

# Despite ballot victory, battle isn't over

## OUTDOOR INSIGHTS



BILL PARKER

which resulted in the defeat of Proposal D and the passage of Proposal G.

The defeat of Proposal D was a huge blow to the animal-rights activists who supported the proposal from the start. They had experienced success in recent years with similar proposals in California, Colorado and Oregon and fully expected to win again here in Michigan. One day after the proposal was defeated, Heide Prescott, executive director of The Fund for Animals, was on the radio announcing that they would return.

Don't let our success lure you into a false sense of security. We won this battle, but the attack on sport hunting is far from over. The animal-rightists will be back.

The good news is that Michigan sportsmen and sportswomen are now united like never before. When this attack began we had to start from scratch and rally the troops. When their next attack begins, we will start with a firm foundation and an idea of what it takes to defeat them again. It wasn't easy this time and it won't be easy next time. While much of the money behind Proposal D came from a couple wealthy Michigan landowners, the next assault on our hunting rights will likely be funded with big money from national anti-hunting organizations. To have a chance to win again we will have to match that money penny for penny.

Enjoy our success in preserving our hunting heritage but be forewarned: we won the first battle, but the war rages on.

### Think safety first

The highly-anticipated 1996 whitetail firearms season has finally arrived and the possibi-

ty of another record harvest adds to the excitement and anticipation. Before you rack a bullet take a minute to think about safety first, success second. Review these safety guidelines with everyone in your hunting party.

- Wear hunter orange and use a flashlight when moving around during hours of limited daylight.
- Treat every gun as if it were loaded and check every gun you handle to be sure it is not loaded.
- Always be aware of where the muzzle of your gun is pointed.

- Be sure of your target and what is behind it.
- Don't load your gun until you are ready to hunt.

- Know your firearm and its ammunition.

- Know where all members of your hunting party are located.
- Don't take chances with your firearm when crossing fences, ditches or other obstacles.

- Don't mix alcohol or drugs with firearms.
- Never place a loaded firearm in a motor vehicle.

- Don't take the safety off until you are ready to shoot and be sure to put your safety back on after you have taken a shot.

A little common sense can go a long way in making the 1996 season the safest season on record.

### Extended season

In an effort to reduce the antlerless deer population on private land the Michigan Department of Natural Resources is extending the antlerless deer season this year in select deer management units.

The extended season will run Dec. 1-8, with the exception of Deer Management Unit 215 in the Upper Peninsula, where the special season will end Dec. 15. The designated units include private land only in all of the Lower Peninsula deer management units as well as private land in deer management units 215, 317, 318, 322 and 414 in the Upper Peninsula.

Any person with an unused antlerless deer tag who has purchased a 1996 firearms deer license may participate in the special season, but only on private lands within the deer man-

agement unit designated on the antlerless tag. The season limit of one antlerless deer per license remains in effect during the special hunt, as do all other firearm deer hunting regulations.

### Sunday hunting update

Hunters heading into Sanilac and Huron counties will have a couple extra days to hunt this year as voters have repealed the Sunday hunting bans in these two counties. However, the repeal does not go into effect until 10 days after the state Board of Canvassers has certified the vote.

In Huron County, voters repealed the ban in the August primary election so the county is now open to Sunday hunting. In Sanilac County, voters repealed the ban in the November general election and the repeal may not be in effect for the first Sunday of the firearms season. Voters

upheld the Sunday hunting bans in Lapeer, Lenawee, Hillsdale, Washtenaw, St. Clair and Tuscola counties. The proposal to repeal the ban in Macomb County was not on the ballot.

### Deer check stations

The DNR will once again host three highway deer check stations during the first week of the 1996 firearms deer season. Deer may also be checked throughout the season at DNR field offices statewide.

Hunters who bring a deer to one of the check stations will receive a successful hunt patch for assisting in the DNR's management of the whitetail population. DNR field personnel will gather information from the deer including the age and sex as well as the location and date of the kill. This information will help the DNR make future management decisions.

The highway check stations are located in Birch Run, I-75 at the Birch Run weigh station 2.5 miles north of Birch Run; Alma, the rest area on US-27 between Alma and Shepherd; Big Rapids, at the rest area on US-131 south of Big Rapids. All three check stations will be open 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and Monday, Nov. 16-18.

Locally, deer can be checked throughout the season at the Livonia District Headquarters, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, (810) 953-0241; Bald Mountain Recreation Area in Lake Orion, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, (810) 693-6767; Maybury State Park in Northville, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-4:30 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, (810) 349-8390; and at the Waterford field office by appointment only through Nov. 18, and 8

**Hunters heading into Sanilac and Huron counties will have a couple extra days to hunt this year as voters have repealed the Sunday hunting bans in these two counties.**

a.m. to noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays after the 18th (810) 666-2837. It's a good idea to call ahead to be sure the particular field office in your area is open.

Anglers and hunters are urged to report their success. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax information to (810) 644-1314 or call Bill Parker evenings at (810) 901-2573.

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