by Hermitage Buffalo Wild Wings, a bird presentation by Birds of Flight Sanctuary and a hawks and owls Q and A,” Geno said.

Sponsored by Stigliano Family Practices, Declan Construction, Shenango Valley Beards and Spurs, Lakeland Longbeards, Morris Chiropractic, Penn-Ohio Drive-Thru and Buffalo Wild Wings, the event was completely free, including complimentary T-shirts, for all in attendance. “That was really huge for us,” Geno said. “Whole Life Services events are free, but to also be able to provide T-shirts for free was a big deal.”

In addition to sponsorships, Geno is thankful for the volunteers who helped make the day extra special. “We had a volunteer show up on her day off just to help out,” he said.

Geno’s day was full of excitement — the thrill of the first cast into the water, the cheers for each fish caught and released, the pierce of the arrow into the target — and genuine happiness in enjoying an afternoon with two of his favorite things: his career and his passion.

“Last year, Michelle didn’t catch a single fish. This year she did ... and we even have a couple pictures to remember it. She had a real good time and that’s what it’s all about,” Geno said. “Seeing so many people out enjoying their day ... that’s a success to me.” ▼

*Whole Life Services, Inc. is located at 1565 East State Street, Hermitage.*

*Information: 724.347.5595 or [wholelifepa.org](http://wholelifepa.org)*

*Photos by Laura Kahl*



To enjoy more photos from the 2018 Outdoor Gathering, find Get2Work Productions on YouTube or follow the QR code!

Using your smartphone, scan over the QR code with your camera or QR reader app to watch video from Whole Life Services.

### INTRODUCTION:

Whether planting perennials or annuals, there is more to putting in a food plot than just spreading the seed and waiting for the critters to arrive. A good maintenance plan for your food plots will ensure you get the results you expect and in the case of a perennial plot will give you several years of performance without having to replant.

### PREPARATION:

The most important step in a food plot maintenance plan begins before the first seed is even planted. Good seed bed preparation goes a long way in combating weeds down the road. The seed being planted, and the technique being used to plant that seed, determines the proper steps for seed bed preparation. If you are planting clover and you have access to a no-till drill all you may need to do is spray with a general herbicide like glyphosate a couple weeks before planting. But if you are using conventional tillage prior to planting that clover seed, you may want to do the tillage, prepare the seed bed and then wait a bit for the first flush

of weeds to germinate. Once the weeds begin to show up spray them with glyphosate and wait two weeks for them to die off. Then go back in and plant your clover seed without disturbing the soil again. Cultipack the clover seed to ensure good soil to seed contact. Every time you till the soil you "activate" the weed seed bank just waiting for a disturbance to germinate. Anticipating this flourish of weeds from the act of tilling the soil and spraying once it happens allows for less weeds in the future. Having a soil test done before planting and getting the soil amendments done will ensure less work in the maintenance phase too. Having the pH of the soil correct when planting your seed means that those new plants will have a better chance to establish themselves and take hold before the weeds can. Proper pH is important for plants being able to utilize fertilizer too. By taking the time to establish a healthy, growing food plot early, means less maintenance later on.

### FERTILIZING:

A good food plot maintenance plan includes the use of fertilizer and lime after the plot has been established. A clover

plot can last 5 to 7 years with proper maintenance but that clover needs some nourishment too. For clover, use a fertilizer low in nitrogen (the first number on the fertilizer bag) as clover doesn't need nitrogen. Feeding the clover plot too much nitrogen only encourages the weeds to proliferate. Similarly watch the pH in your clover plots. A soil sample every other year, or every third year, will reveal if lime needs to be applied. I keep records of my soil samples by plot so that I remember from year to year if I need to apply lime. As mentioned before, having the pH at the optimal level means the plants can utilize the fertilizer you apply. For annuals like corn and soy beans a top dressing of fertilizer during the growing season can give the crop a boost of energy. Corn that is showing a bit of a yellow or light green hue may be suffering from low nitrogen. A dose of 19-19-19 or even urea (46-0-0) can be a benefit to corn. Beans, like clover, don't need nitrogen so again watch the numbers on your fertilizer bag.

### MOWING:

Mowing applies to clover plots and can really help rejuvenate

even a poor clover plot with lots of weeds. Timing of the mowing is critical as you want to mow before the weeds go to seed and contaminate the plot even more. You also don't want to mow during a hot, dry spell and stress the clover even more.

Not only does mowing help with weed control but it also encourages new growth within the clover which makes that clover more palatable to deer. Depending on how many deer are utilizing your plot, you may need to mow more than once per growing season. I usually mow in the spring and then again in the late summer if I can do so without stressing the clover too much. I want my clover plot as attractive as possible to the deer going into the fall season.

### SPRAYING:

No matter how hard we try, no matter how well we prepare the seed bed prior to planting, weeds are inevitably going to appear. For your annual plots like corn and soy beans, you'll need to plan for at least one spraying to control weeds. With the popularity of the glyphosate tolerant plants it is easier to control weeds in your annual plots. I usually plan on spraying

about 4 to 6 weeks after planting. Read and follow the label on the herbicide for the correct amounts to use for the weeds to be controlled and the crop being sprayed.

If planting non-glyphosate tolerant annual crops, you'll need to identify the weeds to be controlled and match the proper herbicide to those weeds. For instance controlling grass in corn can be more challenging since corn is a modified grass and is susceptible to herbicides specific for controlling grasses. Get advice from your local farm store on the proper herbicide to use. A pre-emergent herbicide might be the way to control weeds in those non-glyphosate tolerant plots. But you'll need to plan for that prior to planting.

Controlling weeds in your perennial plots also requires proper identification of the weeds to be controlled. For killing various grass species in clover plots I've used Poast, Poast Plus, Arrest and Arrow. Clethodim is the common name of the active ingredient in Arrest and Arrow. Adding a surfactant, or crop oil, is recommended for some of these herbicides. Follow the herbicide label and pay attention to the recommendation for height of grass to be sprayed. You may have to mow the plot first to get the grass under control

before spraying. After mowing I usually wait a week or so before I spray. To control broadleaf weeds in clover plots, I've used 2,4-DB200, Butyrac and Slay. When selecting a broadleaf weed herbicide for clover, be aware that clover is a broadleaf too. Check the herbicide label to make sure your clover won't be harmed and also check the label for the broadleaf weeds that are controlled. I've had to switch herbicides because one or the other wasn't controlling the specific weeds I had in my plots. Penn State Extension is a good source for information on weed identification and weed control.

### CONCLUSION:

Successful food plots require maintenance. A maintenance plan that includes good seed bed preparation followed by a strategy of other techniques; mowing, fertilizing and spraying, ensures a successful food plot. A clover plot can last 5 to 7 years without needing to be replanted with a good maintenance plan in place. Seed is expensive and time is precious so planning for maintaining your plots makes a lot of sense and saves time and money.

This clover plot is 4 years old and still going strong with proper maintenance.



# PICK OF THE FLOCK




## Chapter Name: NWTF Local Chapter #1

President, Joseph Stefko • 423 Willow Crossing Road, Greensburg, PA 15601 • 724-610-6973

Vice President, Edward Matska • Secretary, Sherri Samulski

Treasurer, Sam Truxel • Media Rep, Phillip Sleber

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The Pennsylvania State Chapter joined the NWTF in 1976, while no records exist for the development of local chapters many sources agreed that Local #1 was a first for Pennsylvania and possibly the entire NWTF.*

*Reason for Chapter's name:*  
**1st NWTF Chapter established in the USA and Pennsylvania.**

*Year Chapter was established:*  
**1985 1st fundraising banquet held at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in 1985**

*Date of banquet:*  
**Thursday, March 01, 2018  
 Roosevelt Room, Norvelt, PA**

### WHAT MAKES YOUR BANQUET SUCCESSFUL?

A very well organized and structured banquet committee of over 15 individuals dedicated to our fundraising efforts. Prior planning and a network of loyal supporters and sponsors.

### DOES THE YOUR CHAPTER DO A FUNDRAISER BESIDES THE BANQUET?

We do several throughout the year.

*Describe it:*

- We run firearms raffle tickets with one of the most successful being our Henry Rifle NWTF ticket. We offer one each of the 22 Henry

Golden Boy rifles engraved with all five species of the wild turkey and a 22 Silver Boy to use as a shooter.

The winner wins all six firearms and the tickets are always a sell out

- We also ran a Local #1 Turkey season package where we offered a complete set up for turkey hunting to include: a 1187 turkey shotgun, camo hunting blind, collapsible chair, turkey ammunition, turkey vest, and an array of different turkey calls. This ticket was also a sell out in very short time.

- We also run a Fall Gun Raffle ticket prior to the PA Big Game season with a quality hunting rifle and accessories. This ticket is a sell out.

- We run a Wild Game Dinner for the benefit of the California University of Pennsylvania Chapter of the "Wildlife Society" with the proceeds going to fund the members participation in both State and National competitions and events. This includes students

from both the Wildlife and Fisheries major programs.

### WHAT ACTIVITIES DOES YOUR CHAPTER DO?

#### • Habitat funding projects:

In conjunction with the PA Game Commission and LMO Officer Steven Leindecker which are implemented on State Game Lands in Fayette, Greene, and Westmoreland Counties. Plantings and forestry management to benefit all species of PA wildlife not only the Wild Turkey.

- **Annual Jake's Day:** Held on Saturday, August 11, 2018 in cooperation with the Sportsmen's Association of Greensburg involving 80 to 100 youth plus 40 or more local chapter and club members. All equipment and lunch provided.

- **NRA Women on Target program:** This is held at the Sportsmen's Association of Greensburg club facilities offering 30 pre registered women the opportunity to enjoy the shooting sports

to include rifle, pistol and shotgun with one on one instruction for an enjoyable day afield. All equipment and lunch provided.

- **NWTF Wild Turkey Education Kits:** These are distributed through the PGC SW Regional Office Wildlife Education Supervisor to all PGC full time officers for use in their school programming. We also provide these kits to teachers that are active in outdoor educational activities with their students and school.

- **BSA Order of the Arrow:** This is an honors scouting program that is awarded to youth and adults that have demonstrated the very best of scoutings involvement to their peers and the public. They have ceremonies that reflect native american traditions of which wildlife is an important part. We recently provided garment tanned pelts of deer, bear, beaver and other animals for use in their ceremonies replacing well used and time worn pelts.

• **California University of PA Student Field Day:** This is essentially a Jakes Day for college students where they can experience an introduction to the shooting sports. Open to 80 pre registered college students they experience three disciplines to include: Shotgun, Rifle and Pistol. They also have the opportunity to talk to wildlife professionals from the NWTF, NRA, PGC, PFBC, SCI which may influence future career choices. This program is supported by the college staff and is maxed out every year. All equipment and lunch provided.

• **PGC Student College Internship Program:** Our chapter has provided funding for the PA Game Commission SW Regions College Internship Program where Wildlife students have the opportunity to work for the Game Commission supporting educational and biological programs during the summer months for college credit. This has led to a number of students pursuing careers in wildlife related fields. Two students are now full time PA Game Wardens and one is a full time PA Waterfowl Biologist.

• **Eastern Black Bear Workshop:** Last year the PGC SW Region was host to the Eastern Black Bear Workshop where US states and Eastern Canadian Provinces met for a week to discuss the management of our black bear populations to include problems, biological issues, current and future management issues

and future plans for sound bear management. Local Chapter #1 donated to this program and had members present representing the NWTF during the entire event.

• **County Fairs:** Local Chapter #1 attends both the Westmoreland County Fair in Westmoreland County and the Bullsken Fair in Fayette County manning a booth and display and selling NWTF raffle tickets and merchandise. Both of these events are attended by thousands of youth and adults and offer the chapter the opportunity to showcase our wildlife efforts and promote the Local Chapter membership.

**HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS ARE ON YOUR COMMITTEE?**

We currently have over 15 volunteers on our Local Chapter #1 Banquet Committee.

**WHAT MAKES YOUR CHAPTER SUCCESSFUL?**

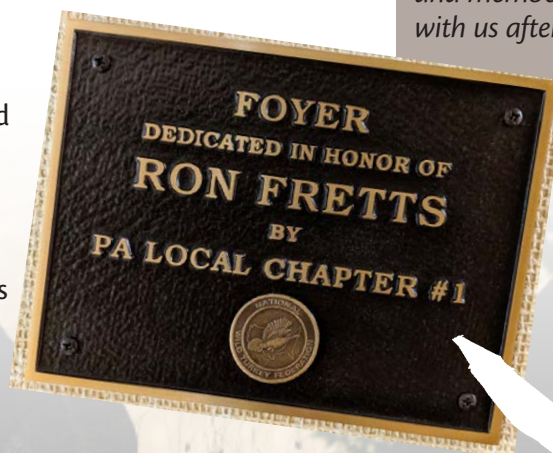
We have a core of dedicated individuals and past officers that are committed to the NWTF and to this chapter. We have tremendous networking capabilities and when we want something to happen we can make phone calls and emails and things become reality. We hold our monthly meetings at the Hecla Sportsmen's Association and they have been staunch supporters since the chapter's formation.

**BEST ADVICE FOR OTHER CHAPTERS:**

Network and build alliances with individuals and organizations with similar interests. Associate yourself with a local Sportsman's Club and provide programs to the public and especially youth and women to foster their participation in outdoor related activities. Always try and maintain a good professional appearance when making contact with the public. Make a concerted effort to build a relationship with your local Game Commission, Fish and Boat Commission, Bureau of Forestry, and State Park officers and staff. Get involved in Habitat Projects, Game Land and Stream cleanups. Publicize your Chapter's activities in the news and electronic media and invite the public to take part. Always remember to promote safe and responsible turkey hunting and above all always remember our future lies in the hands of today's youth.

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:**

*I have been involved with the Local Chapter since 1987 in that I was the Wildlife Conservation Officer assigned to the District after graduation from the PGC Training School. I then moved into the Wildlife Education Supervisor position in the SW Region where I served until my retirement in 2015. I have been an active member for all those years and have been a part of Local #1 in every aspect. We suffered through the Blaze Orange requirement implementation and numerous laws and regulations that affected our sport but always managed to keep an open mind to what was best for the resource. Safety was always a #1 concern and from my perspective one hunting accident was one too many and if wearing an orange hat and vest could be the difference we were for it. Now that I am retired I feel it an honor and a privilege to serve as the President of Local Chapter #1 and carry on the tradition and to have the support of all the past officers and members that are still with us after all these years.*



# Save the Hunt with Plan A, B or C

By Brenda Beal

As spring season kicked off I had hunting plans in the works – a few friends, sunrises, gobbles and some hunting luck. But as we all know plans are made to be changed. This was a change I never expected but what a great change.

April 28, the first day of season, and Plan A had not panned out as I hoped. Later in the day my season moved to Plan B when I received the email below.

*Hello!  
I am hoping you can help me or point me in the right direction. I have a 13-year old, with his Jr license, who has his heart set on turkey hunting. The problem is, he has no one to take him. Do you know of anywhere that does a youth hunt? He does have his own 12 gauge shot gun. Any help is appreciated.  
Thank you.  
Amy*

Signed – Amy. That meant a couple of things to me but most importantly it meant a Mom – a Mom wanting to make a season memorable for a young man. As a mom that hunts and wants to pass along that tradition, making this happen was now as important to me as to Amy. When I realized she was several hours from me I panicked on how to make this a success. Logistics was going to be interesting.

So, I enlisted the help of my NWTF local chapter president, Heath Nace. Heath knew how much I wanted this to happen, not just Justin, but Amy too. Amy isn't a hunter - YET! She may hunt someday with her son. And if never a hunter, I hope this will strengthen her understanding of conservation through hunting and can be a connection she shares with her son.

Heath made many calls and I left him run with contacts as I did not want to duplicate calls and create confusion (lesson learned from the past). We checked maps, scouted areas near Justin's home to no avail and more calls were made to chapters near Justin and Bob stepped up to the task. We surprised Justin one evening at his home as Mom had us meet Justin to talk.

Again, a flurry of emails and on May 26 Justin's hunting plan became a reality. Below is the email from Bob describing the day.

Justin and his Mother drove up to Clark's Summit Friday evening and stayed at a motel. I picked up Justin on Saturday morning and we both hunted off of a point located in the middle of the farm on the main field until 10:00am. We neither saw or heard a bird and packed up our dekes, chairs and blind and hauled them back to the truck to hunt Plan B. Plan B) was a run gun strategy. So we eased over to the west side of the property accessing an old logging road that we could walk quietly and call to the ag fields situated below in the valley. Justin was anxious to participate in this using a "Brian Vandergrift custom made call" and Justin performed quite well for his first-time clucking and yelping. We covered many acres to no avail and then we decided to hit plan C) this consisted of two options...I asked Justin if he would like to drive with me down the road for a nice cold drink and slice or two of pizza in an air conditioned room or climb the hill with our blind and dekes and hunt the east side of the farm. He chose the Climb and what a great choice he made.

We climbed the hill on the gas line and we were able to get everything set up

by approx. 12:30. Then at 1:00 we finally heard our first Gobble... upon hearing this I was so excited because we just spent 7 hrs. of no action at all with turkeys, even though we did see plenty of deer, a small box turtle and tracks in the mud of raccoons, coyotes and deer. So, I turned to Justin and said ... "Justin, we're in the house! Did you hear that Gobble?" He replied, "What Gobble?" Immediately the bird hammered a Gobble a second time, I asked him once again, "Did you hear that Gobble?" He said, "Is that a Gobble?" I told him that is the sound that a male gobbler makes when he is calling to a hen. He then said...I hear that sound every morning near my house and I thought that it was a dog barking...I must have a lot of turkeys near my house! Lol

The bird appeared approx. 110 yds on top of the over grown natural gas pipe line and stood there gobbling frantically. I talked Justin in to the ready mode and the bird began to come in, we were both jacked and anxious. I told Justin to point his barrel towards the JAKE decoy approx. 20 yds away from the blind. I reminded him that we need the turkey to prop up his head so that we could get a good clean point of aim at the caruncles that we practiced on Tuesday at the shooting range.

The bird came only to 55 yds as my range finder registered. The bird would not come any closer and he remained there for what seemed like hours. He moved towards a rise in the gas line used to prevent erosion and ducked out of sight. He poked his periscope up numerous times before he vanished. After what seemed to be forever he gobbled once again inside the woods to the west, sounding like he was still interested, so I broke my silence and cut at him, to my surprise he came back on the gas line keeping his distance at 60 yds and still out of our range. He once again did his hide and peek scour of our set up. This went on for a period of time before once again disappearing behind the rise. Because of the high growth on the gas line and our location due to the property line. I decided to use a Strutter so it could be seen from the top of the Gas line. My average Jake would be as noticeable, so I deployed a Strutter so it would stand out in the high grown vegetation. I believe the

Strutter scared the love-struck Tom and kept him from coming in to our set up.

It wasn't 20 minutes after we conceded that we'd finally lost him for the second time, that I need to remove the Strutter and somehow get my subordinate Jake out there. So, we quickly changed out the decoy and so Justin tried his hand at calling. It didn't take very long until Justin noticed a bird once again at the very top of the gas line, I glassed and notified Justin that it was a Mature Gobbler he gave us a couple of looks in our direction and even strutted momentarily and only came into 65 yds. Before heading back to where he entered the gas line and then headed off on another search for hens.

Justin and I hunted till until approx. 3:00 and I realized that we had pretty much played this hand out and that his Mother was sitting in the heat out by the truck. When I suggested that we pack up and call it a day.

I told Justin that I'm sorry we couldn't seal the deal, however we experienced one of the most exciting hunts that I've ever been on this late into the season. I also told him that he has an open invitation to join me next year on another hunt and he immediately replied yes...

In closing this young man is a Turkey hunter and exactly what the NWTF needs on our team.

I have been in touch with Amy since the hunt and Justin continues to practice his calling and is getting involved with local JAKES events. And a special thank you to Heath and Bob for changing their plans and making this possible for Amy and Justin. They are true Save the Hunt mentors.

*Bob Schwalm,  
JAKES Coordinator  
Jerry Zimmerman Memorial Chapter*

*Heath Nace,  
PA NWTF Board President  
Shermans Valley Strutters Chapter*

*Brenda Beal,  
PA NWTF Board Member &  
Save the Hunt Coordinator  
Shermans Valley Strutters Chapter*





# PA NWTF Leadership Workshop 2018

*By-Skip Motts*

The weekend of July 21 & 22nd the PA NWTF hosted its annual PA NWTF Leadership Workshop at the Ramada Inn located in State College PA. The weekend was kicked off on Saturday afternoon following the PA State Chapters board of directors meeting.

This year's workshop was a little different from previous years. Where we structured breakout sessions where the attendee could choose what topics they wanted to sit in on and be a part of. The main focus was getting our attendees involved and get everyone's input in these sessions. We want to hear what concerns and needs all our chapters have across our state.

We started things off with a short welcome and introductions. We discussed the new meeting structure with our planned breakout sessions and reviewed our agenda for the rest of the afternoon. We held two one-hour break sessions where our attendees could choose from the superfund and outreach request process, our new habitat request and scoring system process, chapter committee recruitment, building a better banquet, hunter recruitment and a simple Q & A session where we simply asked what was on our chapter's minds and how can we help. The feedback I received was that this

new breakout session format was a huge success and I thought we had a lot more chapter involvement than in prior years.

We finished up our afternoon of training as a group with Jonathan Calliham from NWTF Headquarters reviewing our online event ticketing system. Jonathan reviewed some of the upgrades we will be seeing moving forward and answered questions and concerns regarding the online ticketing system. The biggest outtake was don't be afraid of online ticketing. Once you start to use it you will find out it can make your event ticketing a much easier process.

The day of training was over but the fun was just getting started! After everyone got checked into their rooms and had a chance to prepare for dinner the entire group gathered for a great meal prepared by the Ramada Inn staff. We then kicked off our fun/networking night. This has grown into a very popular function on our Leadership weekend. We held a fun and competitive corn hole tournament. Walt had the crowd laughing and having fun at the penny pitch game. There were free giveaways going on the whole evening and most importantly a lot of great chapter networking going on the entire night. It was a great evening of fun and fellowship. A big thank you to PA State Chapter President

Heath Nace for building and donating two full sets of corn hole games to our winning team of the PA NWTF corn hole tournament! A note to everyone that has not attended the last 2 years, please know that there were no PAY raffles. All fun items including some awesome prizes were FREE to play and win complements of the PA State Chapter NWTF.

Sunday morning was started off with a presentation to the group by our new PGC R3 Coordinator Derek Stoner. Derek gave some direction on the new PGC R3 efforts and showed a very informative video. From there we had two more sets of one-hour breakout sessions with a great lunch provided in-between. We gathered as a group one last time for a brief over view and final comments for the weekend and we had everyone headed home by 3 pm.

I would like to thank all the volunteers, PA Board members and staff who participated in the weekend's events. The only downside I took from the weekend was we didn't have all our chapters in attendance. I would encourage all of our chapters to make an effort to try an attend this very fun and informative weekend next year. We are already planning next year's event and are looking at some new fun activities.



Join the PA-State Chapter for the  
 44<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**Rendezvous**  
 January 5, 2019  
 Ramada Inn  
 Call for reservations @ 814-238-3001  
 State College, PA

**2019 CORE PACKAGE INTRODUCTION**

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- Adult Banquet Meal Ticket .....\$40 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
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- Early Bird Raffle Ticket .....\$100 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Grand Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Name : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name(s) of people attending \_\_\_\_\_

# EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE OUTDOORS

On July 28, 2018 the Stony Valley Chapter NWTF Women in the Outdoors Program held its first WITO Event in 14 years. This event was a kayaking day held at Memorial Lake State Park. There were 17 participants and 7 volunteers who not only learned about kayaking but also learned about the WITO Program and the NWTF's mission of conservation.

Most of these women did not know each other prior to this days' event. We had participants ages 15 to 67! Of the 17 participants, 8 were first time kayakers; every single participant spent time on the water enjoying this sport. These women were supportive and encouraging of each other and thanks to the amazing team of volunteers the group enjoyed door prizes and delicious, home-made food.

The Stony Valley Chapter WITO is planning several events going forward. You can keep up with the happenings of the chapter at [www.facebook.com/stonyvalleynwtf](http://www.facebook.com/stonyvalleynwtf).

Abbie M. Shireman  
WITO Coordinator, Stony Valley Chapter



# A LESSON FROM AN 84-YEAR-OLD AVID HUNTER. CAN WE LEARN FROM IT?

One thing that I am learning is that many in the older generation of hunters walk around with blinders on when it comes to Sunday hunting. I am referring to people in my age bracket, 50 and older. For some unknown reason, as a whole, they seem to make the deliberate decision to remain uneducated, uninformed, and ill-tempered on the subject. Something of which I am completely baffled by. I just can't understand why giving sportsmen and women more time to participate in the act of hunting is such an off-putting issue just because of the day in the week - Sunday.

But there may be hope. After presenting to the Schuylkill County Sportsman Association an 84-year-old man approached me. He extended his hand for me to shake and said; "Good luck with this...I need Sunday hunting. I want to hunt, but no one has time during the week to take me, and I can't hunt alone. We need more time."

His statement did not fully set in until I was home and talking to my wife about how the presentation went. When I relayed the story to

her, she responded by asking [maybe it was more of an observation] "So if an 84-year-old man gets it. What is the problem with others?" My only response, "I don't know."

I relay this story because of its perspective value. I once read a quote by the 20th Century Italian Poet Cesare Pavese, "We do not remember days, we remember moments." That is exactly what this gentleman was telling me; he wanted just a few more moments. Moments that would make him happy in his last years of life. He just wanted to hunt, get into the woods, and to do the thing that he enjoyed most, making memories.

Time, it is the only thing we will not get more of. Our time on this earth is short, we have no control as to when it will end, that is up to a greater power. Removing the barrier to Sunday hunting will give us more time to spend afield, more time to enjoy our sport, and most of all more time to make memories that we can cherish as we age.

Sunday hunting spans generations. Whether you are 8 or 84, when you go hunting you are creating memories that will be captured not

only in your mind, but to live on Facebook, hang on the wall, place in a book, and most of all to tell again.

The fight for Sunday hunting is alive and well. I am often told by influencers close to the issue: "keep moving the needle your efforts are paying off," referring to the grassroots effort of Hunters United for Sunday Hunting. We appreciate the support of the PA-NWTF, as well as every other conservation organization in the state. Join us on September 30, 2018 at the PGC auditorium on Elmerton Avenue in Harrisburg, PA. The program begins at 1pm.

I will close by saying, the issue is truly "about time." Just ask that 84-year-old avid hunter from the Schuylkill County Sportsman Association. Change is coming to Pennsylvania.

Harold Daub  
*Executive Director, Hunters United for Sunday Hunting.*  
Hunters United for Sunday Hunting will be having several information sessions starting in September 2018. Please visit our Facebook Page: @HuntersUnitedForSundayHunting for further information.



**Brandon O'Hara**  
2018 National Wild Turkey  
Federation's Pennsylvania State  
Scholarship winner

# Mentored Adult Hunting

By Jessica Welshans



Dennis Strawbridge with Ron Hengst

There seems to be an emphasis in the Pennsylvania hunting community on youth. While it is important to keep youth involved in hunting heritage, adults are also key in keeping that ideal alive. Here, the game commission started a adult mentor program 2014, this is where those 18 years or older who may have not taken the Hunter-Trapper Education course or ever held a hunting license in the state (or any other) can purchase a Mentored Adult Hunting Permit. The permit allows these qualified people to hunt squirrels, ruffed grouse, rabbits (cottontails), bobwhite quail, hares, porcupines, woodchucks, crows, coyotes, antlerless deer and wild turkeys, and must be accompanied by an adult mentor who is a licensed hunter.

So, what does it take to mentor an adult through the hunting community – Dennis Strawbridge talks about his experience mentoring and why it is important.

Q: Why do you think it's important that not only our youths mentor in hunting, but adults, too?

A: "Right now, we need to encourage as many men, women and youth, as possible as we are losing many hunters each year," he said. "Because of this, we need to educate everyone possible about hunting and what it really means and what it is all about."

He added if the adult understands and supports the hunting community, "we" those who hunt, will be much better off.

"Even if they choose not to hunt later on. They will continue to support us politically and in other ways when they understand us and what we do and what we feel is important," he said.

Q: How do YOU mentor an adult - do you look at their experience and go from there - do you have a certain hunt or activity a new adult mentor you start with and why?

A: "Yes, I look at their experience with shooting and knowledge of the outdoors. Based on that I know where I should start. If they

have limited or no experience I would probably recommend dove hunting as a great experience for starting out where they get lots of shooting and opportunities for harvesting game," Strawbridge said. While at "camp" Strawbridge said members have designated him a guide when a new or inexperienced turkey hunters show up.

"So I get a lot of opportunities to mentor adults. Often, I don't have time to work on their shooting ability beyond what they or their friends can tell me. If we have time I like to take them around the area and show them game or at least many places we have harvested game in the past," he said.

Once he works through some of those details, he takes his adult mentoree out.

"And give them the best experience I am able to by showing them good areas to hunt, trying to show them game, mentoring them in the signs turkeys leave and other important things in their surroundings," he said.

Focusing on key factors like being quiet, (don't move, don't move, don't move 10 times) adding in fundamentals of turkey calling for Fall or Spring and what the different calls mean.

"I teach them fundamentals for camo and proper setup, so they will be in a position where they will see birds as they first approach and birds will not be able to see the hunters before they come into range. I try to show them sign and what it means and how to use it to their advantage," he said.

Q: What advice would you offer an adult that is being mentored by another adult?

A: Strawbridge's answer, "First just get them out there and give the best experience possible. Show them all you can. Give them a chance to ask questions."

Q: When you are finished being out with that adult mentoree - what do you hope you have passed on to them? How do you encourage them to continue to hunt and possibly pass what they learned onto others?

A: "I want to leave them with the best memories possible whether they harvest game or not. I want them to have a great outdoor experience where they have gained knowledge about the game they have hunted and the overall about the sport of hunting and what it really means," he said. "I want them to gain knowledge that will help them feel good about the activities that we do so they will support us and the activities even if they don't continue to participate further themselves."

He hopes the adult will continue to hunt, and that he has a seed.

"That will blossom them into the sport as I have had when I was inspired by others," he said.



*Dennis Strawbridge with Trent Rinehart, first bird in Spring 2013 in Susquehanna County*

*Dennis bio – A long time hunter from York County, Strawbridge has been a member of the NWTF since 1973 and he is a current member of the Mason Dixon Chapter – "I joined NWTF because I was a turkey hunter when they formed and I believed in many of the things that CEO Rob Keck and Carl Brown were promoting at the time. I got to know Rob Keck thru his father Bob and one of his uncles who helped with Mason-Dixon Chapter for a few years."*

*Served as chapter president, on the PA Chapter board (receiving most of the prestigious awards they present), as a director, which I did for 22 years, serving in many capacities. After that I he continued as the Jakes First Bird Award chairman for many years. He judges turkey calling contests and makes decorative turkey calls for banquet donations and has taken first and second place at the convention. His calls have made more than \$10,000 at various NWTF functions in the US and Canada. Recently, he has placed with second and third place ribbons at the new NWTF Keystone Callmakers Competition in PA.*

*He is still active as Executive Officer for Mason-Dixon Chapter where I have served consistently since I was President.*

# The Trophy Is In The Memories

By Maureen Sangiorgio

If it's one thing I've noticed in life, it's that there's a friendly comradery among those of us involved in the shooting sports. I'm an NRA-Certified Firearms Instructor, and Range Safety Officer. This past June I was asked to participate as the Handgun Instructor for the NWTF's Women In The Outdoors event held at Ontelaunee Rod & Gun Club, New Tripoli, PA. That's where I met Dave, an avid turkey hunter, who loaned me several of his firearms for the event. Here is his story about how, after a lifetime of turkey hunting, sometimes even a missed shot makes wonderful memories.

Dave lives from one turkey season to the next. When Spring gobbler season is over, he anxiously waits all year long for the next one to begin. This year, he did his usual scouting on his private hunting land in

Susquehanna County, PA, before the big day. Although his scouting revealed little signs of turkeys, he was confident there were birds about. (Mainly because fifty-seven of them walked under his tree stand on the last day of deer season.)

On opening day, he got up at 3:30 am and put on the coffee, got dressed and went outside to check the weather. It was pretty cold for the end of April; it looked like spring would be a latecomer this year. Just before sunrise he let out an owl hoot to see who was around. The only answer he got was from, what sounded like, two young gobblers 200 yards away in a tree up the side of the mountain. They were on private property across a hard road.

Having no other contacts at this time he set up in a 70-yard-wide stretch of woods alongside the hard road. That stretch of woods was the only cover between a wide-open grass field on his property and the hard road. It was overgrown

with saplings mixed with mature pines and Maples -- not a premium setup, but what the heck it was action. He set out two decoys and hit the slate. The two young gobblers responded immediately. He could tell they were still in the tree, so he went quiet for 20 minutes. After he heard they were on the ground he called again. Low and behold, they were coming closer. After a half hour of back and forth, they had closed half the distance.

And that's when it happened. A thunderous gobble came from a tree no more than fifty yards away across the hard road. The hairs on the back of his neck went up like cactus needles -- this was a big boy! He sounded like a trophy gobble for sure! He could tell he was a bruiser by the very loud sound of his gobble. His mind kept telling him don't overcall, don't overcall ... this boy's no dummy!

After ten minutes of silence that seemed like an hour, Dave decided to try a fly down cackle. No

response! Then all of a sudden, he heard massive wing beats and he knew the boss was on the ground. The other two young birds scattered. But which side of the road did he land on? If he landed on the other side of the road, it was private property, and Dave couldn't shoot. But if the bruiser landed on Dave's property, he could take him down.

Another 15 minutes of silence went by when he heard the unmistakable spit and drum sound that told him a gobbler was really close, but where?

All of a sudden, he saw some color to his left. The bird was walking along a tiny 8-inch-high ridge across the small strip of woods. Dave had only two shooting lanes, so he settled his bead on the first one the bird would reach, two steps then strut, three steps then strut, two steps then strut. What a show! After almost 20 minutes he was about to clear into the shooting lane. One more strut and it's lights out. The huge gobbler stepped

into the clear and BANG. A clean MISS at 35 yards!

The bird ran ten feet then launched into the air and flew back to the safety of the mountain. What had gone wrong? Inspecting the pellet marks on the trees it looked like he shot way high. After 39 years of turkey hunting he had made a rookie mistake. His face was way off the stock when he dropped the hammer. That bruiser had put on such a magnificent show, that he completely forgot his mental checklist before pulling the trigger: 1: Check for male gobbler beard; 2: Check for proper sight picture; 3: Squeeze trigger.

Looking at his watch he figured that he was engaged with this bird for about forty minutes. The tree gobble was the only sound that bird had made. But boy what a show he put on. It was a great morning and although he didn't get the bird, he was grateful for the whole experience. You see his reward was the hunt not the kill. Just being there

was what it's all about. He was away from the pressures of his job, out in the forest, experiencing the thrill of the hunt. The memory of that morning was his trophy.

**MENTAL CHECKLIST:**

- Check for male gobbler beard
- Check for proper sight picture
- Squeeze trigger





# The Wild Turkey Predation Blues

By Mary Jo Casalena, Pennsylvania Game Commission Wild Turkey Biologist

“What’s killing all our turkeys” is a question I constantly receive. Well, wild turkeys don’t normally die of old age – they, and turkey eggs, are preferred foods for an abundance of predators. In fact, during our recent turkey studies across Pennsylvania annual survival rates of male turkeys average 41% for adult males, 65% for juvenile males, and 55% for females. Studies in other states show similar rates. So now that we know annual turkey survival is low, what eats them and when? For males, most natural and hunting related mortality of adult gobblers is during the spring when they are prone to harvest and predation due to being focused on attracting and mating with hens (or coming to hunters’ calls!). Luckily for hunters, juvenile male behavior of sneaking in the background during spring provides them with relatively high survival, such that those juveniles live to be vocal, gregarious 2-year old gobblers the following spring hunting season! Each year, 30-40% of adult male turkeys are harvested by spring turkey hunters, but for the rest of the year adult gobblers have high survival rates. Recent studies show the most common predators of gobblers, besides hunters, are bobcats, followed by great horned owls. Coyotes often are implicated as voracious gobbler predators, and they certainly take gobblers, but some kills attributed to coyotes are likely from coyotes scavenging kills made by other predators. Gray fox also kill gobblers,

and, in western states, golden eagles. As for hens, during our 5-year hen turkey study (2010-2014) throughout Pennsylvania, we gained insight into just what is after our hen turkeys, and when. Most hen mortality (41%) occurred during nesting (they nest on the ground), with another 10% occurring during summer while hens are brooding their young (Figure 1). Fifty-one percent of hen mortality is during the spring/summer, with another 19% during fall, prior to hunting season. Fall turkey hunting accounts for another 11%, on average. Winter mortality, in comparison, accounts for 13% – winter flocking behavior may have evolved for safety. Another way to look at mortality throughout the year is to look at mortalities per month (Figure 2). Nesting season mortality accounted for the majority, with fall hunting the second highest cause. This illustrates how fall turkey harvest plays a major role in hen mortality and why the Game Commission conservatively manages the fall hunting season. What kills turkey hens, was a question we answered during the hen study. With nesting season accounting for most of their mortality we’ll look at those causes. Not surprisingly, predation accounted for 86%. Those that avoided predation fell victim to legal/illegal harvest (5%), unknown causes due to lack of evidence (5%), and 2% each was from vehicle strikes and natural infection. Mammalian predators (coyotes, bobcats, foxes and

others such as raccoons, etc.) accounted for 59% of all mortalities during this period. In most instances, mammals consumed or carried away the entire hen, leaving behind only a few bone fragments and piles of chewed feathers, but only occasionally left scat or fur at the scene to identify the mammalian species. We did document two black bear (thanks to their tell-tale droppings) kills of hens that were incubating their nests. Avian predators, hawks and owls, killed and ate 18% of hens during this timeframe, usually picking the carcass clean and leaving the wings intact. Unknown predators accounted for 9%. Hens have it rough. That’s why hens lay 10-12 eggs per nest (older hens lay up to 18). Those that do survive with their one to four young, carry the population to the next year. And then there are the outliers: one adult hen turkey we equipped with a backpack transmitter in August of 2011 beat the odds. She was still alive and well through the 2015 nesting season. The transmitter battery died before she did! With all this predation (natural and hunting) how can we help the turkey population? Three ways: create secure nesting habitat (thick brushy areas where hens can avoid predators), during the spring season if you see a bearded hen consider not harvesting her, and, during the fall season consider not harvesting an adult hen because the next spring they have higher nesting success than first year hens.

Figure 1. Percent Mortality of Transmitted Hens during Nesting Seasons (April 15- July 14), 2011-15.

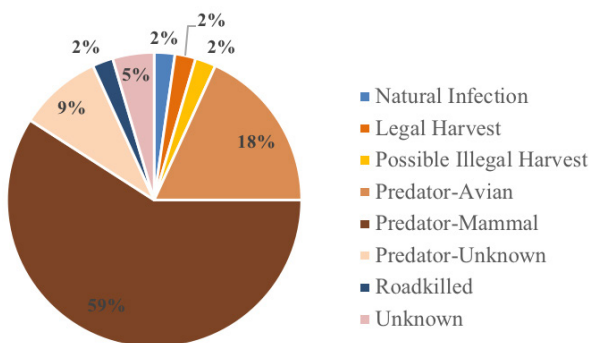
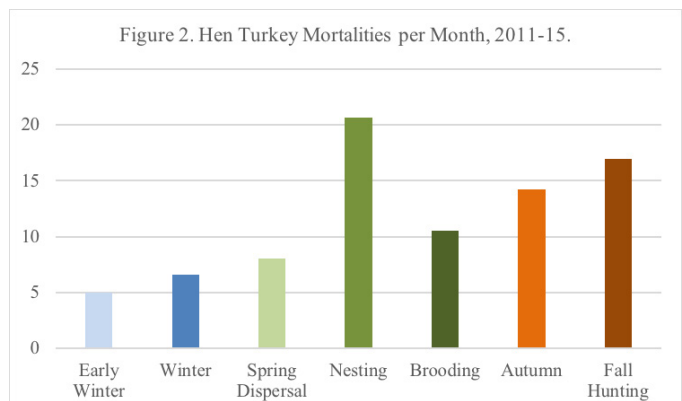


Figure 2. Hen Turkey Mortalities per Month, 2011-15.



# From the Roost

Hello fellow NWTF members and volunteers, I hope everyone has had a wonderful and prosperous summer. I am going to follow up on Sean Langevin's previous article regarding recruitment because I feel it's that important to all our NWTF chapters growth across the country. We face the same issues as our declining hunter numbers. We need to focus on membership and most importantly chapter committee recruitment. Our committees are aging or declining and we need to start funneling new people and the next generation of NWTF committee leaders into our chapter system. Far too many times I see or hear of chapters that fold or decline because of no new committee recruitment. Its then left to a limited few or the RD to rebuild or start a whole new committee. Where it would be so much easier to have a constant focus on recruiting new committee members while your chapters are going strong. We are our own worst enemies. We all become complacent and get comfortable working with the same group of people. We tend to put growing the committee on the back burner and focus on other chapter activities. I believe it's important to always be thinking and working towards growing your chapter committee. One of the biggest benefits you will see is it lessens the workload off of just a few people and it gives everyone a sense of responsibility and ownership of the chapter. Face it folks, we all are very busy with our day to lives and time can be very hard to come by. Spreading the chapter workload amongst more committee people is the greatest way to become a stronger chapter and have more successful events.

Let's look at the big picture here everyone. We are all members or on a committee because we believe in conservation and support our hunting heritage. If we are going to be involved in something let's do our best to make a difference. One of the most important things you can do in this effort is to have a constant focus on growing your committees.

Let's look at just a few ways to do this. Number one and one of the easiest things you can do is just ask someone. Ask a friend or fellow hunter you know if they would like to get involved with the local chapter. I challenge each current committee person to just simply invite someone new to a chapter meeting or function. Hold a chapter dinner, picnic/BBQ. Invite some new folks to this function. Another way to grow your chapter's committee is to work with your RD and hold a recruitment event. There are many ways to grow your committees. The main thing is to keep a constant focus on growing your committee.

As Sean mentioned in his article. Keep it fun everyone! Enjoy what you do and you will be more successful.

Yours in Conservation,  
Skip Motts

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*Brian Stoddard,  
DuBois, PA Moshannon  
Chapter, President,  
Banquet Chairman,  
NWTF Mentor Guide  
Doubled on Jakes with  
Jim Nowak*



*Brian Stoddard (left)  
Jim Nowak (right)  
Jim Nowak's first  
spring gobbler*



*Jim Nowak, Dubois PA  
First spring gobbler. Sat, May 26, 2018  
10-inch beard 1-1/4 spurs*

*Jim Nowak, DuBois, PA Moshannon Chapter,  
Banquet Committee & Habitat Enhancement*



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Guy Hostutler • (724) 447-2716

**1.5.19**

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Ramada Inn Conference Ctr.,  
State College  
Jim Panaro  
jim.panaro@resfuel.com • (814) 322-2294

**1.19.19**

**Wilhelm**

Nick's Place, Edinboro  
Andy Tobin  
timtobinwin@gmail.com • (814) 734-1691

**1.19.19**

**Shermans Valley Strutters**

Millerstown Moose Lodge #925, Millerstown  
Brenda Beal  
shermansvalleystrutters@gmail.com  
(717) 979-0920

**1.20.19**

**Nancy Craft Memorial**

Muncy Valley Fire Hall, Muncy Valley  
Jackie Sheets  
fjsheets@windstream.net • (570) 584-3577

**1.25.19**

**Allegheny Valley**

Springdale Veterans Asso., Springdale  
Michael Zourelias  
zfball@consolidated.net  
(724) 265-0903

**1.26.19**  
**Lower Lackawanna Longspurs**  
Greenwood Fire Hall, Moosic  
Edward Skoranski  
(570) 655-5023

**1.26.19**  
**Foothill Spurs**  
Sligo Area Rec Center, Sligo  
Jared Carr  
Jrod.scarr@yahoo.com  
(814) 473-8488

**1.26.19**  
**Blue Mountain**  
Lebanon Valley Expo Cntr.,  
Lebanon  
John Barry  
jdb1264@gmail.com  
(717) 821-5306

**1.26.19**  
**Chesquehanna Spurs**  
Rembrandt Club, St. Benedict  
Jim Panaro  
jim.panaro@resfuel.com  
(814) 322-2294

**2.1.19**  
**Penn's Woods Spurs**  
Italian American Club, Export  
Jason Straley  
jaystray@yahoo.com  
(412) 855-9774

**2.2.19**  
**Moraine**  
American Legion Post 778,  
Butler  
Christopher Smith  
cesmith462@gmail.com  
(724) 316-4454

**2.2.19**  
**Moshannon**  
Veteran's Of Foreign Wars Club,  
DuBois  
Brian Stoddard  
rutstrut@mail.com  
(814) 808-0009

**2.3.19**  
**Great American Outdoor Show**  
Harrisburg Farm Show Complex,  
Harrisburg  
Ray Smith  
(570) 220-1535

**2.9.19**  
**Col-mont Gobblers**  
Pine Barn Inn, Danville  
Matthew Swartz  
mashunts@gmail.com  
(570) 490-2784

**2.9.19**  
**Gobbler's Knob**  
Gobblers Knob Hall,  
Punxsutawney  
James Lellock  
jimlellock@gmail.com  
(814) 938-6668

**2.9.19**  
**Steel City Spurs**  
Fairview VFW, Bridgeville  
Ed Planinsek  
planinsek@verizon.net  
(412) 221-0515

**2.22.19**  
**Shenango Valley Beards and Spurs**  
Hickory VFW  
Hermitage  
Gene Blair  
gblair@wholelifepa.org  
(724) 732-1045

**2.22.19**  
**Shippensburg Strutters**  
Shippensburg Fish & Game,  
Shippensburg  
Scott Bailey  
4meseb@kuhncom.net  
(717) 486-4995

**2.23.19**  
**Wilson F. Moore**  
Montrose VFW, Montrose  
Alan Hickok  
abh5676@yahoo.com  
(609) 529-7526

**2.23.19**  
**Nittany Valley Longbeards**  
Mountain View Country  
Club, Boalsburg  
Donna Frantz  
ddfrantz@comcast.net  
(814) 238-5387

**2.23.19**  
**Lake Marburg**  
Porters Community Fire Co.,  
Spring Grove  
Phillip Marks  
pmarks6475@comcast.net  
(717) 577-1358

**2.23.19**  
**Wapiti Roost Local**  
The Red Fern, St. Marys  
Jake Stanisch  
jake.stanisch@gmail.com  
(814) 335-7083

**2.28.19**  
**Local Chapter #1**  
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Ed Maczka  
truxels@yahoo.com  
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