

Vertical Response Jan 14 2016

Happy New Year everyone!! A great deal of the winter is now behind us and from all reports will be a banner year for game province wide - little snow and moderate to mild temperatures. In most parts of the province this will be the third good winter and that should bolster big game numbers. Trouble is, these conditions also help maintain the high levels of predators we are seeing across the landscape which in turn have profound effects on the same game populations. Can't win.

With the New Year, it is time to renew your membership. Check your last newsletter mailing label for your membership expiry date and your permanent ABA membership number (or contact John (John@albertabowhunters.com) or Brent (Brent@albertabowhunters.com). Go online (www.bowhunters.ca) and renew through our "store". Works awesome!! You get an immediate email confirmation and can print off your own membership card. If you are a new member, John will email you your membership number. Renew now so you don't miss any newsletters, eligibility for game awards, 3D Program, insurance coverage. Even more important, renewing increases our numbers and that increases our presence in the various meetings we go to with government and stakeholders.

A HUGE thank you to everyone who bought tickets for our next cougar raffle. We launched the raffle in the last newsletter that hit mailboxes the first part of December and then we sent out a mass email/on Facebook Dec 13 notifying the general public of the raffle. We sold most of the tickets online and it worked awesome!! The raffle sold out on Dec 26 and we will do the draw at the banquet!! Good luck to everyone who bought a ticket.

The next issue of the newsletter is being put together now and will be at printers soon, then on to your mail boxes. We have had members submit stories but there is a constant need of stories for future issues. We know there are people who have expressed interest in putting their hunt to paper and if we can get you to follow up with that, it would be greatly appreciated. You can send stories and harvest pictures to Gord (Gord@albertabowhunters.com).

In the next newsletter we will have a report about "food plots" -- the view of F&W Enforcement is ***"that hunting over a food plot created for wildlife is hunting with the use of bait and, therefore, illegal."*** The report will have more details but we want to communicate this to members - there has been questions asked and actual plots made without the knowledge of the possible repercussions.

Things are coming together for the banquet - March 26 2016 and will be at the same venue as last year - the Nisku Inn. Fits our needs and is perfectly situated to allow reasonable access for those who have to travel. Ticket prices will be the same as last year - adult \$65 and youth \$25. Tickets are at printers right now and Lance will be setting things up on our online store - is the easiest and quickest way to buy tickets. You can also get them from Brent. Posters have been mailed out to all the archery shops we have on our contact list, will be in the next newsletter, on our website, Facebook Page. Information on booking rooms, convention agendas etc are on the poster.

Our partners once again this year are the "Alberta Traditional Bowhunters Association".

We have made "Bears" a theme for this year's banquet - if you have a life size or half mount bear, full shoulder mount or finished rug, contact Cole (Cole@albertabowhunters.com) or Dale (Dale@albertabowhunters.com). Those who bring any of the above will get their name entered for a FREE draw for a table of 8 at the 2017 banquet - one entry for each item. We have had some preliminary interest and it could shape up to be an incredible display!! The life sized current Alberta archery record at 22 3/16 taken in 2015 will be there!!!

Our guest speaker will be Mike Ukrainetz - "*Bowhunting Big Alberta Black Bears.*" Mike has hunted and guided for black bears for many years and has it down to a science. Nobody knows bears and what it takes to get a big bear more than Mike. Lots of great tips for you bear hunters!! Member Ric Fedyna has donated a 4'x3' painting of a big black bear that we will be raffling off at the banquet as well. Ric has donated past works to other conservation groups (Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited) and we really appreciate his support. Check out his new website at www.ricfedynartist.com and also an Instagram feed at @ricfedynartist.

If anyone has submissions for regulation changes they would like to see contact Terry Brew (Terry@albertabowhunters.com) or Brent (Brent@albertabowhunters.com). We have a standardized template you can fill out and we will present to F&W at the various meetings we attend - it is important however that you talk to your local and/or regional biologists as well.

Rob and Brent attended the revised AGMAG meeting on Dec 2 2015 - now called the Alberta Game Policy Advisory Committee. Meetings will be somewhat similar but will address much broader, province wide scale issues. Another meeting likely in the spring will deal with regulation changes. F&W were to send out a summary of the meeting and a second draft of the "Terms of Reference" but we haven't seen anything yet. This first meeting touched briefly on the first big issue we will be dealing with - "Big Game Allocation Policy" review. Ongoing meetings (the next one Jan 28 2016) will involve discussions and debate on how the big game harvest will be divided up amongst the various users - who gets what of the "pie." That goes for outfitter allocations, landowner tags, bowhunter share, etc. Couple of our points based on past member guidance will be the archery season draw proposal we have presented in the past and "is our 15% harvest share going to be carved in stone/capped" or "will it slide upwards in proportion to the increase in bowhunter numbers versus general hunter population"? Once we get into this allocation discussion we will be advising members thru the newsletter, email list, Facebook, website etc about the issues involved, ask what suggestions they have for change, offer up some change options etc. and then take that feedback to the meetings. Are thinking of doing a survey online too - easy to do and one way to gauge member thoughts plus gauge interest.

We have three members contact us with their entries that qualifies them to get their Grandmaster portraits as well as several buckle winners. Make sure you get your game awards entries in to Ryk (ryk@ryk.ca) as soon as possible so he can check where you sit at the various levels and if you get your Master Bowhunter buckle of the Grandmaster portrait. Allows plenty of time to get everything lined up so there is no rush at banquet time. Entry forms can be found on the website, in the newsletter or contact Ryk or Brent. Once you send them to Ryk, contact him to confirm that he did indeed get them. We have had some in the past not make it - through the mail, a fax or an email. So please confirm.

For 2016, the election positions are as follows. If anyone is interested in running for the executive positions, contact Brent or any of the other executive. The "duties" are outlined in the newly updated constitution. Serving on the executive doesn't take up a great deal of time (we do our exec meetings by conference call, work as a group, etc) and can be very rewarding in that you are helping shape the present and the future of bowhunting in Alberta.

Vice President
Treasurer
Membership
3D Director
Central Director
South Director

Enjoy the rest of the winter and hopefully see you at the AGM and banquet!