

DNR Shares Instructions for Field Dressing Deer Safely and Efficiently

Congratulations! You got a deer! Though the thrill of the hunt is over, the effort made now to safely and correctly process your deer will ensure tasty venison for your table in the coming months.

Many hunters have performed this procedure before, having learned by watching others or by trial and error. This year, whether you may be taking your first deer or have struggled to field dress your deer in the past, the Department of Natural Resources offers the following tips that will make the job easier:

The most important thing is preparation. Before leaving your vehicle or camp to go hunting, make sure you have these necessary supplies: kill tag, flashlight, sharp knife, rags or paper towels, rope to tie legs or to drag a deer, several small pieces of string or twine, plastic bag (self sealing) for heart and liver, heavy rubber or latex gloves that fit snugly, camera..

Once you shoot the deer, you'll be excited. Approach the deer cau-



tiously on the side away from its legs. Be ready to discharge a finishing shot, but don't do so unless nec-

essary. Make sure the animal is dead before getting close to it. Unload your gun, secure your kill

tag to the deer, and take some pictures.

It is best to field dress your deer



Outdoor Matters

A column from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources

The easiest way to drag your deer back to your vehicle or to camp is to tie the forelegs together and lash them to the antlers with the head facing forward. Then attach a short drag line to the forefeet. This streamlines your deer and makes it much easier to drag. (DNR photographs by David Kenyon)

in the open. Drag it to a spot where you can work comfortably. Place the deer on its back with its head uphill, if possible, and tie its front legs behind the head.

Now, organize your equipment. A surprising number of hunters lose knives, gloves, and other equipment at their field dressing site, or spend too much time looking for a misplaced knife in the snow or leaves. Select an area where you

can keep track of your knife and other equipment.

Safety is very important. Many hunters cut themselves with their knives because they are in a hurry. In cold temperatures, when fingers may be numb, handling a knife takes extra care.

Always wear heavy rubber or latex gloves when field dressing wild game. With your hands, first locate the sternum of the breastbone. Insert your knife at the bottom of the sternum. Keep the blade edge pointing upward when making the first cut. The first cut through the breastbone should avoid damage to the internal organs. Then, cut through the abdominal wall. Keep the knife blade up toward the hide, not down toward the organs, as you work

*Please turn to page 9

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Joe Average American Wants Peace

To the Editor:

Hello, my name is Joe Average American. I just elected you to the House of Representatives and the Senate. I have two children at home and one out of the home. My household income is somewhere in the general vicinity of the American median income.

I put up signs in my yard and on the roads for you. I put bumper stickers on my car for you. I talked to people for you and encouraged them to vote for Democrats because it is time for a change. I made telephone calls for Move.Org for the Senate races in Virginia, Missouri, and Montana for you. I contributed money for local candidates – no not thousands, just a few hundred – but remember, I am Joe Average, not Joe Millionaire.

The catch is, though, I am not a do-good chucklehead, I want something. The first thing on my agenda is I don't want you to fully cooperate or even compromise with the most corrupt, inefficient administration in the history of our country. I voted for you because I want change!

I want you to protect Social Security, not set up "private accounts" that give Bush's boys on Wall Street more money to gamble with. I want some protection in my old age. If I want to gamble, I can play the market without the federal government's nose in it.

I want single-payer, universal health care. The health care situation is out of control; the profits of the insurance companies are obscene. The insurance companies brutalize both the patient and the doctor.

Do something about our border. National security is not served when literally millions of people are pouring across our border illegally. Not only do we need a strong Border Patrol, we need heavy fines and imprisonment for employers that hire illegals. These are wealthy agri-business and construction firms that put money into the pockets of politicians. The 700-mile fence on a 2,000-mile border is a farce, and we both know it. It is just another boondoggle and money maker for the Republicans' pals in the construction business, while it looks like the government is doing something about the border problem.

Related to the border issue, could we please have a sane, humane immigration policy? No, you are not going to put 12 million people on buses and planes and send them back to their countries of origins. Can we please deal with people who have often been here for years and years, working, paying taxes, and having children, in a humane way in a country that says in part in its Pledge of Allegiance "with liberty and justice for all"?

I want you to do something about corporate welfare, tax breaks for the wealthy, and subsidies for the oil companies. It is obscene that our government gives tax breaks and subsidies to Big Oil while they rape us at the gas pump; yet the same administration cuts veterans programs and screams about entitlement programs. Can you please start to put people before profits?

We are a sick people in an increasingly toxic environment. Some of us "average" types are starting to figure out that when dope head and verbal abuser of the disabled, Rush Limbaugh, says "the government needs to get out of the way and let business regulate itself," that means big business gets to poison our food, pollute our air, and foul the waterways.

Please, I want a healthy earth and a healthy America; we need environmental regulation.

Finally, make peace. The biggest reason Joe and Jane Average American voted for you is we want peace. We want America to be a beacon of light for the world, not a bully who the world fears and hates.

God Bless you in your mission! Stand up to tyranny!

Jim Ramelis
Gould City

Against Ownership of Guns Specifically Designed To Kill People

To the Editor:

In response to Letters to the Editor opposing gun control of any kind, I have a couple of points that I would like to discuss. First, gun rights advocates repeatedly quote the Second Amendment of our Constitution in support of their position that citizens have the right to own firearms, but few really seem to appreciate the intent of that passage. They consistently ignore the initial clause of the amendment that states, "A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." The Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles declares that a meaning of "to bear arms" is a figurative usage meaning to serve as a soldier, do military service, fight. This study casts doubt on the modern definition of bear arms to mean carry firearms. In *Amyette vs the State*, the court stated in 1840 that bear arms has a military sense and no other. Militia, according to Webster's Dictionary is "a part of the organized armed forces of a country, liable to call only in emergency." The courts of the country continue to interpret and opine the Second Amendment and gun ownership yet today, but current opinions are just that, opinions, and not laws cast in stone.

Second, in the interest of a reasoned discussion concerning the ownership of rapid-fire, military type weapons, I would like to state that I am not opposed to hunting; my husband and son both hunt. I don't have serious issues with gun ownership for the purpose of hunting. The discussion I would like to encourage is what place, if any, the possession or ownership of military type rapid-fire weapons have in our general society.

In response to previous letters where defendants of rapid-fire weapon ownership have argued that a person intent on killing could kill numbers of people with a variety of weapons (stones, knives, etc.), I would submit that this is not a logical argument. There are few weapons that have the devastating firepower of military type weapons designed with only one purpose, the killing of human beings. These are the weapons that have tragically figured in far too many mass murders in recent times, school killings, postal, workplace, and restaurant murders, and the recent tragic murders of five innocent little girls in Pennsylvania. My argument is against ownership of guns that are specifically designed to kill people.

Historically, there is statistical evidence that countries that regulate the ownership of specific gun types have a significantly lower rate of murder. I may be thought of as unreasonable, or illogical, but in my mind, an argument that ignores the potential damage such weapons can do, without them having any concurrent positive social value, is an argument that is patently weak and cruelly callous toward the well-being of our citizens.

Beverly Schmidt
St. Ignace

St. Ignace News Policies

Letters:

All responsible letters will be considered for publication and may be edited. They must be signed and a telephone number must be included for verification. Personal thank-you notes, personal attacks against other people, form letters, and letters promoting political candidates are not accepted, although letters for or against ballot proposals are welcome.

Obituaries:

The St. Ignace News maintains a policy of not charging for obituaries and we sometimes add information or rewrite them for clarity and reader interest. Obituaries that the family wants published exactly as submitted can be placed in the newspaper for \$75. Photographs are welcome at no charge.

Weddings:

Weddings with photographs are published without charge within 45 days of the ceremony. After 45 days, a photograph can be included for \$32.80.

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The quotation under the flag of *The St. Ignace News* on Page 1 is from the 10 triads written by Dr. Fred Newton Scott, creator and teacher of the first continuous course in journalism in the United States at the University of Michigan in 1890. The 10 triads are chiseled on the parapet of the Detroit News Building at 615 Lafayette Boulevard, Detroit. They were headed "Ideals of the Press" or "The Newspaper in a Free Society," and serve as a reminder of what a free press means to us.

Michigan Politics

By George Weeks



Will New Majority Use Its Clout for Great Lakes?

Much of the Michigan media post-election pondering has been on widely respected Senator Carl Levin, 72, a chief critic of the Iraq war, becoming chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and having a bigger oversight role than he already has as its oft-quoted ranking Democrat.

And on Dearborn Democrat John Dingell, 80, highly regarded dean of the U.S. House, becoming chairman of the House Commerce Committee with enhanced power as an advocate for the auto industry and health care reform.

And on Detroit's combative John Conyers, 77, who as ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee wrote a bill to consider impeachment hearings against President George W. Bush, but wisely said last week that if he becomes chairman, "impeachment is off the table." Well it should be.

"Aging lions become top dogs," headlined the *Detroit Free Press* Friday about Michigan's new geezer power on Capitol Hill.

In Lansing, the post-election focus has been on how re-elected Governor Jennifer Granholm, the newly Democratic House (58-52), and the still Republican Senate (21-17) will deal with next year's compelling tax and budget issues, especially in light of need to replace lost revenue from elimination of the Single Business Tax.

While there is understandable emphasis on other issues in both capitols, let us in the Great Lakes insist that their leaders also focus on issues lapping at our shores.

The questions I have:

- Democratic congressional champions of the Great Lakes from Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan will have more power next year, but will they have the influence and resolve in a tight budget to finally get passage of the proposed \$20 billion Great Lakes restoration plan that has languished for three years?

Senator Debbie Stabenow and Representative Bart Stupak of Menominee have been among those champions and will have added clout with their party ruling both chambers.

Representative Rahm Emanuel of Illinois, co-sponsor of the Great Lakes Collaborative Act, headed the campaign committee that helped finance the Democratic takeover of the House and is a member of the Ways and Means Committee; Representative David Obey of Wisconsin will chair the powerful Appropriations Committee, and Representative James Oberstar of Minnesota likely will head the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, whose responsibilities include water issues.

Democratic Senator-elect Sherrod Brown of Ohio, another co-sponsor of the Great Lakes act, has vowed to fight for Great Lakes protection.

Surely, there should be enough influence among Great Lakes lawmakers to at least fund a better battle against invasive species, especially those Asian carp coming up from south of Chicago.

- Will Granholm, cautious in her first term but now term-limited with a Democratic House, have backbone and will to go to the mat for Great Lakes and other environmental issues?

She told me during the campaign that she'd support strengthening laws on withdrawal of ground water, an issue on which she was a tad wobbly.

At the beginning of her first term, Granholm delivered on her campaign pledge of making land use reform an immediate priority. Her commission on the matter, chaired by Republican ex-Governor Bill Milliken and Democratic ex-Attorney General Frank Kelley, made recommendations – less than 20 percent of which have been implemented as of the end of that term in dealing with the Republican Legislature.

Milliken predicts Granholm will vigorously fight for "her better chance for a clear path on environmental and land use issues."

Bill Rustem, former Milliken environmental adviser and now president of the Public Sector Consultants firm that staffed Granholm's land use commission, recalled that Milliken as a Republican environmental advocate in the 1970s was allied in the Democratic House with Conservation Committee Chairman Tom Anderson (D-Southgate).

Now, says Rustem, look for Chair Patricia Birkholz (R-Saugatuck), of the Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee, to have a similar productive bipartisan alliance with Granholm in yet another divided Legislature.

Birkholz and fellow GOP senators will have the lone Republican stronghold under the Capitol dome (Granholm has a ceremonial office there; the GOP-ruled Supreme Court, once in the Capitol, has its own Hall of Justice).

Ironically for environmentalists, Republicans have a 21-17 Senate toehold in the Capitol because Green Party candidates managed to get votes that surpassed the narrow margins by which Republicans beat Democrats by less than 1,000 votes in Oakland and Saginaw counties. Had Democrats won those races, it would be 19-19, with Democratic Lieutenant Governor John Cherry tipping the scale.

George Weeks retired this year after 22 years as political columnist for The Detroit News. His weekly Michigan Politics column is syndicated by Superior Features.