

**Monthly Meeting**

We had hoped to open this month's newsletter with a report on our Super Bowl Sunday Ice Fishing Outing. But alas, it has been postponed. The varying temperatures made the ice a little too risky. As we all know it's better to be a little cautious when venturing out on a frozen pond. We thought we might have enough ice from Tom Brady's first half in the Super Bowl, but it didn't last because his fourth quarter would have melted a glacier! Congratulations Patriots!

Instead, we open with a story from one of our members. Ken Baer from Ashburnham has graciously sent us a story that is published in this month's edition of the North Woods Sporting Journal. Many thanks to Ken for sharing it with us. Enjoy...

*"Total Chaos"*

Muzzleloader season in Massachusetts is always an interesting time. There have been times when the snow was so deep we could not get into the woods or the year of the ice storm when the woods were flattened and impenetrable. This was not one of those years. We were able to put a camp together after Christmas with the family and the snow was perfect. It snowed two to three inches the first night and an inch or two on top of that every night the next three days, perfect for a late December muzzleloader hunt.

It was a family affair with dads, uncles, and cousins hitting the woods. With the new snow every morning, the crew was able to pattern the late season whitetails. By the third day, we had them. The deer holed up on top of a spruce covered hump every night; we call the spot "Junkyard Joe's." When they got jumped, the deer would head downhill across a tote road towards a swamp about a mile away, which just happened to be surrounded by my driveway. I have what some would call a long drive, others I have spoken to call it the road to the house, it's a long drive way.

We found where they crossed the tote road and entered the conifer swamp. They were sticking to the thick stuff since the snow. There were a dozen beds in the spot we jumped them from, and the tracks showed there were a lot of deer crossing the road, enough tracks so you could not tell how many had crossed within the last hour. We had them right in front of us. With the driveway surrounding the swamp, we could put a man on the tracks, stand around the edges of the hemlock bog and hopefully get a shot at them on their way out. None of us had a chance to get a good look at the critters in the last couple of days.

We dropped off my nephews, Nevin and 10-year-old nephew John, tagging along, to take the track. My cousin, Peter, would be the outrider and follow the path of the driveway

to keep the herd from doubling back with the famous whitetail “Button Hook” maneuver. My uncle Gary and I would string out along the driveway and wait.

Uncle Gary and I made our way up the driveway in his truck; I kept a watchful eye on the sides of the road for the deer or any signs of them already crossing. As we made our way up the hill, past the detention pond, I spied a new set of tracks leaving the acreage. I yelled, “Stop, let me out! One crossed here, the rest are still in there. You go stand by the log pile.” Uncle Gary continued up the hill to his stand.

I was able to hide behind one of the large boulders I placed along the curve to keep me from going off the road and into the pond. When my nephews entered the woods they immediately spotted a doe in her bed. She stood up and walked away. The deer made their way across the swamp and came out right in front of me, just below the pond, in an opening in the boreal forest. The first one was a doe. My mind raced, “The others are behind her,” I thought to myself. She was broadside, standing still, looking over her back. I thought again, looking down the sights, “The buck is right there, just step into the opening.”

The doe swiveled her head and looked right at me. Thinking, “She can’t see me, I’m behind this rock.” I turned to look up the hill; here comes my uncle in his truck, sliding down the hill right towards me. I started waving my arms and pointing at the deer. He was waving his arms for me to move out of the way because the truck is going to slide into the rock I was standing behind. The truck slid into the snow banking lining the side of the road, just missing me, ricochets back onto the driveway and continues down the hill, sliding out of control.

In the meantime, the deer started scattering in all directions, most running across the driveway and some back into the swamp. When it was all over, the truck was stopped by the snow banking at the bottom of the hill, undamaged. By the time I got there my cousin and my nephews were out at the truck. I asked if they saw the deer and were there any bucks. They exclaimed that they had and were. I asked why they had not taken a shot. Pete said, “I was on him, then my dad came sliding by, waving at me. By the time it took him to slide by me the deer were gone.”

Total chaos, what a way to end the season.

- Reprinted from the “North Woods Sporting Journal”, February, 2017 edition with permission of the author, Kenneth Baer.

Thanks again, Ken! Great job!

Please send me any outdoor stories you may have. We’d love to hear about your latest exploits! I’ll serve as editor and get the story into a presentable format, subject to your approval before publishing. Please email me, Chris Erali, at [eralic23@gmail.com](mailto:eralic23@gmail.com)

Monthly Meetings are always the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at the Clubhouse – next Meeting February 14, 2017. Make it a point to attend if you can. From 6:00 – 6:45 pm for a cocktail and socializing – then we serve the best \$5 meal in town! Club business discussed with occasional guest speakers from 7:15 - 8:30 ish. Home in bed by 9:00.

### **Speakers**

Please let us know if you have a suggestion for a speaker at a future meeting.

### **Monthly Safety Tip**

“Watch your step.”

### **New Business**

Roland and Cindy have prepared Itemized Categories and Income/Expenses by Category for 2017. The budget was released and discussed. The bottom line is there is a decrease in the Archery budget (Nice savings, Tina). Budgets are always a balancing act. The Club recognizes that there are times when spending is in our best interest. There are also times when frugality is the best road to take. Many thanks to our Executive Board for their work on this matter. There are some big-ticket items that will be voted on at the general meetings. Copies of the budget will be available for discussion at our Tuesday meeting.

### **Membership**

Of our 320-active paying memberships, we have about 60 left who haven't sent in their renewal dues. That is normal for this time. **Final chance for dues to be paid for 2017 is February 28.** If you haven't already sent them in or paid at the club, we will be accepting them at our Feb 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Thursdays at trap is also available if you want to stop by the clubhouse. New applications for this month are Douglas King, Justin Sobel, Alison Wilson and one family/conversion membership. Scott Vandersea is bringing in his whole gang. He and we, are joined at Nimrod by Paula, Haley, and Jonathan!

### **Board of Trustees**

A date for the audit is forthcoming, as soon as Chris Craigue can find a date amenable to all the people involved.

### **Trap/Skeet**

Thursday nights have been slow but will hopefully get better with spring on the way. Maintenance to one trap was successful and all is now operating at top level. Planning for a purchase of new targets. We have enough to last through March, and we're looking for another club to join us in the purchase. Buying a larger quantity gets us the best price. Trap and Skeet is every Thursday night. We encourage everyone to come out on Thursday evenings for a night of shooting and fellowship.

## **Kitchen**

Bruce Ebbeson is cooking the February dinner. On the menu is smoked ham, au gratin potatoes, and glazed carrots. Sounds delicious! Volunteers are welcome. This is a good way to earn work hours and for newer members to meet the “old timers”. Call Bruce at 508-853-1589 if you would like to volunteer. We always need people to serve and clean up (no cooking skills are required).

Volunteers for cooking at upcoming general meetings are as follows: February: Bruce Ebbeson, March: Russ Chapel, and April: Bob Horgan, May: Pat Orrell

We also need chefs for the Worcester County League Banquet as well as the months of June and July.

### **Spring Cleaning is set for April 22, 2017 Volunteers are welcome!**

We will start after coffee and donuts at 8AM and be done by noon, when we'll have elk burgers for lunch.

Bruce purchased a new instant thermometer as well as more vacuum sealer bags. He's been busy sealing packages of meat for the game dinner. **Remember when you donate! Label with a “game name” and date!**

We have plenty of big game including moose, elk, boar, and venison. The Club thanks Harry Wilbur for a generous recent contribution of venison and turkey. Philip Ceryanek recently donated a generous amount of elk. It's been a few years since we've had elk at the dinner. We look forward to it being on the menu. We would appreciate donations of striper for the fried appetizer and bluefish to smoke for the pate. Paul Frasier always needs help setting up and cleaning up afterwards. This also is a good way to earn work hours. Bruce and Larry appreciate the regulars in the kitchen who produce one of the best Game Dinners you can find.

We are still looking for donations for our game dinner. If you have any game, please label it and leave it in the refrigerator and call Bruce at (508) 853-1589. He will vacuum package it for the freezer to prevent freezer burn and keep it fresh for our dinner. Thanks!

**Upcoming Event:** Game Dinner is on May 20, 2017. Tickets are \$25.

Get your tickets early as this event will be sold out!

## **Rifle Range**

No report and no news on the NRA grant.

The range will be closed May 13-14, 2017 for the Archery IBO Shoot.

## **House**

We are discussed our freezer woes. We lost meat due to the brownout and our freezer is unreliable. We are fortunate to have Peter Brewer's freezer. The possibility of an alarm that

can be attached to a member's cell phone was discussed. We need to keep our freezers properly serviced and maintained. We will need to clean (pressure wash) coils and fins when we clean the oven hood in April.

### **Executive Board**

This month's meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM. Much discussion and decision-making on a variety of issues. We aim for the newsletter to convey the highlights.

E Board meetings are held at 7 PM the last Tuesday of the month. Members are welcome if you'd like to come and observe our club's operation. Our membership can be very proud of the board and the time and effort that is made by everyone to keep our club running smoothly.

### **Special Committee (Scholarship)**

We have applications on the bulletin board. We will give three scholarships instead of two. One will be designated as a Past Presidents' Scholarship. Discussion of fund raising was productive. Ice fishing derby for a scholarship was thought to be not dependable enough. We are having trouble doing just one for this winter. Setting a date and "hoping" we have ice just does not work for planning. A local fishing trip or deep-sea excursion was discussed and we learned that we have a member who owns a bus company. More news to come...

### **Grounds**

We have a request for a barrel of sand for the rifle range. AED batteries are getting old. Recommendation is to change them every two years. The cost is \$150 and Neal will make the purchase.

Please remember that we always can use plenty of volunteers for shoveling and snow blowing. Many hands make light work!

### **Finance**

The market fluctuates as we all know. Smart investors stay the course.

### **Bar**

No report

### **Birds**

This project is starting up again. Our first payment is due soon of approximately \$400. A spring clean-up work party is in the future. The hunting area is shaping up into very good bird cover. There is however, a lot of timber lying on the ground that needs to be picked up and piled. Keep this party in mind for volunteer hours. This would also be the area affected by the Mass Wildlife grant if that comes through.

## **Revenue**

No report

## **Archery**

Shooting on Friday nights has been going well. This is our Open League Night, every Friday at 7pm. This is open to all for a \$10 fee. (Group snacks are always welcome. Thanks!)

The issue of sanding on Friday nights and Saturday morning was raised and discussed.

**Upcoming Event:** Nimrod will host the IBO Shoot on May 13 & 14, 2017. **Volunteers needed!** Don't feel you must commit to the whole weekend. Give us a couple of hours. It's a great way to fulfill your volunteer obligation. The Rifle Range will be closed that weekend.

## **Worcester County League of Sportsmen**

The League is preparing for Kid's Day at NORCO on Saturday, March 4, 2017. They are also in the early stages of planning a Youth Trap Event. The thought is to have events held at different area clubs, perhaps an event in the north, one club from the central, and one from the south. The shooters would then meet in finals to be held at NIMROD sometime in July or August. We will need volunteers for the championship. WCLS will provide 12 and 20-gauge ammunition.

Our Kid's Day at NIMROD is February 19, 2017. We should be able to run that event on a \$300 budget for food and other miscellaneous expenses. The bird houses, walking sticks, and archery equipment are being readied for the day.

This next item could have been placed under the Rifle Range.

## **The Nimrod League of Holden and Gun Owners' Action League present a women's only instructional shooting clinic.**

**When?** April 29, 2017

8:30am to 5:30pm

**Where?** The Nimrod League of Holden

168 Coal Kiln Rd Princeton, MA 01541

[www.nimrodleague.org](http://www.nimrodleague.org)

Ladies, if you have ever thought about trying your hand at recreational shooting, here is your opportunity! Come and join us for a women's only instructional shooting clinic. You will receive hands on instruction in archery, shotgun, rifle, and pistol by the fun, friendly and knowledgeable folks at our club. All women are invited to participate regardless of skill level. No previous experience is necessary; just the desire to learn and have fun. There will also be a lecture on state and federal gun laws. Successful completion of this event exceeds

the requirements for application of a Massachusetts Firearm Identification card or a License to Carry if you are interested in either of those. All equipment and student texts are included. Lunch and refreshments will be served! The event fee is \$60 and is limited to 24 people. You must be at least 15 years of age to participate.

**To register online & for more information:**

<http://www.nimrodleague.org/women-on-target.html>

### **Good and Welfare**

Happy Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day!

Please if you have any news that you would like to have included in this section, good or bad, contact any member of the Executive Board, and we'll see that it is included.