

Fall 2016



Alberta Hunter Education
Instructors' Association

Conservation Education Magazine

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in Alberta



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President's Message

Blind Etiquette

"If you are the experienced hunter in the blind, take it upon yourself to lead by example and to explain safety etiquette."

By Robert A. Gruszecki



Robert A. Gruszecki
President - AHEIA

It's that time of year where we head out with our favourite shotguns and pursue waterfowl. Little wonder why when one experiences the delicious rewards it offers. I barbecued some goose and duck poppers recently after a successful hunt using my friend Matt Shaw's special recipe. Scrumptious indeed! His recipe has appeared here in our magazine in past issues and it is worth trying.

There are tons of waterfowl hunters, and as such there are many types. Some know the rules, some don't even know that there are rules, some

don't care! These aren't the legal regulations that we all must follow; rather these are the unwritten rules that we try to adhere to in order to ensure a safe and successful excursion. Waterfowl hunting "rules" usually have something to do with how you were raised or who mentored your first few hunts. Your adherence to this set of rules can ensure your success and enjoyment. Your failure to follow them can get you exiled from the blind, uninvited for future hunts or worse — an injury to you, your hunting partners, or the dog.

Safety is absolutely the most important part of any hunt. Shooting in close quarters is something we usually avoid, but in a duck or goose blind it is something we do without a second thought. Waterfowlers, by contrast from deer hunters, often cram themselves into little confined spaces together, or in rows or pits. It is absolutely nec-

essary in such instances to be acutely aware of your surroundings and where the end of your barrel is. On a sporting clays course we have special cages that stop the muzzle of a shotgun from travelling in an unsafe direction. However, in a blind no such safety feature exists. We must rely on our knowledge and strict adherence to zones of fire. Zones of fire are boundaries that are self imposed to restrict the travel of our shotgun barrels in an unsafe direction. Before the first bird appears, determine where these safe zones are. Be absolutely disciplined not to cross the boundaries you have set. Remember that waterfowlers focus on a bird, and while that bird flies across your zone of fire it is so easy to have your barrel travel into or across another zone as

Continued ➤



Conservation Education Magazine

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Front Cover Photo by
Alberta Environment and Parks

President's Message *cont.*

you follow its path. A barrel pointed at or over another shooter's head is simply unacceptable. The muzzle blast alone can cause permanent hearing or eye damage, even if the projectiles themselves don't strike the hunter beside you.

It's easy to see how an accident can happen especially with novices in a blind. There is a high level of excitement and a huge buildup of tension until suddenly the all-clear is given to pop up and shoot. There is no careful aim, no long rest to watch carefully where to place a bullet; rather it is a moment in time when birds from all directions descend upon you, and two or more people jump up at the command to discharge their shotgun at these feathered targets. A newcomer is absolutely thrilled to see the birds cup their wings and close in. He or she is keyed up and focused on shooting a bird; safety thoughts are often secondary to the uninitiated. Nothing wrong with being excited ... in fact it's wonderful! Just remember to try and channel it, and never forsake safety. If you are the experienced hunter in the blind, take it upon yourself to lead by example and to explain safety etiquette. If you are the novice, listen, watch, and emulate good behaviour.

Some key points for your consideration:

- Everyone shooting at the same bird is just wrong! A long time ago I learned from a very wise man that it's far better to spare a bird than share a bird.
- Claiming a duck or trash talking just isn't acceptable. Make fun of someone's duct-taped waders, but never joke about someone's shooting or their dog. Many a fight has started and many feelings have been hurt over what you think is playful teasing.
- Stop worrying about being first to shoot!
- Loaded guns and excited dogs or hunters don't mix. Even a well-mannered dog can knock your gun to the ground, creating a dangerous situation.
- Let the dog owner shoot the cripples. Nobody wants to see a dog get shot. And, while on the topic of dogs, never discipline another man's dog!
- Short barrel shotguns and ported barrels are hard on ears! There are always unspent powders and other fragments that find a way out those ports.
- Don't be a sky buster. Avoid taking shots that are at marginal range. It is not sporting and it clearly results in cripples that aren't recovered. If you don't know what your effective range is, watch the others or be bold enough to ask.
- Resist the urge to give a play by play! If someone offers you peanut butter, it's because they want you to stick your tongue to the roof of your mouth.
- Don't be "That Guy" with the calls! If you are going to blow your call make sure you know how to use them. It is amazing to me that



- there is always someone that thinks they need to call at every single passing bird.
- At the end of the day, you really need your eyes and ears. Wear safety protection!
 - Be constantly aware of where the end of your barrel is and if your gun is cocked and loaded or not. Clicking the safety on and off and on and off is a worry to those around you.
 - Don't be like toast! Don't constantly "pop-up" and cause the birds to flare. If there is a guide or a mentor and you see them sitting down or with their eyes/face hidden, they are doing it for a reason. Sit still and be patient — believe it or not if you've got a good setup, there will be a lot more birds.

Waterfowl hunting from a blind is a very social type of hunting. There is opportunity for storytelling, philosophising, lying, gossip and just generally sharing in the camaraderie of the day. There is room for everyone in the blind if you follow

The Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association says:

Think!
Your Trigger Can't
Firearm Safety is for Everyone

the "rules!" You wouldn't leave home for a waterfowl hunt without your favourite shotgun; blind etiquette is every bit as important — don't leave home without it!

May all of your hunting experiences be both safe and rewarding!

Cheers!

Bob



Edmonton Report

“ We are continually trying to recruit more volunteer assistance for all of our courses, camps, events, etc. ”

By Len Gransch



Len Gransch
Program Coordinator
AHEIA
Red Deer - North

The Youth Hunter Education camps were once again a great success this year with just under 300 participants and volunteers attending. If you missed getting your youngster(s) enrolled, you can take advantage of our 2017 Advance Notification Listing. Email us at edmontoninfo@aheia.com and we will take care of the rest. These fun week-long camps help prepare next generation youngsters in their quest to become responsible hunters, future firearms owners and outdoors enthusiasts.

The Outdoor Youth Seminar was also another definite success. Please check out the article and pictures elsewhere in the magazine.

Another date to remember is June 1, 2017. We will be holding our 4th Annual Spring Fling fundraising event. Now you have lots of notice. Tickets will be available shortly.

We are continually trying to recruit more volunteer assistance for all of our courses, camps, events, etc. If you or any of your acquaintances or family members wish to become part of the AHEIA family, please let me know. Paying it forward has great personal benefits and rewards.

The majority of Canadian Firearms Program instructors are well aware that there was a program change starting on July 1, 2016. A new manual, testing materials, instructor guide and

PowerPoint presentation were all unveiled. If you are interested in seeing how the new course materials actually play out in a classroom setting, we can help. Just volunteer to assist with teaching one of our in-house classes.

If you are a CFSC instructor and have still not attended one of our Canadian Firearms Program instructor information sessions, please contact Glenn McKay at bgm@aheia.com, Chuck Strong at chuck@aheia.com, or myself at len@aheia.com to get the ball rolling.

Until next time.



*Take Care and
Enjoy the Great Outdoors!*

Want to get involved with AHEIA?
Want to teach potentially lifesaving skills?
Want to talk about boats and boating?

AHEIA is currently canvassing for instructors for our
**Pleasure Craft
Operator Training (PCOT) Course**

We have recently been approved by Transport Canada to provide training which would allow people to obtain their Pleasure Craft Operator Card. At this time we are taking names of anyone interested in teaching this course when we roll it out in the near future.

For teachers, this course will satisfy the requirement for WLD1090 in the NAT cluster in CTS.

Instructor training will be provided at no charge to those interested.

**Pleasure Craft
Operator Training**

BOATING SAFETY INSTRUCTION PRESENTED BY



Please contact Allan Orr at allan@aheia.com or 403-319-2281 for more information, or to express your interest.

14th ANNUAL

Outdoor Youth Seminar

By Len Gransch

To increase awareness of outdoor recreational opportunities, the Alberta Hunter Education Instructors' Association (AHEIA) held their 14th Annual Outdoor Youth Seminar on August 19-21, 2016. This annual event is specifically intended for young outdoor enthusiasts (ages 7 and up) and their parent(s) or guardian(s).

The seminar is a two-day event filled with fun and learning activities. Numerous experts and volunteers were on hand to share their expertise and instruction in various outdoor pursuits.



Len Gransch
Program Coordinator
AHEIA
Red Deer - North

The seminar has always been very well received and provides yet another way to get yourselves and your children in touch with the great outdoors and just a small part of the recreational opportunities that are available there.

This year we had over 130 participants and instructors gathering to try their hand at the numerous sessions offered. Safety is always at the forefront of everything we do, and this Seminar was no exception.

Some of the sessions offered were: intermediate centrefire, beginners shotgun, intermediate shotgun, practical rimfire, crossbow basics, archery, fly fishing, trapping basics, black powder shooting, survival walk, outdoor cooking, guns-guns-guns and proper handling of your game from field to freezer. We also offered some optional special Saturday

night sessions this year: making dream catchers, game calling, making a survival kit, rope making, and moose calling.

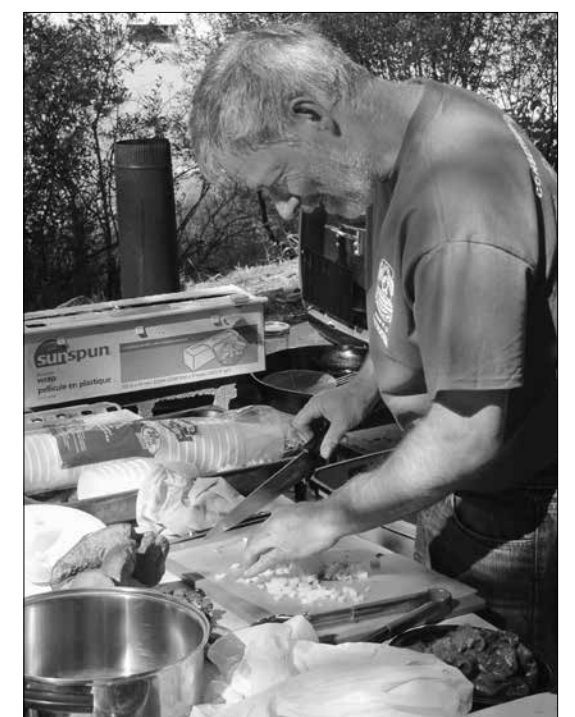


Plans are already underway for the 2017 Outdoor Youth Seminar featuring some new and exciting sessions. Don't miss out!

To get added to the Advance Notification List
call our Edmonton office at

780-466-6682

or email your request to edmontoninfo@aheia.com



B.P. Alford (1871-1958)

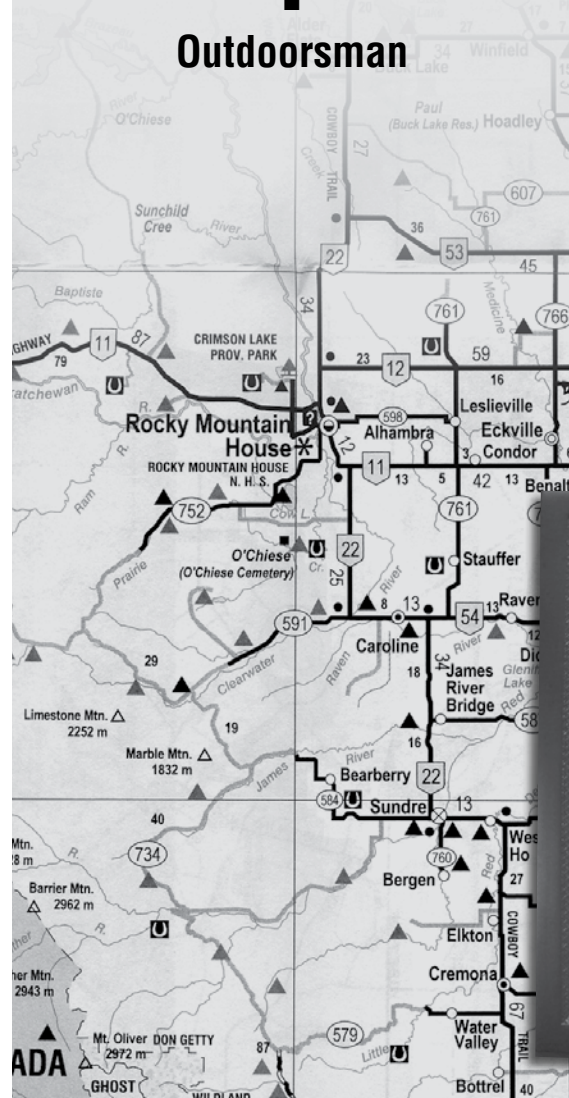
Hunter

Fisherman

Rancher

Forest Ranger

Outdoorsman



By Matt Shaw



Matt Shaw
Camp Manager
Alford Lake

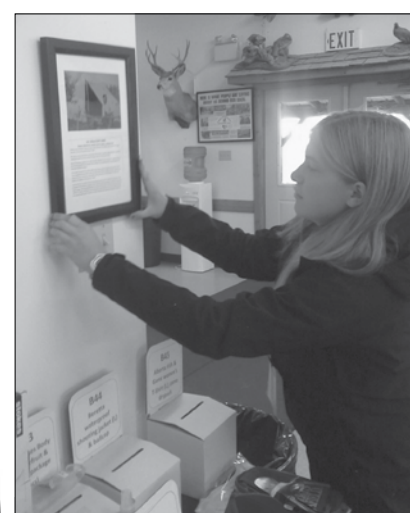
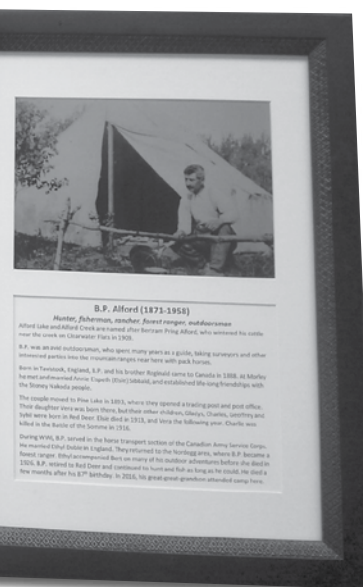
Alford Lake and Alford Creek are named after Bertram Pring Alford, who wintered his cattle near the creek on Clearwater Flats in 1909.

B.P. was an avid outdoorsman, who spent many years as a guide, taking surveyors and other interested parties into the mountain ranges with pack horses.

Born in Tavistock, England, B.P. and his brother Reginald came to Canada in 1888. At Morley he met and married Annie Elspeth (Elsie) Sibbald, and established life-long friendships with the Stoney Nakoda people.

The couple moved to Pine Lake in 1893, where they opened a trading post and post office. Their daughter Vera was born there, but their other children, Gladys, Charles, Geoffrey and Sybil were born in Red Deer. Elsie died in 1913, and Vera the following year. Charlie was killed in the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

During WWI, B.P. served in the horse transport section of the Canadian Army Service Corps. He married Ethyl Doble in England. They returned to the Nordegg area, where B.P. became a forest ranger. Ethyl accompanied Bert on many of his outdoor adventures before she died in 1926. B.P. retired to Red Deer and continued to hunt and fish as long as he could. He died a few months after his 87th birthday. In 2016, his great-great-grandson attended camp here.



Jen Kubos hanging a tribute to B.P. Alford at AHEIA's Alford Lake Conservation Education Centre for Excellence.



Firearms Education Report

2016 Outdoor Women's Program: Life on the Range

“Learn the skills, have some fun, be outdoors.”

By Glenn McKay



Glenn McKay
Firearms Education
Coordinator
AHEIA

Truer words were never spoken and although I am being somewhat biased, this summed up this year's range experience for a number of first time shooters.

On their arrival at the range, participants were met by a great group of instructors. Jim Ford and John Morrissey looked after the rimfire rifles, Sly Baier looked after the centrefire rifles, and they were followed with Brenda Steenson and Joey Gruzescski giving the participants a lesson on shotguns. Although there were some obvious butterflies, they accepted the information given to them by their in-

structors and for that they received some immediate positive results. Rimfire targets indicated trigger control and sight alignment. The ringing of the “gongs” could be heard above the sounds of the other shots, but second only to the cheers from the others watching them shoot. Laughter was the sound of the beginner shotgun range where Joey and Brenda used great skill and knowledge, mixed with humour, to help the students achieve their goal.

The afternoons were filled with a mix of first time shooters on the handgun range (John, Jim and Sly). More experienced shooters found themselves on the advanced shotgun course administered by Brenda and Allan Orr. Adding Crossbows and Blackpowder rifles (Lisa Kavanaugh and Chris Neuman) rounded out a full day of activity. There was no doubt that the winners were the students, and if the smiles and posi-

tive conversation were any indication, we managed to point the ladies on a path to enjoying the shooting sports.

If the weather, nerves and a fear of recoil could not wipe the smiles off their faces, I would say mission accomplished!!

A HUGE thanks to the instructors who gave their time, skill and experience to make this year's “Range Days” a great success!

Contact Glenn at the Calgary office,
403-319-2282 (direct line) or
via email at bgm@aeia.com.



2016 3 Gun Raffle II



Drawn June 17, 2016. License #425672.

First Prize

Browning X-Bolt Eclipse Varmint
.22-250 Remington
Won by Chris S.
Calgary, Alberta

Second Prize

Browning A-Bolt III Redfield Scope Combo
Won by Roxanne C.
Bonnyville, Alberta

Third Prize

Browning BL-22 Grade II Lever Action Rimfire
Won by Cory G.
Calgary, Alberta



Chris S. (left),
Glenn McKay presenting.



Cory G. (left),
Glenn McKay presenting.



23rd ANNUAL

Outdoor Women's Program

By Jessica Holt

On August 3-7, 2016 A.H.E.I.A. celebrated our 23rd Annual Outdoor Women's Program, with 148 participants and 50 volunteers. Over the five day period, 35 different sessions were held during the day and a variety of evening sessions were held as well.



Jessica Holt

Held at the Alford Lake Conservation Education Centre for Excellence, the first session of the Outdoor Women's Program took place in 1993 and it has grown in popularity ever since. Women participate at their own speed and level of interest and are welcome to try their hands at everything from fly fishing, shooting and backing up a trailer, to outdoor survival. Classes run approximately three hours and cover topics such as using a GPS, how to handle a canoe, outdoor cooking, and firing various firearms. Patient and knowledgeable instructors encourage each woman towards her own level of confidence and competence with each new skill.

Many thanks to the 50 instructors who came out and donated their time for the Outdoor Women's Program. Without your assistance, this program would not be possible. As always, the feedback from the participants has been very positive, but let the quotes speak for themselves. Thank you for another great year!

**Mark your calendar for next year's Outdoor Women's Program
August 9-13, 2017!**

Registration forms will be available online at www.aheia.com by May 2017. Email edmontoninfo@aheia.com to have your name put on the express notification list!

If you are interested in volunteering at this Program, or any other A.H.E.I.A. Program, please contact Dave Paplawski at 1-403-252-8474 or email dave@aheia.com.

Photos courtesy of Matt Shaw.

"Everyone was so incredibly patient and friendly. Thank you so much to all the instructors who gave up their time to teach us new things. I left feeling so much more confident in myself and my skills."



Program Sessions:

- Advanced Hunting - Big Game Animals
- Advanced Hunting - Migratory Bird
- Archery
- Arrow Crafting
- Backpacking 101
- Building a Survival Bracelet
- Canadian Firearms Course
- Canoeing - Basic
- Crossbows - Getting Started
- Firearms Basics - Guns, Guns, Guns
- Fly Fishing
- Fly Tying
- Geocaching
- Get Out Alive!
- Handguns
- Introduction to ATVing
- Knife and Axe Sharpening
- Let's Go Bowhunting
- Longbow Building
- Making Leather Moccasins
- Primitive Muzzleloading
- Photography Outdoors
- Predator Awareness
- Shotgun II
- Stranded on the Road
- The Real Mantracker
- The Science of Fishing
- Trailering
- Walk on the Wild Side
- Wild Plants and Animals for Health
- Wilderness Cuisine
- Wilderness Identification
- Wilderness Survival (Basic) - Part 1
- Wilderness Survival (Basic) - Part 2

"Overall excellent program that is run very effectively. This was my first year and I was impressed. The instructors were all fantastic!"

2016 Outdoor Women's Program Statistics:

Average age of participants – 42 years old.

Oldest Participant – 84 years old.

Youngest Participant – 13 years old.

55% of the attendees were first time registrants.

Two ladies have attended the program over 20 times!

More OWP photos on the following pages ➤

23rd Annual Outdoor Women's Program *cont.*



“ Thank you very, very much.
I had an amazing, rich, learning time. Every day was so good.
I enjoyed the care, kindness, availability of instructors
and sincere expertise.
As a novice in these areas — guns, hunting, archery, skinning —
and new to the Alberta outdoors community,
I felt supported to learn at every step of the way.
Thank you! ”



“ I have to say that
I look forward to this week
sooo much,
because it is a week that
I feel is all about me
and what adventures
I would like to try.
You can't beat the price,
and the memories
of a lifetime! ”



“Amazing overall experience. Looking forward to next year!”



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News and Special Events via email?

Send your email address to info@aheia.com.
Your email address will not be given out and our database is not shared.
Special events and notices are sent from the President only.

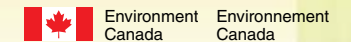
The Alberta Hunter Education
Instructors' Association

would like to thank

Wildlife Habitat Canada



The *Outdoor Youth Camps & Seminar*
project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été entrepris avec l'appui financier de:



Since 1985, Wildlife Habitat Canada, a national, non-profit, charitable
conservation organization, has invested over \$50 million to support
hundreds of conservation projects on private and public lands across
Canada, through its granting program. Wildlife Habitat Canada works
through partnerships with communities, landowners, governments,
non-government organizations, and industry to conserve, enhance,
and restore wildlife habitat. To learn more about the projects that
Wildlife Habitat Canada has funded or to see our annual report, please
visit www.whc.org.

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Scenes from the **AHEIA Youth Hunter Education Camps**

July 3-8, 10-15, 17-22 and 24-29, 2016



The Youth Hunter Education Camps were once again a great success this year with just under 300 participants and volunteers attending.



These fun week-long camps help prepare next generation youngsters in their quest to become responsible hunters, future firearms owners and outdoors enthusiasts.



Tigers in Alberta!

"... three lakes were selected for the initial stocking of approximately 20,000 Tiger Trout in hopes of giving anglers a new opportunity of catching this fierce fighting fish."

By Sarah Long



Sarah Long
Assistant Conservation
Education Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - North

Well, now that I've caught your attention, I'm talking Tiger Trout. I know this isn't exactly new to a lot of the fishing community, but it sure was new to me! When I heard about the stocking program of this new species in Alberta, I was intrigued and wanted to learn more. So for those of you who, like

me, may get left in the dark from time to time, here is what I have learned.

First of all, what is a Tiger Trout? A Tiger Trout is the sterile, hybridized offspring of a female Brown Trout and a male Brook Trout. This cross-breeding is a rarity in nature as Brook Trout have 84 chromosomes and the Brown Trout have 80. Hatcheries have perfected the making of this Franken-fish, however, and have found that heat shocking the fertilized eggs causes the creation of an extra set of chromosomes, which in turn, significantly increases the survival rates of the new hatchlings.

Alright, so now I know what it is ... How do I know I'm looking at one? These fish have wavy lines (also known as vermiculations) running all over their bodies. It almost resembles a worm's trail in the sand. They have an orange belly, with their pectoral, pelvic, and anal fins showing the same colorations. The dorsal fin is square with the same vermiculations that are found on their

bodies. They really are quite a handsome looking fish in my opinion, and if I were to catch a good-sized one, I would happily mount and display it in my own home.

Fisheries and Oceans has launched a stocking program of Tiger Trout in Alberta. In October of 2015, three lakes were selected for the initial stocking of approximately 20,000 Tiger Trout in hopes of giving anglers a new opportunity of catching this fierce fighting fish. It may even provide some relief to our other native species that are under a bit of pressure, as well as boosting the economy in the selected stocking areas.

Black Nugget Lake (near Tofield), East Twin Lake (located in the Peace County), and Lower Chain Lake (west of Athabasca) are now under a two year monitoring program to observe the behavioral patterns, growth, and survival rate of the new inhabitants. Angler effort, catch rate, and any ecological effects to the aquatic community are being monitored as well.

"... the US holds the world record for the biggest Tiger Trout caught: a 20lb, 13oz fish caught in Lake Michigan on August 12, 1978. The second biggest Tiger was more recently caught on Bonaparte Lake near Tonasket, Washington on May 5, 2015. It weighed in at an impressive 18.49 lbs."

The stocking of Tiger Trout isn't new. The United States has been introducing and stocking them in river systems and lakes as early as the 1960s. In fact, the US holds the world record for the biggest Tiger Trout caught: a 20lb, 13oz fish caught in Lake Michigan on August 12, 1978. The second biggest Tiger was more recently caught on Bonaparte Lake near Tonasket, Washington on May 5, 2015. It weighed in at an impressive 18.49 lbs.

The monitoring program should be finished by next year and I am curious to see what the findings are and if I will be seeing any Tigers around the Edmonton area any time soon. It's mostly in hopes that I may drop in a line and pull out a Tiger of my very own.



Photo courtesy United States Geological Survey

Ice Fishing Season is Right Around the Corner

... and there are a number of fishing lines on the market made specifically for the sport.

Mono

Trilene Micro Ice

This is a low-stretch mono for increased sensitivity and more solid hook-ups. Best mono choice for use in ice shelters. The preferred mono choice of the serious ice fishing angler. Three colours available:

- Clear steel. Low-vis underwater, good contrast against ice and snow.
- Red. High angler visibility.
- New Solar. Famous Berkley colour now in Trilene Micro Ice. Great visibility, and some anglers believe the chartreuse colour actually may attract some panfish to the fishing area.

Trilene Cold Weather

Cold Weather has been formulated to stay ultra-flexible even in the coldest weather conditions. This is the best mono choice for open ice fishing, with no shelters. This line does have a bit more stretch than micro ice, but the low memory design enables good handling and low tangles and coils. Two colours available:

- Electric Blue. Bright blue colour, easy to see over ice and snow.
- New Fluorescent Clear/Blue. Glows blue in sunlight to see over ice and snow, lower vis underwater as sunlight is filtered away.

Fluorocarbon

NEW Trilene 100% Fluorocarbon Ice

Field testers have remarked that this is quite possibly the best fluorocarbon yet developed for ice fishing. Has remarkable handling and low memory for such a strong, thin, sensitive fluorocarbon.

This is a special formula of Trilene 100% Fluorocarbon — different than the warm-weather version. This version has thinner diameter and lower stretch. The thinner diameter provides greater lure control. The lower stretch means greater sensitivity and solid hooksets. Of course, since it is 100% fluorocarbon, it is the ultimate in invisibility for finicky, pressured fish.

Braided Superline

FireLine Micro Ice and FireLine Crystal Micro Ice

In many cases, nothing works better than FireLine through the ice! FireLine has virtually no stretch for incredible sensitivity. 100% Dyneema® fibers are braided and fused to create an ice line with break strength off the charts — so that if the big surprise fish hits, you can land it with confidence. Crystal goes down to size 1, 2 and 3 for ultra-thin diameter presentations.

NEW! Uni-Filament NanoFil

NanoFil is not available in a specific ice fishing put-up. 125 yards is the smallest length. NanoFil is outstanding as an ice fishing line. Since it is not a braid, it does not pick up water like braids, resulting in low amounts of ice build-up. Any ice that collects on the line is easily knocked off. It is the thinnest diameter Berkley line, which results in the lowest visibility of any non-stretch line in the 1, 2, and 3 lb. sizes — even less visible underwater than FireLine Crystal. Ultra-thin diameter and zero stretch gives you unsurpassed sensitivity and lure control — especially effective with tiny baits. Made with 100% Dyneema® fibers, yet not braided; there is no ice line available with such great strength at such tiny diameters.



The APOS Hunting Heroes Program

Sponsored by the Alberta Professional Outfitters Society to honour our heroes, the men and women of the Canadian military, who have sacrificed so much on our behalf.

This initiative matches up wounded Canadian veterans with Alberta's professional outfitters to partake in a professionally guided hunting experience.

For more information contact APOS at 780-414-0249 or via email at info@apos.ab.ca

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Fire, Accident and Theft: Is Your Outdoor Gear Protected?

**"... three principles we outdoor people should use to protect our gear:
good warranties, strong preventative measures and adequate insurance."**

By Al Voth
© February 25, 2016

Bad things can happen to good gear. Like the time, about four years ago, while on a hunting trip, I managed to wrap my truck around a tree.

When the truck came to its sudden stop, inertia dictated that everything inside the vehicle keep going until contacting a solid object. I was lucky in that the two rifles in the box suffered no discernable damage. The only equipment casualty, other than the truck, was a binocular knocked out of alignment. Being a Leupold product, it was quickly repaired under warranty. The truck was, of course, insured, and later determined to be a write-off. I braced myself for the bad news as to how much extra I was going to have to shell out for new wheels. After all, insurance companies never pay out what a vehicle is "really" worth to the owner.

"Hmmm," said the insurance agent on the phone. "I see you have a depreciation clause on that truck." "I do?" This was news to me.

"Yes. And if the accident occurred within three years of you buying it, then we'll pay you exactly what you paid for the truck. No depreciation." I knew the truck was about three years old, but unable to recall the exact date of purchase, I quickly dove into my filing cabinet. "How long have you owned the truck?" she asked.

The yellow invoice sheet told the tale. "Two years and 11 months," I said.



Firearms are particularly in demand among thieves.

Her voice turned gritty. "Okay. Then we'll write you a cheque for exactly what you paid for the truck. And I've checked your claim record. We can't even raise your rates because you've been accident free for so long."

Dodged that bullet. Twice! So, with the truck replaced and the binocular fixed, I was back hunting with minimal cost. I'd like to say it was because of careful planning on my part, but dumb luck is the real reason. However, the story does

illustrate two of the three principles we outdoor people should use to protect our gear: good warranties, strong preventative measures and adequate insurance.

Good Warranties

Like most people, I occasionally break things. Sometimes it's my fault. Sometimes it's just bad gear. A really good manufacturer's warranty will cover both of those eventualities and it's something I look for in every purchase. As with the previously mentioned binocular, good warranties are easy to find in the optics industry, but even then the level of service will vary.

I once had two rifle scopes go south in the same week. They were from two different manufacturers, so I figured I'd do a test. I boxed up both, taking them to the post office on the same trip. Just over a week later I had a replacement scope from one manufacturer, and about four months after that a replacement arrived from the other company. Both replaced their defective product, but in vastly different time frames.

Warranties are notorious for fine print; like being non-transferable, requiring proof of purchase, or transferable only if a form is completed. It's worth paying attention to those details and I think it's worth buying products from companies with great warranty service.



Bad things can happen to good gear.
Like the time, about four years ago, while on a hunting trip, I managed to wrap my truck around a tree.



If you use firearms, it's also important to have liability insurance for all your hunting and shooting activities.

Strong Preventative Measures

I've never been the victim of a fire or a major theft, but I've seen the results of those events enough to be a little paranoid about them happening to me. Firearms are particularly in demand among thieves, and the law requires we store them safely. The legally required standard is insufficient to protect them from a serious thief, but then a really serious thief will access them no matter how securely they are stored. You have to find the level of security which fits your own budget and needs.

I choose to store firearms to a higher level of security than the law requires, including having an intrusion alarm. It's also why I have more smoke alarms than required by the building code, including remotely monitored ones.

Technology is definitely your friend when it comes to protecting outdoor gear. There are GPS trackers available which you can attach to boats, quads or snow machines. If the item is stolen, an app on your smart-phone will quickly pinpoint its location. Additionally, those trail cameras we all use can also protect our gear and our homes in the off-season. Point them at whatever area you want to monitor and besides just recording activity at that site, some versions will also send a photo to your phone whenever movement is detected, allowing you to monitor things in real time.

Adequate Insurance

Fire, theft and accident also prompt me to make sure I have enough insurance on my outdoor gear and sufficient liability coverage for my hunting and shooting activities. An insurance check is something I think every outdoorsman should do occasionally. How much insurance you need depends, of course, on how valuable your gear is.

Insurance experts tell me most home insurance policies cover firearms as part of the personal property underwritten by the policy. But if your guns are worth more than what can realistically be covered by your policy, then you'll need to specifically add them as a "scheduled" item. Which simply means you have to list them and perhaps be prepared to present a purchase receipt or a certified appraisal to establish value. You'll also have to pay extra, often around one dollar per thousand dollars of coverage.

One of the advantages of this type of insurance, is that guns are usually covered for accidental damage as well. A friend carries this kind of insurance and he once dropped a custom rifle and broke its fancy wood stock at the pistol grip. His insurance company paid for a custom stock maker to fashion a new stock from a slab of exhibition grade walnut. It wasn't cheap. But neither is the insurance. The bottom line is, you need to discuss your insurance needs with your broker and find what level of protection is right for you.

However, if you use firearms, there's one other level of insurance I think you need to consider. While losing guns to fire, theft or accidental damage can run up some steep bills, the numbers involved pale in comparison to those tossed around in law suits. If property gets damaged or someone gets hurt as a result of your hunting or shooting activities, a civil suit has the potential to wipe you out financially. Which is why I think it's also important to have liability insurance for all your hunting and shooting activities.

Fortunately, the sporting use of firearms is so safe, this insurance is dirt cheap. The best rates I know of for this type of insurance are offered by firearm organizations like the National Firearms Association or the Canadian Shooting Sports Association. For example, the National Firearms Association is currently offering \$5 million worth of coverage for \$9.95 per year. For that price, I think it's a no-brainer.



Those trail cameras we all use can also protect our gear and our homes in the off-season.



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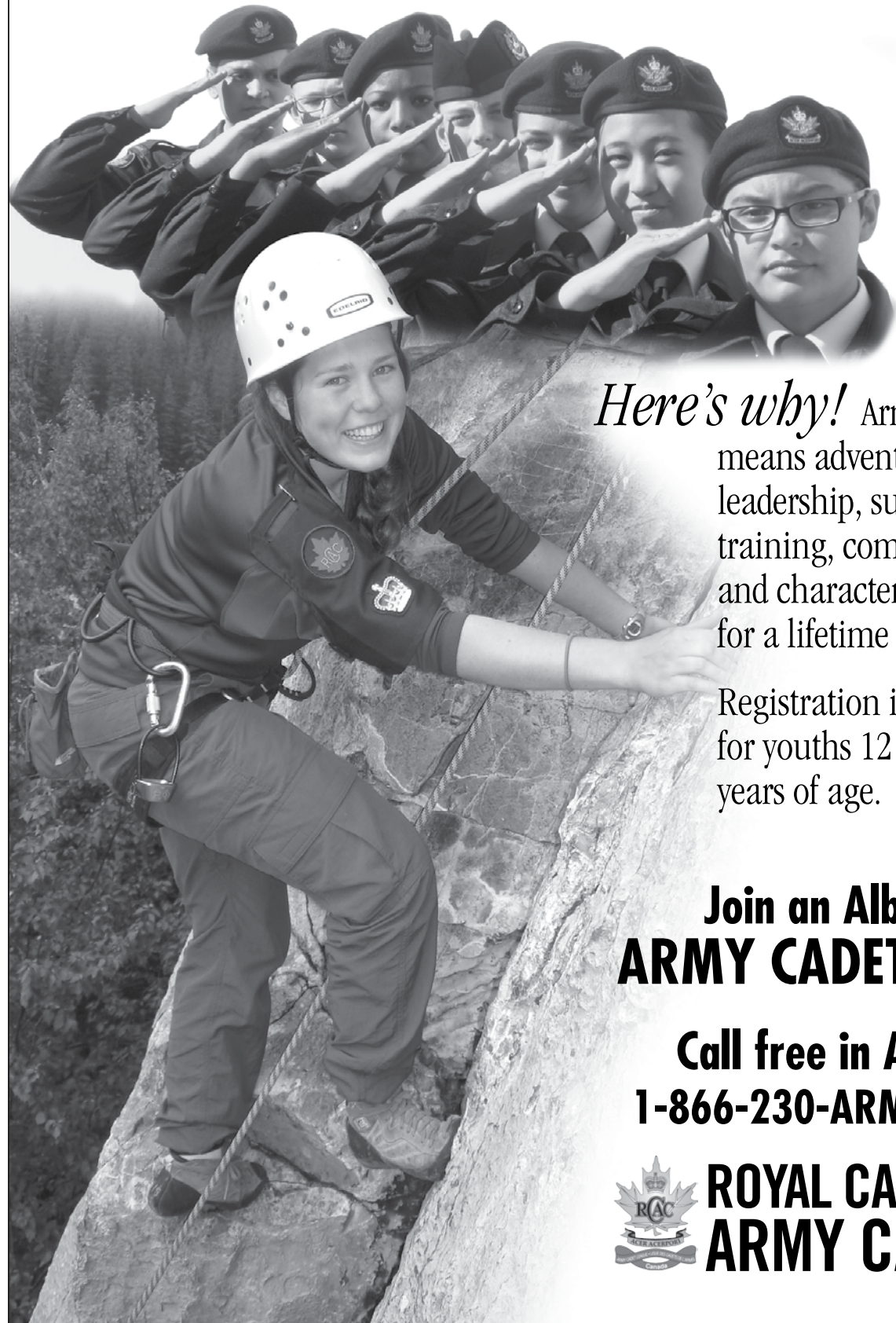
Technology is your friend when it comes to protecting outdoor gear. There are GPS trackers available which you can attach to boats, quads or snow machines.

No question, our outdoor gear is expensive and therefore it requires protection. Consider that protection to be like a three-legged stool, with warranties, prevention measures and insurance making up the legs. When all three are in place, you've got solid support.



No question, our outdoor gear is expensive and therefore it requires protection.

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"A well maintained and tuned bow will allow you to shoot with confidence and consistency ... It is our responsibility as ethical hunters to shoot within our effective range and to do our best to make a quick, clean kill."

In Tune With Your Compound Bow

By Glen Pickering



Glen Pickering
Assistant Conservation
Education Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - South

Whether you are a seasoned shooter or just starting to get into archery, tuning your bow is one of the most important aspects to help ensure accuracy and consistency. Each time you pick up your bow, check the condition of the string, limbs and all other components that are attached to make sure they are in good working order and have not come loose. A few weeks before you intend on heading out hunting, it is important to take the time to properly tune your bow and spend time practicing in order to learn what your maximum effective range is (the ability to consistently group three arrows into a three-inch circle). The objective of establishing your maximum effective range is to ensure you will make a quick, clean kill on the quarry you will be hunting.

If you are just getting into archery, your first two concerns will be getting measured for your correct draw length, and determining what draw weight you will be comfortable shooting at in various positions (simulating hunting condi-

tions). It is important to check your bow every year to make sure your string has not stretched or needs to be adjusted for your draw length. Once you have determined your draw length/weight, you will start the tuning process by choosing an arrow with the correct length and spine (stiffness of arrow shaft). This can be easily determined by looking at the arrow manufacturer's spine chart and picking the correct arrow for the weight at which you draw your bow.

Once you have decided on the type of arrow rest you want to use, you will need a bow square to set the height of your nock or string loop. Setting your arrow rest height and adjusting your nock point correctly will prevent fletching contact and will keep your arrow level during flight. Next you will want to set your rest in the centre of your riser handle, lining it up with your string to prevent your arrow from wobbling left or right during flight. Newer bows may have marks or grooves to help you align your rest with your string. During test firing, you can use lipstick or baby powder to check to see if there is any fletching contact with your rest. Final adjustments to fletching alignment can be made by using push in nocks, allowing you to easily turn your shaft.

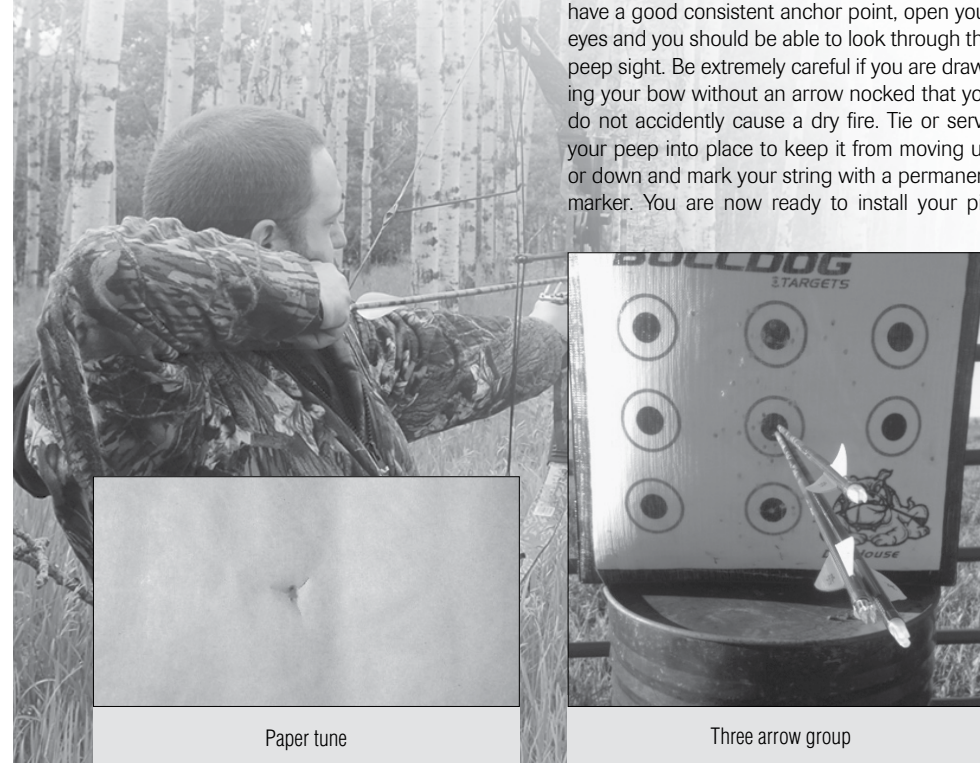
Installing a peep sight and setting the height can be accomplished by drawing your bow to your anchor point with your eyes closed. When you have a good consistent anchor point, open your eyes and you should be able to look through the peep sight. Be extremely careful if you are drawing your bow without an arrow nocked that you do not accidentally cause a dry fire. Tie or serve your peep into place to keep it from moving up or down and mark your string with a permanent marker. You are now ready to install your pin

sights. Initial set up for the height of your first pin can be a bit of a guess and you can adjust your left/right alignment by lining up the end of your pin sight with your string and the centre of your rest. You should now be close to hitting centre when firing at a large target with a good back stop at 10 yards. Practice with good shooting techniques until you are able to get a good grouping, then move back to 20 yards and set your first pin for the correct elevation and windage. Once you become consistent at that distance, move back 10 yards and set your next pin, keeping in mind your maximum effective range.

Fine tuning or paper tuning your bow is the final stage of ensuring consistent shot placement and shrinking your group size to match your shooting potential. Watching your arrow while in flight can help you make your final adjustments, but without lighted nocks this can be difficult to see with the speed of today's compound bows. The simplest way to observe how your arrow is traveling toward the target is to shoot it through paper at 7-10 yards and see how your arrow tears the paper as the point and how the fletching passes through. Assuming good shooting form and a good release, you should be able to produce a hole made from the shaft with three concentric fletching tears around that hole. Looking at how the arrow tears the paper will tell you if you need to adjust your nock point up or down, or move your rest left or right. (Always ensure a safe back stop when shooting through paper.) At this point, if you are having difficulty getting that nice concentric tear, the first thing you want to check is that your arrows have the correct spine for your bow, especially if you have just adjusted your draw weight. Last, but not least, check your cam wheels for lean or timing issues; this usually requires a pro shop to make some adjustments using a bow press. Depending on what type of broadheads you are using, this same process may need to be repeated once they are put on, but try rotating the inserts first and align your blades with your fletching. Bow tuning can be time consuming and at times frustrating, so take advantage of all the expertise that is available.

A well maintained and tuned bow will allow you to shoot with confidence and consistency, if you spend the time perfecting your shooting techniques and practice well before the season starts. It is our responsibility as ethical hunters to shoot within our effective range and to do our best to make a quick, clean kill.

AHEIA offers the International Bowhunter Education Program and the National Archery in Schools Program to help you get started.



Paper tune

Three arrow group

Firearms Ballistics: Terminal Ballistics

"... what happens to the bullet and, more importantly, what effect the bullet has on the target, when it hits and enters an animal."

By Allan Orr



Allan Orr
Assistant Conservation
Education Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - South

We have been exploring ballistics in the last couple of issues and now it's time to bring the series to an end with a discussion on terminal ballistics. Although other ballistic categories exist, the three most commonly discussed are internal ballistics (what happens to the bullet inside the gun),

external ballistics (what happens to the bullet as it flies through the air), and terminal ballistics (what happens to the bullet and, more importantly, what effect the bullet has on the target, when it hits and enters an animal). With that in mind, let's take a look at terminal ballistics

Rapid death in an animal occurs only through brain death. The more quickly the hunter can cause the brain of an animal to cease functioning, the more quickly and more humane is the kill. Some people reading this might think that I am going to talk about head and/or neck shots being the preferred target zone. In fact, I do not recommend trying head or neck shots for all but the most practiced and experienced hunters, due to the relatively small size of the target and the possibility of a miss or a wounding shot. Brain death obviously occurs when a bullet enters the brain or the upper spine. Another method of producing brain death nearly as quickly is to cause massive hemorrhaging by doing considerable damage to a vital organ or three. The more quickly we can have the blood drain out of the animal's brain, the more quickly it will die through loss of blood pressure.

As any hunter knows though, an animal hit in "The Vitals" can easily run for a number of metres even though it has been hit with a non-survivable shot. I recall my (at the time) 13 year old son shooting a white-tailed buck which ran about 50 metres after being hit. He jumped straight up in the air about 2½ metres (the buck, that is) and came down on his head, stone cold dead. Upon opening him up, we saw that the shot had destroyed the animal's heart, lungs and liver. It was a perfect shot that caused massive hemorrhag-

ing bringing the animal's blood pressure to zero and causing rapid (but not instant) brain death.

The forces that caused that massive hemorrhaging are twofold. The first is easily understandable and is called a permanent cavity. This is the "hole" that the bullet makes as it travels through the animal's body. This channel can be followed using a small piece of doweling to determine the path of the bullet. I used that technique several times in my previous life to recover bullets for forensic analysis. The permanent cavity shows the damage to the internal organs, the muscles, the skeleton and the hide. This is where the majority of the massive hemorrhaging comes from.

Lesser known is the hydrodynamic effect that causes temporary cavitation. This temporary cavitation is caused by the transfer of kinetic energy from the bullet into the animal. This energy transfer results in a rapid expansion of soft tissue inside the animal. The rapid expansion causes secondary trauma to soft tissue and organs and can lead to further hemorrhaging or destruction. Temporary cavitation is most effective when a hit is taken in the internal organs. Taken in a large muscle mass (hind quarters for example) a bullet's ability to create a temporary cavity is lessened, as is the effect of that cavitation. The greatest effect of temporary cavitation is on "non-elastic" organs such as heart, lungs and liver. As any hunter knows, intestines, stomachs and other "gut pile" organs tend to be very elastic and therefore not susceptible to the temporary cavitation effect.

So boiling this all down, it seems that the most effective method for a rapid kill of an animal is to kill their brain. The most effective method for killing their brain is to eliminate blood pressure. The most effective method of eliminating blood pressure is to interrupt the flow of blood to the brain by causing massive hemorrhaging. The most effective method of causing massive hemorrhaging is to deliver a high powered bullet to the non-elastic vitals (heart, lungs and liver) which have a high blood flow. These non-elastic vitals are damaged by both the permanent and the temporary cavitation caused by the bullet's entry into the animal, effectively multiplying the effectiveness of the bullet simply by placing it in a strategic location.

There are many discussions on terminal ballistics on the internet. Like most things, there are opposing views. I have touched on only the most basic aspects of terminal ballistics in order to introduce you to the topic. For further study, simply Google "terminal ballistics" and book off the next several days!

As always, I can be reached at allan@aheia.com if you have questions, comments or concerns.



Photo courtesy Don Kesler Nature Photography.



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Great Meals

from the

Harvest

with Len Gransch



Len Gransch
Program Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - North

Breaded Baked Fish *Courtesy Sarah Long*

4 fillets of any white fish (walleye, sole, haddock, etc.)
¾ cup milk
¾ cup bread crumbs
¼ teaspoon dried thyme, ground
2 teaspoons salt
¼ cup parmesan cheese, grated
¼ cup butter, melted

Preheat oven to 500°F. Mix milk and salt in a small bowl. In a separate bowl mix bread crumbs, parmesan cheese and thyme. Dip the fish fillets in the milk mixture, then press into the crumbs to coat. Place fillets on a baking dish and drizzle with the melted butter. Bake on the top rack for approximately 15 minutes or until the fish flakes easily.

This is a simple, delicious recipe that can be easily modified and added to, so go ahead and get creative! Bon appetite and enjoy!

Deep Dish Meat Pie *Courtesy Len Gransch*

Filling:

1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 cup carrots, sliced
½ cup onion, grated
¼ cup green peppers, chopped
1 tablespoon butter
2 cups venison, cubed
1½ cups beef broth
¼ teaspoon dried thyme
⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons cold water
⅓ cup cheddar cheese, shredded
2 tablespoons parsley, minced

Topping:

1½ pounds potatoes, peeled and cubed
3 garlic cloves, minced
½ cup milk
1 tablespoon butter
¼ teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
½ teaspoon salt
⅛ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Topping: Cook potatoes in boiling water until tender. Drain and mash. Add the garlic, milk, butter, rosemary, salt, pepper and cayenne pepper, and combine. Set aside.

Filling: In a large skillet sauté mushrooms, carrots, onion and green peppers until tender. Add the venison, broth, thyme and nutmeg. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium. Cover and simmer for 25-30 minutes or until the meat and vegetables are tender.

Combine the flour and water into a smooth paste. Stir into skillet and bring to a boil. Cook for about 2 minutes, stirring constantly until thickened. Transfer to a greased 2 quart baking dish (deep style). Spread the potato topping mix evenly over the top of the meat mixture. Bake uncovered at 350°F for 30-40 minutes until bubbly. Sprinkle with cheese and bake for a further 5 minutes or until the cheese is melted. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Serve with your favourite salad and some crusty buns. Enjoy!

How to Take Your Best Shot: Mental Program, Trigger Release and Follow Through

"Once you've trained this way at the range, you'll find your confidence and accuracy on operations, while hunting or in competition, will also improve."

By Linda K. Miller
MilCun Training Center



Linda K. Miller
MilCun Training Center

Everybody has heard of marksmanship principles, few have heard what they really mean. Here are the ones we use when we teach our rifle marksmanship courses.

The slide we show at the beginning of the marksmanship lecture says it all:

Marksmanship Principles

Position and holding pattern

Alignment - natural body alignment

Sight picture and breath control

❖Mental program

Trigger release & follow through

But the devil is in the details and we take our time going through the marksmanship principles, first in the classroom and then out on the range.

Last issue, we talked about "Sight Picture and Breath Control." Now, we move on to the final marksmanship principles.

PAS*T: "★" is for Mental Program

We used to teach the Mental Program as part of more advanced shooting, but we soon realized that it is a fundamental of accurate marksmanship and it's important to get in the habit of it as early as you can.

The mental program is a series of thoughts that help you control the repeatability of each shot you fire. Basically, its purpose is to keep the conscious mind busy and on task while the subconscious mind takes over for a few micro-seconds and controls the details of firing the shot. We teach two mental programs which can be tuned to the individual. For the deliberate shot we use: "Breathe and relax; correct target; level; sight picture ... sight picture ... sight picture." If you're using iron sights, modify your mental program slightly to make sure you're keeping the front

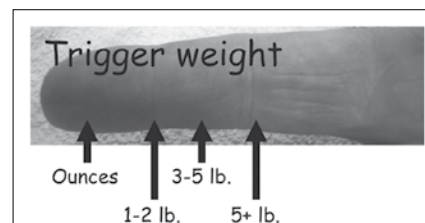
and rear sights aligned: for example, "Breathe and relax; correct target; level; align-sight-align-sights-align." For a snap shot (on demand), we use "Target; sight; cycle." If you're using a semi-automatic rifle, the mental program for the snap shot would be "Target; sight; reset."

This mental program is magical. It enables the shooter to focus on task, forget everything else and fire the best possible shot. It takes practice, so we introduce it right on the first day of our courses, and we reinforce it during all the range training. It takes about 21 days of practice for the mental program to work automatically for you. When I was on the National Smallbore team, my coach told me not to change my mental program within six weeks of an important competition. It takes practice and time for it to become a habit.

PAS*T: "T" is for Trigger Release and Follow Through

We teach "situational trigger control." If you have a light trigger (1-pound pull weight or less), use the fingertip. If you have a normal hunting rifle trigger (2- to 4-pound), use the finger from the first to the second joint. If you're using an AR-10 with a 5-pound plus trigger, then put as much finger as you can on the trigger. It's all about leverage. You have more strength as you move from the tip to the middle of the finger. The more strength you can apply smoothly and gently, the more likely you are to keep your sight on the target and take advantage of that beautiful holding pattern you worked so hard to achieve.

This is usually the one thing that our new students find the most strange and the most beneficial. If you haven't tried it, you're missing out on one of the great secrets of accurate marksmanship.



We teach "situational trigger control" ... the heavier the trigger, the more finger you need.

Follow through is what happens from the moment you initiate trigger movement until all the movement of the rifle stops. The first bit of it is trigger follow through ... for better accuracy, you need to continue holding back the trigger during follow through.

You need to keep watching the sight picture throughout the shot. There are two things you need to know: where exactly were the crosshairs when the rifle fired; and where did the sight move during the shot. The first item tells you where the shot should have landed and is called, "calling the shot". This is important in police and military operations for obvious reasons, but it is also important when you're practicing on paper targets. You need to know where the shot should be in order to figure out whether your system is performing properly.

The second thing (knowing where the sight moved during the recoil) is an important part of "recoil management" and it will help you diagnose your position.

So there you are, back at "Position and holding pattern" ... repeat until you have the accuracy you need.

When you're ready to learn position shooting (kneeling and offhand and various supported positions), you'll know what you're looking for to produce the best possible shot.

Once you've trained this way at the range, you'll find your confidence and accuracy on operations, while hunting or in competition, will also improve. Even when you don't have time for all the pretty details, your body will automatically do whatever it can to prove that "what you do in training, you'll do under stress".

Linda K. Miller and Keith A. Cunningham are well-known instructors and competitors, and authors of *The Wind Book for Rifle Shooters* and *The Secrets of Mental Marksmanship*. Both books are both available at www.amazon.ca and <http://theshootingedge.com>.



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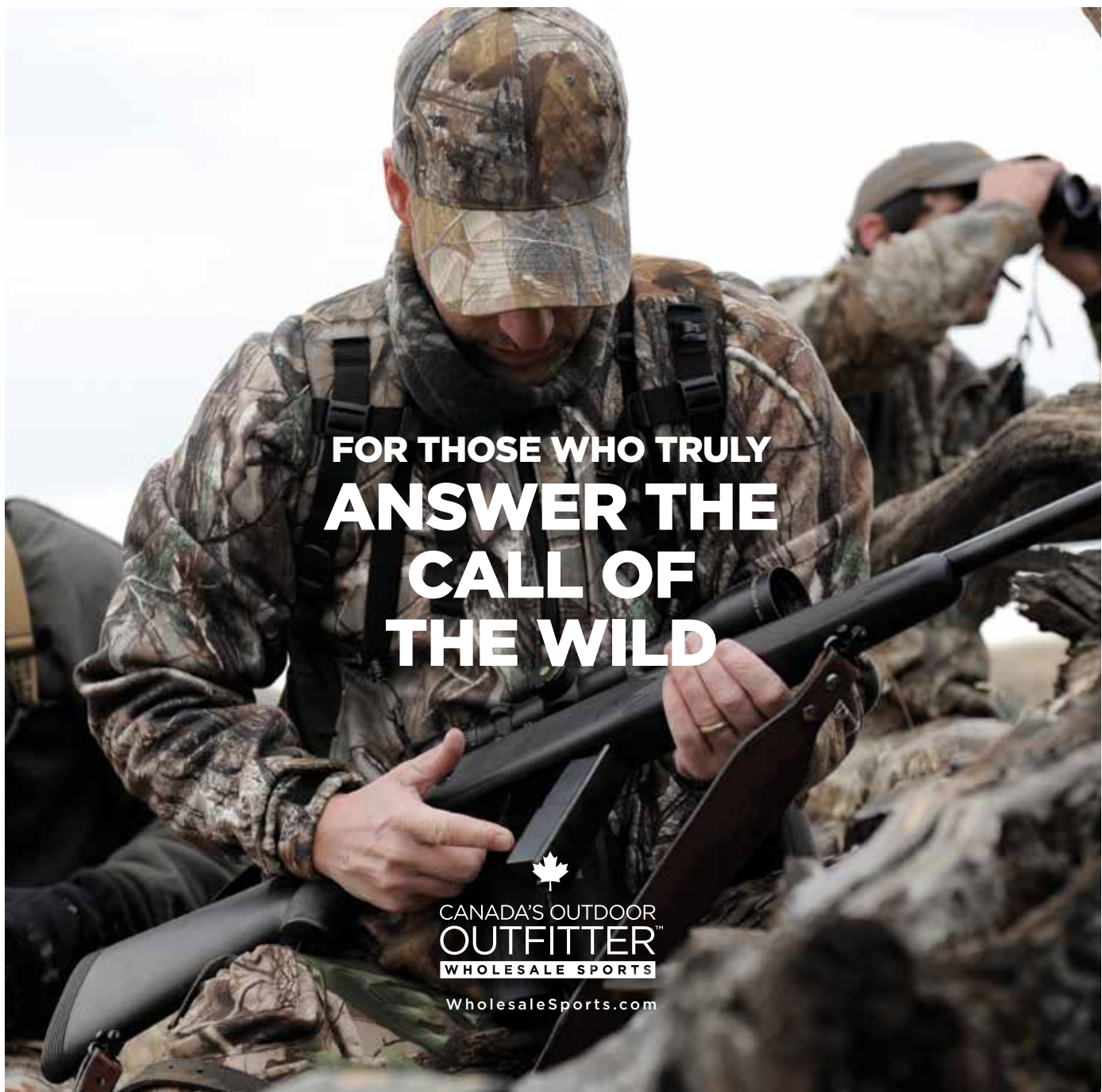
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