



NYSCC HOLDS FIRST EVER VIRTUAL CONVENTION

By Chuck Parker, President



This year's convention on September 24 was held using Zoom. Reports by DEC, NYS Trout Unlimited, Back Country Hunter and Anglers, NYSCC's Marine Resources Chairman, and an update on Rebuild 2020 were well received.

Tony Wikinson, Director, NYSDEC Fish & Wildlife Division addressed the dual crisis of COVID-19 and the state's fiscal situation, hunter education classes, the new electronic licensing system, wildlife diseases such as EHD and CWD, and the latest deer management plan.

Steve Hurst, Director, NYSDEC Fisheries Division reported on stocking activities, access to DEC launch sites, the draft trout stream management plan, fishing education programs, Caledonia Hatchery improvements, the Great Lakes Fishery and associated possible regulation changes for black bass and panfish.

Jim Farquhar Director, NYSDEC Division of Wildlife provided information on the proposed extension of deer hunting season to the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. Wildlife management regulations are being updated, and habitat management plans for WMAs are under review.

Larry Charette with New York Council of Trout Unlimited noted that public fishing rights were acquired on numerous streams across NY State in 1951. 2020 is the 61st anniversary of Trout Unlimited's founding. Some of TU's major projects in recent years include the Battenkill Rivers Initiative, Oatka Creek Conservation, and the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture.

Virginia Glazier of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers stated that the organization defends stream access, promotes increased hunter and angler access to public lands, and advocates for full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The New York Chapter focus includes stream access, R3 initiatives, and expanding membership for women and minorities.

Charles Witek, chairman, Marine Resources Committee, noted that saltwater fisheries management is more complex than DEC's management of freshwater fisheries. Managing fisheries for abundance is a major goal of commercial fishing interests, which may conflict with desires of recreational anglers relative to striped bass, bluefish, and other species

Rebuild 2020 is entering its second year. Topics include fighting apathy, greater awareness, need for fundraising, participation and being productive. We are moving in the right direction for growth, representing sportsmen, conservation, and those who enjoy the outdoors. Some of our accomplishments over the past years include a new website and social media, improved article quality of *Grass Roots News*, new infographic capabilities, new legislative bill tracking technologies, and new partners and increased recognition by those who share our common goals. More information can be found at <https://oswegocountysportsmensfoundation.com/2020-fall-convention>

Finances: With COVID-19 came some financial concerns similar to other years. With 4th quarter billing to go out and 4th quarter donations we look toward ending 2020 ok.

Legislation: 2020 was a unique year when it came to following legislation. Normal monitoring of legislation peaks in mid-June. This year there was no normal peak of activity. While sparse now we are seeing some activity which we shall continue to monitor.

End of Year Reports: There are to date four end of year reports submitted for Firearms, Small Game, Hunter Education and myself that can be found here:

<https://oswegocountysportsmensfoundation.com/2020-fall-convention>

Resolutions: There were no resolutions submitted this year.

Elections: All incumbents were reelected as they ran unopposed.

Conclusion: With COVID-19 and everything else against us we had an excellent meeting. Some thought that it couldn't be done, but we did it. Thanks to everyone who participated. A special thanks to Nate Kennedy and Keith Tidball for handling the logistics and operation of Zoom. For further details about the annual meeting, go to <https://nyscc.com/2020/10/14/nyscc-presidents-post-convention-report-2020/>

VIRTUAL OPERATION? WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

By Chuck Parker, NYSCC President

The NYSCC Board of Directors recently met and voted to operate as a virtual office. The concept is not new; it was first looked at in 2013. Advancements in available technology and better understanding of a virtual office made for a unanimous decision by the Board to go in this direction.

A virtual office gives businesses and non-profits such as the Council all the capabilities of operating as a conventional office-based business without the overhead of leased office space. It has dedicated mail service for conventional mail, email, internet capabilities, and the availability of all necessary computer records.

Elements of a Virtual Office

- Maintain all day-to-day capabilities of a conventional office.
- Maintain a postal address for traditional use.
- Employees: part time, full time, volunteers can essentially work from anywhere.
- There is no commute so no lost days due to weather.
- Operates using a business class cell phone service. With a cell phone service, rollover and call forwarding services, the office can remain open even if a worker is called out of the office.
- Employees have more free personal hours available as they are not traveling to where they work.
- There is a larger talent pool to draw from for full and part time employees and possible contractors than if you are restricted to having to draw from people living near the existing brick and mortar building you are using.
- It is simply more cost effective.
- If we expand our services, as we intend on doing, it can be more easily done without the need to rent added work space and associated equipment.
- Today's available security measures ensure the protection needed for items deemed confidential.

This move is seen as a means of growth and there is no loss of essential services. This is a good move. It opens many additional options for the Council by which we can operate. A virtual office, new website, Facebook, Instagram, and the Rebuild 2020 model that we are steadily assimilating are today's tools for a successful organization. I hope you all agree and are onboard to support and participate with our new virtual office as well our other new modes of operation.

LEGISLATION VERSUS REGULATION

By Larry Becker

As sportsmen and conservationists we are making a mistake if we request laws that override the DEC's ability to establish or change wildlife management regulations based on sound scientific studies and data collected by professional Wildlife Biologists.

There appears to be a growing trend to do an "end run" around the DEC regulatory process by requesting laws when these groups disagree with a regulation or lack thereof. This is a significant error in approach that we may all regret in the long term if any such law comes to fruition. Our current Environmental Conservation Law gives the DEC legal authority to regulate wildlife management among other things. Any law that overrides this authority handcuffs the agency and prevents future science-based management decisions. Science based decisions include adapting to changing environment, population levels, public input, etc. This process is called "**Adaptive Management.**"

To avoid singling out specific recent requests for legislation, let me give you a hypothetical example of how things could go wrong. Suppose that for Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) "X" the DEC on an annual basis issues 10,000 Deer Management Permits (DMPs) on average each year. Note that in this example the 10,000 figure would be an average because DEC staff will use Adaptive Management to adjust DMP allocations based on current and past conditions impacting WMU deer densities. Local deer hunters and farmers are convinced that we are overrun with deer and that amount of DMPs must be increased drastically. We get petitions signed, letters written and a bill proposed to double the number of permits. Further suppose that we lobby well and get a law passed (as opposed to a regulation change). For the next season or two, 20,000 permits are issued, the typical ratio of those permits are filled and deer numbers are greatly reduced. Suddenly there is a significant outbreak of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) such as the outbreak that hit Rockland County in the summer of 2011 and the herd is reduced drastically in a very short period of time. The law says the DEC must issue 20,000 permits so DEC staff are forced to continue with that number even though deer densities are now much lower than intended. If the law cannot be changed and the 20,000 permits are issued there is the possibility the entire herd could be decimated. If the permits were controlled by regulation the DEC would have the ability to use Adaptive Management to regulate the number of DMPs and manage accordingly; the population could recover over time and the DEC would continue to be able to issue the appropriate number of DMPs based on science rather than arbitrary numbers forged into law.

Once a law is passed it is often very difficult to get it repealed; and even if there is success in getting repeal it may take several years to do so and implement the change. Regulations can be changed relatively quickly once there is sound data to do so. Wildlife biologists and technicians of the DEC are better trained and equipped to make judgments on wildlife management than the NY state legislators. Passage of laws that override the DEC's regulatory powers will have significant negative impact on DEC's ability to manage wildlife in a changing environment and put an unnecessary strain on cooperative efforts that have been a driving force in our state's wildlife management for decades.

There will be times when some or all of us may disagree with the DEC's conclusions and subsequent regulation. When this happens there are avenues that can be pursued to arbitrate a potential change without passing a law. First make sure that you have good sound basis for your request and majority support from other sportsmen. Next contact the DEC manager in charge of this particular area and give them detailed supportive information. Then listen to the basis for whatever position they may be taking. Be willing to accept that they are right if they have sound scientific reasons for their position. Also understand there is more to the decision-making process for wildlife managers than simply level of support/opposition among sportsmen and women. If the person or department you are dealing with is not responsive or you feel does not have the data to back the decision, then go to the next level of responsibility in the agency. If you feel you have exhausted all levels in the

agency and their reasoning is totally wrong, as a very last resort you can contact your legislator and request that they have their staff work with DEC management to determine the correct solution to avoid legislation. **Always be willing to accept the fact that your solution may not be the one that is in the best interest of wildlife management.**

If we set a precedent by having a law passed that overrides science-based wildlife management, it will have the potential of opening the flood gates for further such laws. Is this what you as responsible sportsmen and conservationists really want? Remember the flood gates will also be open for those who want to stop hunting, fishing, or trapping.

Be responsible and understand the difference between the regulatory and legislative process and don't do the wrong thing for what you may consider the right reason.



This is a great recipe to stretch your harvested duck meat to feed more mouths. With just a duck or two, you can create 8 hearty servings of soup. Perfect after a chilly waterfowl hunt or for a cozy evening meal.

Sweet Potato and Puddler Duck Soup

Ingredients:

- Skinless, boneless breast meat from 1-2 ducks
- 4-6 pieces of bacon
- 1 large sweet onion, such as Vidalia (about 2 cups diced)
- 2 stalks of celery, diced (about 1 cup)
- 2 large carrots, diced (about 1 cup)
- 1-2 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. Cajun seasoning
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- ¼ cup flour
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 2 sweet potatoes or yams, cut into dice sizes bites (about 3 cups)
- 4 smallish red potatoes, cut into dice sized bites (about 2 cups)
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 1-2 Tbsp. chopped fresh sage and thyme or ½ tsp each of dried
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: 8 oz. smoked chorizo or Andouille sausage, cut into slices

Preparation:

In a large stock pot or Dutch oven cook the strips of bacon until crisp over medium high heat. While that is cooking, cut the duck breast meat into small pieces, making sure there is no shot or feathers in the meat. Remove the crisped bacon from the pot and reserve to go back in the soup later. Brown the duck breast meat in the bacon fat and seasoning it with a sprinkle of fresh ground pepper, salt, and a sprinkle of Cajun seasoning. Remove the duck meat from the pan and reserve it with the bacon. Add the onion, celery, and carrot to the pot and sauté until soft, you may need to add a Tbsp. of butter. Add the garlic and sauté a minute more, stirring to not overly brown the garlic or other veggies. Sprinkle in the flour and stir to thoroughly combine. Pour in the chicken stock and stir the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon to be sure to get up and browned bits from the bottom of the pan, the "fond". Add the sweet potatoes and red potatoes. Cook about 15-20 minutes until the potatoes are soft. Add the duck meat and bacon, crumbled, back to the soup. (Optional: add sliced, cooked sausage to soup). Add the fresh herbs, turn down the heat to low and add the half-and-half. Season to taste with salt and fresh cracked pepper and perhaps a pinch more Cajun seasoning.

| Nutrition Facts | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ~8 servings per container | |
| Serving size | one bowl |
| Amount per serving | |
| Calories | 290 |
| | % Daily Value* |
| Total Fat 14g | 18% |
| Saturated Fat 6g | 30% |
| Trans Fat 0g | |
| Cholesterol 45mg | 15% |
| Sodium 870mg | 38% |
| Total Carbohydrate 29g | 11% |
| Dietary Fiber 3g | 11% |
| Total Sugars 6g | |
| Includes 0g Added Sugars | 0% |
| Protein 12g | |
| Vitamin D 0mcg | 0% |
| Calcium 78mg | 6% |
| Iron 2mg | 10% |
| Potassium 781mg | 15% |

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BILL SIGNED INTO LAW BY PRESIDENT

By Bill Conners

While things may move slowly in Washington, thankfully they do move. Dozens of sporting and conservation groups have been promoting America's Conservation Enhancement Act and its importance to the country's wildlife conservation programs.

According to U.S. Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), President Trump has now signed the most significant wildlife conservation and sportsmen's law in decades. The law establishes a task force to address the growing problem of chronic wasting disease. The bill also provides compensation to ranchers for lost livestock from predator attacks and helps combat dangerous invasive species.

Conservationists, hunters, anglers, and farmers all agree that the ACE Act is a win for America's wildlife. It's a great example of what can be accomplished when both parties work together to get something done.

Among other actions, the ACE Act will:

- Commission a study by the National Academy of Sciences regarding the pathways and mechanisms of the transmission of CWD in the United States;
- Establish a CWD task force to develop an interstate action plan for state and federal cooperation relating to the disease;
- Authorize the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to issue depredation permits to livestock producers to allow for the taking of black vultures or common ravens under specified circumstances during calving or lambing season;
- Establish a Theodore Roosevelt Genius Prize for technological innovation to reduce human-predator conflict using non-lethal means;
- Authorize funds to combat the threat of invasive species; and
- Encourage partnerships among public agencies and other interested parties for promoting fish conservation.

Several key provisions of the bill support New York's fish and wildlife programs

The bill will reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program until 2025. The Program was created by law in 1983 and has been amended a couple of times since then to address new issues that needed attention. Regionally, the Chesapeake Bay Program was created to facilitate the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay which is undoubtedly the most important resource for the entire east coast striped bass fishery, including New York.

In general, the Chesapeake Bay spawning areas produce 70-90% of coastal migratory striped bass. It is the largest striped bass nursery area on the Atlantic coast. Although there are also significant contributions from the Delaware River and Hudson River stocks, when problems occur in Chesapeake Bay such as toxic pollution, nutrient over-enrichment and dwindling underwater bay grasses, among other problems, our two striped bass fisheries cannot fill the void.

The Chesapeake Bay Program brings together members of various state, federal, academic, and local watershed organizations to build and adopt policies that support Chesapeake Bay restoration. By combining the resources and unique strengths of each individual organization, the Chesapeake Bay Program is able to follow a unified plan for restoration.

While New York has escaped the ravages of Chronic Wasting Disease, 26 other state and provinces have not. It is important to New York that the disease is brought under control. The ACE Act is a step in that direction.

New York is battling a veritable shopping list of invasive species. Non-native fish, wildlife, plants, and diseases are finding their way here with regularity. We can't hope to win the battle to hold them at bay without federal support.

Fortunately, the head of steam that pushed the bill down the track did not evaporate as so often happens in Washington. The bill moved with remarkable speed through both houses and across the finish line when it was signed by the President.

ORLEANS COUNTY FEDERATION OF SPORTSMEN'S CLUBS, INC. *Est. 1938*



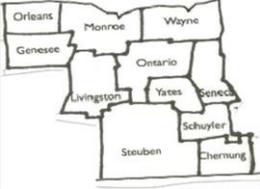
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 Holley Rod & Gun Club
 Junior Wilson Sportsmen Club, Inc.
 Medina Conservation Club
 Oak Orchard River Chapter, National Wild Turkey Feder:
 Orleans County Clay Crushers
 Orleans County Bluebird Society
 Orleans County Ducks Unlimited
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Finger Lakes Conservation Council Inc.
 Representing County Federations and Affiliate Clubs of New York State Region 8

Member Federations

- Chemung Co. Fed of Sportsman's Clubs
- Genesee Co. Fed. of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Livingston Co. Fed. of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Monroe Co. Conservation Council
- Ontario Co. Fed. Of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Orleans Co. Fed. of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Seneca Co. Fed. of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Steuben Co. Fed. of Conservation Clubs
- Wayne Co. Fed. of Sportsmen's Clubs
- Yates Co. Fed. Of Sportsmen's Clubs



President Mike Elam
 Vice President Bob McIlwaine
 Secretary Glen Adams
 Treasurer Dennis Race

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

GUARDIAN MEMBER:
James McCann, Gowanda

DEC: EHD OUTBREAK KILLING WHITETAILS IN NEW YORK

The DEC is asking hunters who may encounter deer affected by Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) this fall to report the find to DEC. EHD is a viral disease of whitetail deer that cannot be contracted by humans. Reports from hunters help DEC track the disease's potential spread which has been largely concentrated in Region 3 in southeast New York.

To date, EHD has been confirmed in portions of Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Ulster, and Westchester counties, and DEC has received reports of approximately 1,400 dead deer. There are no plans to reduce harvest in areas affected by EHD at this time.

The EHD virus affected New York deer in 2007 in Albany, Rensselaer, and Niagara counties, and in Rockland County in 2011.

Hunters should not handle or eat any deer that appears sick or acts strangely. Report sick and dead deer to your regional wildlife manager. In Region 3 call 845-256-3098.

PUTNAM COUNTY SPORTSMEN HOST YOUTH PHEASANT HUNT



Information and photos by Ray Merlotto

Over 20 youth attended the event held at the Great Swamp WMA in Patterson on September 26 where approximately 100 pheasants were stocked. Thanks to the ECOs and the forest ranger for their help and advice on ethical hunting and firearm safety. Federation volunteers and the Patterson Fire Department helped with the water supply for cooling down the dogs. Everyone had a good time, and lots of birds were taken.



SCHWERD, SIMPSON WIN 2020 NYSOWA'S PASS IT ON AWARD

By Glenn Sapir

For the first time ever, the New York State Outdoor Writers Association has named two people to earn the organization's coveted "Pass It On" Award for 2020. Kenyon Simpson of Bolton Landing and Bill Schwerd of Middle Grove were both named to receive the recognition this year because it is difficult to mention one person without the other – they have been working together and volunteering for over 50 years.

Both have worked together as hunter safety instructors and promoted the 4-H Shooting Sports Program for Youth. They have also held clinics for other instructors and have been designated Master Instructors. Each year one of them holds a major banquet as a fund-raiser for the 4-H program to fund and promote youth shooting sports and hunter education projects. Both have received numerous awards for their efforts and long service as hunter safety instructors. It was high time to recognize these two stalwarts of the outdoors who pass things on every chance they get.

This annual award honors the active member of NYSOWA who has done the most to "pass on" our outdoor heritage. NYSOWA has recognized the fact that it is vital to pass on our outdoor heritage, including the understanding of the role of conservation and an interest in our outdoor sports. This can be done in several ways such as creating awareness through writing, helping organizations that promote these activities, or directly being involved in mentoring and educating.

MARINE FISHERIES UPDATE

By Charles Witek

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's annual meeting just ended. Not too much that will impact New York's marine fisheries occurred.

Probably the only item that will lead to regulatory action here in New York was the actions of the ASMFC's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board, which followed up on its prior action to require circle hooks in all striped bass bait fisheries beginning in the 2021 season.

New York had submitted a proposal intended to comply with that requirement, as did all of the other coastal states between Maine and North Carolina. New York proposed requiring circle hooks in all bait fisheries for striped bass without any exceptions for certain sectors (e.g. for-hire) or fishing techniques. Two states did try to carve out exceptions for sectors (Massachusetts would not require circle hooks for anglers fishing from party or charter boats) or techniques (Maine sought to exempt tube-and-worm rigs, while Massachusetts asked that bait attached to lures designed to be cast, trolled, or jigged be exempted); but the Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board refused to grant any exceptions, so all states will be fishing under circle hook requirements substantially similar to New York's.

The next step will be a rulemaking by New York State. I haven't seen a copy of the proposed regulation yet. It **must** require circle hooks in all striped bass bait fisheries and will define "circle hook." A failure to meet those minimum requirements would result in the ASMFC finding New York out of compliance and asking the Secretary of Commerce to impose a full moratorium on striped bass fishing in New York State waters. It is also possible, and I think likely, that the state will adopt complimentary regulations that will increase the enforceability of the basic rule, although it's not completely clear how such complimentary regulations will read. They may create a presumption that anyone with a striped bass on board who was bait fishing with anything than non-offset circle hooks (i.e., treble hooks, traditional J-hooks or offset circle hooks) caught the bass on such illegal gear; there might also be a presumption that anyone fishing with a hook exceeding a certain size was targeting striped bass. However, none of that is certain.



Buck A Member Contributors:

- CNY Wildfowlers Assn.**, Bridgeport * **Finger Lakes Conservation Club**, Waterloo
- Lima Gun Club**, Lima * **Mad River Club**, Pulaski * **Medina Conservation Club**, Medina
- Millgrove Sportsmen's Club**, Corfu * **Neighbors' Gun Club**, Rhinebeck
- Otisco Lake Rod & Gun Club**, Marietta * **Pleasant Valley Trout & Game Club**, Pleasant Valley
- Redfield Fish & Game Club**, Clay * **Salmon River Strutters**, Lacona
- South Shore Assn. of Oneida Lake**, Cicero * **Toad Harbor Rod & Gun Club**, Brewerton
- Waterloo Rifle & Pistol Club**, Waterloo * **West Albany Rod & Gun Club**, Colonie
- York Sportsman's Club**, Piffard

General Donation Contributors:

- Chautauqua Co. Federation of Sportsmen**, Ripley, **Krys & Mike Elam**, Albion
- Finger Lakes Conservation Council**, Penn Yan * **Dennis Jones**, Castile * **Patrick McBrearty**, Milford
- Zen Olow**, Fredonia * **Orleans Co. Federation of Sportsmen**, Albion
- Oswego Co. Sportsmen's Foundation**, Lycoming * **Redfield Fish & Game Club**, Clay
- St. Lawrence Co. Trapper's Assn**, Canton * **WNY Environmental Federation**, Cheektowaga
- Wyoming Co. Wildlife Federation**, Gainesville
- Yates Co. Federation of Conservation Clubs**, Penn Yan

NYSCC COMMITTEE APPLICATION

Have you submitted yours? Deadline 12-31-2020

Every year at this time the word goes out if you would like to be considered for a NYSCC committee position you must submit a committee application. This applies to both a present committee member or someone seeking a committee membership for the first time.

While there are several different committees to choose from, there is a restriction: each region can have only one voting member for each committee. There can also be up to three Associate Members on each committee. For an application and other information fill out and return the application below or go to https://nyscc483831414.files.wordpress.com/2020/01/committee_app-1.pdf. Appointments are made by the Vice Presidents and others selected by the President. and are further vetted by the Board of Directors.

Important!! Appointment to NYSCC Committees is not automatic. If you have served on a committee in the past and wish to do so again, you must re-apply each year.

Please return your completed application immediately to:

NYS Conservation Council, 8 East Main Street, Ilion, NY 13357-1899

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archery & Bowhunting | <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms & Ammunition | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish/ Marine District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forest Preserve & Public Lands | <input type="checkbox"/> Fur Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Game (Big) | <input type="checkbox"/> Game (Small) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Habitat/Access | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunter Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legislation & Lobby Team | <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterfowl |

NAME _____ REGION # _____ COUNTY _____

PHONE (home) _____ (work) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Are you interested in serving as Chair of one of the above committees?

Yes _____ (Specify) _____ No _____

Signature _____

**Affiliated Conservation Clubs
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PIATT WINS 2020 NYSOWA M. PAUL KEESLER OUTDOOR CITIZEN AWARD

By Glenn Sapir

Steve Piatt of Waverly, editor of NY Outdoor News since its inception until he retired this year, has been named recipient of the NYSOWA M. Paul Keesler New York Outdoor Citizen Award for 2020. NYSOWA made the announcement at the group's virtual meeting on Oct. 22.

The M. Paul Keesler New York Outdoor Citizen Award is presented each year to an individual or organization that effectively has raised the public's awareness of outdoor recreational opportunities and conservation issues in New York State. The award is named after the late M. Paul Keesler who spent nearly five decades promoting and conserving the outdoor wonders and recreational opportunities within New York State.

Piatt fulfills the vision of the award's founder both through his journalistic endeavors as well as with his practical mentorship of youth.

In 2004 Piatt became the founding editor of New York Outdoor News, a post he continued to man until his retirement in April of this year. Every other week for 16 years, Piatt produced information-packed publications that reported on the developments in the outdoor world, especially as it pertained to New York anglers, hunters, trappers and fish and game. Through the articles, readers learned about a myriad of outdoor recreational opportunities.

When conservation issues faced our fish and wildlife or when political issues threatened our right to hunt, fish, trap or own firearms, Piatt made sure it was addressed. He did so through reports that he either wrote or assigned to his hand-picked staff. When the information was not being disseminated in highly journalistic reports, Steve would deliver his message through his Editorial and through his award-winning "Out There" column.

The New York State Outdoor Writers Association awarded Steve its Pass It On Award in 2016 for his accomplishments to do just that, pass on the information and the skills to others to continue our outdoor heritage. Judges of the highest credentials from across the nation often judged Steve's articles "best" in NYSOWA's Excellence in Craft awards program.

Steve has not only fulfilled the criterion of the award through his writing and editing, but also through his mentoring of youngsters. He is almost always accompanying a young hunter on the youth hunting days New York holds for deer, turkey, and pheasant hunters. He teaches them the right way and at the same time exposes them to the outdoor and conservation treasures of our state.

NYS CC HAS TWO JOB OPENINGS

What better source do we have than to seek to fill positions from within our own Council members and friends.

The New York State Conservation Council is moving to a business model based on a virtual office, creating opening(s) based on this work-from-home model. Duties are best described as office managerial and operational responsibilities. Both full and part time positions are available. The combined duties include office management, record keeping, billing and renewals, preparing documents, editing and proof reading, financial record keeping, and other traditional office management duties. Individuals need not be proficient in all categories but need to be proficient in Word and Access. One individual needs to have a working knowledge of QuickBooks. Employees must be bondable. Starting pay is based on experience, with scheduled increases as the virtual office reaches full operation. For further information contact Chuck Parker at aparker@twcny.rr.com or 315-963-8413.

IMAGE AND SAFETY FOR HUNTING SEASON

Article and photo by Douglas H. Domedion

There are a number of things that can help the public's opinion of hunters. An important one is being respectful to landowners, including asking permission to hunt their property. Conduct yourself properly; this means not littering, parking to not interfere with the landowner's activities and not cutting any trees without permission. Ask about using tree stands and if it is okay to trim some tree branches or brush. Does the landowner mind if you set up trail cameras or use screw-in steps for your tree stand? What other hunters are using the property? It would be a good idea to let the landowner know what you have seen or gotten, and a friendly visit after the hunting season could help as well.

No matter where you are hunting gun safety is very important. Things like never pointing your gun in a unsafe direction, handling an "unloaded" gun as if it was loaded, being sure of your target, being aware of what's behind and in front of the deer, not leaning a gun against a vehicle (even if unloaded) and not climbing into tree stands with a gun. If you are using a tree stand don't even think about not having a fall harness on. Have a rope to haul your equipment up and down the tree. Always wear some fluorescent orange outer garment such as a hat or vest so other hunters can see you, at least while on the move. Older hunters need to slow down and be aware of what they can and cannot do anymore. Maybe a plastic sled would be helpful not only for getting gear in and out but also to haul out a deer.

There have been a few things I have noticed recently about deer hunters in our area. During the bow season there are some who seem to have trouble parking their vehicles off the highways. One case in particular stood out to me with the fellow parking most of his vehicle on the road all day, not just one day but several days in a row. This gives the public a bad impression of hunters and could cause an accident. It also makes snow plowing difficult and dangerous. Get off the roads, guys!

The other thing I noticed as I travel around with my camera is most hunters are doing a great job of not leaving a lot of trash around where they park. Wish I could say the same thing about other folks who travel through and use our "swamp" during the non-hunting period. In general we all need to be cautious and respectful while out there.

After getting your deer the work begins! How do you get it out of the woods? I've seen some really nice light, wheeled deer carriers. After I was no longer able to get my deer up on my ATV I got one of those heavy duty black plastic sleds that ice fishermen and trappers use to haul gear in. The deer was rolled into the sled and hauled back to camp with the ATV. Not only is this easier but it also protects the meat from bruising, dirt and debris as you drag it along.



So -- you got a big one and you would like to have the head mounted; what's that going to cost you? Well, prices vary but you can figure on \$400 to \$500 for a well-done full shoulder mount; but you can get it done a little cheaper if you don't mind being disappointed in a few years. There is a lot to good taxidermy work and if not done right it may look great for a few years and then the cheaper price bites you as the ears and noses crack and face features get pulled out of place by the improperly handled cape. Soon that "alive" look begins to look very dead.

If you don't want to put that much into a good shoulder mount you can consider just a skull mount where the skull with antlers attached is cleaned of all meat inside and out and then bleached. It can be hung on the wall like that or placed on a plaque.

Now what about the butchering? Again, you get what you pay for. Venison is covered with tallow, not fat. If left on the meat it can impart a bad taste even when frozen, so make sure your butcher does a good job of trimming the meat. Just because a butcher does a lot of beef butchering doesn't mean he does venison right, so check it out.

Hope everyone has a successful and safe deer season!



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