

Hunters must take a stand to protect tradition

OUTDOOR INSIGHTS



BILL PARKER

The speakers came from a variety of backgrounds, but their message was the same: Hunters must take action to ensure the future of the sport.

"Hunting can no longer be thought of today without thinking about anti-hunt-

ers. We need to be prepared. We're the endangered species," Tom Washington, executive director of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs and first vice president of the National Rifle Association, recently told members of the Michigan Bear Hunters Association at their annual convention in Cadillac. "We can't let a groundswell of public opinion begin. When people only hear one side of an issue, that's what they believe. We need to let the people know what we have done for conservation and wildlife and

what the antls have not done."

In Michigan alone, hunters' money has contributed to building healthy populations of many wildlife species. Consider:

- At the turn of the century the native Eastern elk had disappeared from the state. Today there is a thriving, managed herd of more than 1,100 animals.
- The whitetail deer herd in Michigan averages between 1.5 and 2 million animals annually, which is more than there were in the state at the turn of the century.
- The Eastern wild turkey was believed to be extinct in Michigan in 1900. Today the flock is flourishing as it closes in on 100,000 birds.

And that's not to mention the thousands of acres of habitat improvement, land acquisition, and self-regulating legislation hunters have fought hard for.

State Senator George McManus Jr., R-Traverse City, advised all hunters to step for-

ward and be heard. "Instead of being on the defense against the antls, we have to go forward and teach the truths about hunters and hunting," he said.

The anti-hunting lobby is well organized in an attempt to force its ideology down the throats of all Americans.

Recently it has experienced some success. Proposition 117 outlawed mountain-lion hunting in California, Proposition 10 outlawed bear hunting in Colorado, and Proposition 200 attempted to outlaw trapping (and much more) in Arizona. Prop 200 was defeated, but it cost hunters upwards of \$2 million.

The nucleus of the general population is centered in the urban areas of the state. The nucleus of the hunting population is centered in rural areas of the state. When anti-hunting legislation is presented to lawmakers, the legislators representing the majority of hunters, or the rural areas, are in the minority. That's why it is imperative for hunters who reside in urban areas to take an active

voice. Write or call your state legislators and congressmen and let them know you are a voter, a hunter, a gun owner and that you value these rights.

"We have to know what you're thinking," explained State Rep. John Gernat, R-McBain. "I think it is a very, very wise idea to talk to representatives in your area to let them know how you feel."

Herb Burns, Michigan Department of Natural Resources law-enforcement chief, advises hunters to be prepared to protect their right to hunt if confronted by an anti-hunter in the field.

"Hunter harassment is a misdemeanor in Michigan," explained Burns. "For an officer to make an arrest the act must take place in front of that officer; otherwise you must file a complaint and a warrant may come later. The burden of guilt lies with the hunter. The chance that a (conservation officer) will be there and witness the act is very remote."

So what does a hunter (or an-

gler) do if confronted by an anti-hunting fanatic?

The most important thing to do is to stay calm and keep your cool. Don't let yourself be provoked into doing something that will shed negative light on hunters.

Pay attention to details, contact a law enforcement officer, and be willing to take the issue to court and provide credible testimony. Inform the harasser of your feelings and ask them politely to stop. Pay attention to the who, what, when, where and how of the confrontation. Take note of the time and length of the incident, the clothes and the physical description (height, weight, sex, eye and hair color) of the perpetrator. Also note the vehicle make and model and the license number. Ask for the names, addresses and phone numbers of any bystanders, regardless of their involvement. Tuck a compact camera away in your fanny pack. It could provide the proof you need to get a conviction.

"We have the truth on our side,

and I've always been taught the truth will prevail, but we need to be prepared," added Washington. "We can't let the untruths and half-truths go unanswered."

I urge all hunters to take a stand and promote hunting in a positive light. Join an organization such as MUCC, the NRA, the Michigan Big Game Hunter's Association, the Michigan Bow Hunter's Association, Pheasants Forever, the National Wild Turkey Federation, or any of the hundreds of other outdoor-related clubs. Write letters to your local representatives at the state and national levels and stay in tune with what's happening in Lansing.

The future of our sport lies in our hands. We can protect it or ignore it. But if we choose to do nothing and pretend these problems don't exist or aren't a threat, we won't have to worry about handing down the hunting tradition to future generations. We won't have a tradition to hand down.

OUTDOORS CALENDAR

DATES AND EVENTS

AUDUBON EVENTS

The Detroit Audubon Society will take a trip to Stony Creek Metropark to search for frogs, newts and salamanders beginning at 7:30 p.m. Friday, 645-2929.

ARCHERY

Royal Oak Archers will hold a 3D shoot beginning at 9 a.m. Sunday, April 18, on its walk-through range in Lake Orion, 693-9799, 693-1369.

TU BANQUET

The Paul H. Young Chapter of Trout Unlimited will hold its 29th annual fund-raising banquet beginning at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 22, at the Royal House in Royal Oak.

SAFE HUNTER COURSE

The Wayne County Sportsmen's Club and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources will sponsor a course of instruction leading to a Michigan Safe Hunter Certificate, beginning at 8 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, April

24-25, at the Wayne County Sportsmen's Club in Romulus. Class fee is \$6 and participants must attend both sessions, 632-0285 or 634-2536.

BLACKPOWDER SHOOT

The Black Powder Committee of the Western Wayne County Conservation Association will sponsor a primitive squirrel rifle match on the club's walk-through black powder course in Plymouth Township, beginning at 10 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, May 8-9. The shoot is open to the public, 463-9843.

FISHING FOR WOMEN

A seminar titled Fishing — For Women Only will be presented by outdoor educator Joe Derek beginning at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 13, at the Farmington Community School. Cost is \$12 and the seminar will be held over two nights, 489-3333.

SALMON STAKES

The 15th running of the River Crab Salmon Stakes, the state's longest-running salmon fishing tournament, will take place May 15 in St. Clair. Proceeds from \$10

raffle/entry tickets will benefit mental health agencies throughout the state, 329-2261.

FREE CAMPING

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will waive all camping fees, reservation fees and the state park motor vehicle permit fees at 11 designated state parks for the weekend of May 21-22, (617) 373-1270.

WILDLIFE ART FESTIVAL

The 9th annual First of America Wildlife Festival, which supports wildlife and conservation projects in Michigan, will be held May 29-30 in Clare, (517) 386-2442 or (517) 386-7492.

DATES/DEADLINES

Trout season opens April 24 on designated trout streams and lakes. (Check the DNR 1993 Michigan Fishing Guide for details.) Walleye, pike and muskie season opens April 24 on inland lakes in the Lower Peninsula.

(Check the DNR 1993 Michigan Fishing Guide for details.)

Bass season opens May 22. (Check the DNR 1993 Michigan Fishing Guide for details.)

Entry deadline for the 1994 Michigan waterfowl and trout/salmon stamp design contests is April 30, (517) 373-1263.

FISHING CLUB MEETINGS

The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets 7:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Maplewood Center in Garden City, 477-3816.

The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month at the Livonia Clarenceville Junior High School, 420-2293.

Romeo B.A.S.S. Busters meet 7 p.m. the first Tuesday of each month at the Romeo Community Youth and Civic Center, 288-6469.

METROPARKS

FULL MOON WALK

A naturalist-led hike to see what's new on the nature trails begins at 7:30 p.m. today at Kensington.

HARNESSING A HORSE'S POWER

A program in which participants will learn about draft horses begins at 10 a.m. Saturday at the Kensington Farm Center.

SPRING HILL HIKE

A two-hour hike on an out-of-the-way trail begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Kensington. This program is not recommended for anyone under the age of 8.

YOUNG ASTRONOMERS CLUB

Kids ages 8 and over will learn the stories behind the star formations we call constellations then make their own constellation in this program which begins at 7 p.m. Saturday at Stony Creek.

EASTER FLOWERS

A naturalist-led hike along the nature trails in search of spring wildflowers begins at 2 p.m. Sunday at Stony Creek.

METROPARK REQUIREMENTS

Most Metropark programs are free while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required, 1-800-47-PARKS.

WE'VE GOT GREEN
NO MATTER
WHAT COLOR YOU
WANT TO PAINT
YOUR HOUSE.

No matter what it is that needs to be done, undone or redone, we can help.

Our home improvement loans are fast and affordable. And, we have almost as many kinds of home improvement loans as there are home improvements. We have special loans sponsored by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. You may qualify for a loan that will give you lower monthly payments, at reduced interest rates, that are tax deductible. Or, you may choose to get a conventional bank loan that may be better suited to your needs. We'll also work with you to come up with a payment that fits into your budget.

For more information, stop by any one of our convenient locations or call us at 281-LOAN — we'll even take your application over the phone.

Apply today for a home improvement loan from First of America. It'll paint a smile on your face.

FIRST AMERICA

Equal Housing Lender

LEARN TO
SCUBA DIVE

MASK • FINS • SNORKEL
PACKAGES from \$69.95

CLASSES: • SNORKELING
• SCUBA EQUIPMENT

Contact one of S.E. Michigan's Professional Dive Centers

DIVERS INCORPORATED 4229 Ann Arbor Rd. Plymouth, MI 48133 313-451-5430 1 mile west of 275 in PMC	REC DIVING 4424 Woodward Royal Oak, MI 48073 313-549-0303 3 blocks south of 14 Mile	DON'S DIVE SHOP INC. 29400 10 Mile Farmington Hills, MI 48336 313-477-7333 Just west of Middlebelt
---	--	---

DETROIT TIGERS

IT'S A
WHOLE
NEW
BALLGAME!

FOR TICKETS
CALL 25-TIGER

OR ANY LOCATION
INCLUDING HUDSON'S, HARMONY HOUSE
AND SOUND WAREHOUSE

skandia 801 Orchard Lake
A Division of E. Telegraph
(313) 332-1717
nursery & supplies, inc.

1993 April - May Specials
MOST SHADE TREES, FLOWERING CRABS AND SOME
ORNAMENTALS.
BUY ONE AT REGULAR PRICE AND
RECEIVE ANY OTHER COMPARABLE TREE FREE

EVERGREENS	LANDSCAPE EDGING
SHADE TREES	SHREDDER BARK
GROUND COVER	FERTILIZER
PERENNIALS	TOPSOIL
FLOWERING SHRUBS	PEAT
UNIQUE-SPECIMEN PLANTS	SOD

WOOD DECKS • RETAINING WALLS
BRICK PAVING • HYDRO-SEEDING

LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION/COMPUTERIZED DESIGN
• CUSTOM PLANTING •

OPEN 8-5 Monday-Saturday

**NO MONEY DOWN.
NO INTEREST.
NO PAYMENTS
UNTIL JAN. 1994!***

Amana ONE COOL DEAL

BUY AN AMANA CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONER,
OR AN AMANA HIGH EFFICIENCY FURNACE
AND CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONER
COMBINATION, AND GET ONE COOL DEAL!
*To applicants with qualified credit.

**HURRY, LIMITED TIME OFFER
SEE YOUR AMANA DEALER FOR DETAILS.**

**31 DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR
NATURAL GAS HOLDS
A THREE-TO-ONE PRICE
ADVANTAGE OVER ELECTRICITY.**

Call, KAST Heating & Cooling Today

- Pontiac — (313) 338-9255
- Birmingham — (313) 642-7150
- Royal Oak — (313) 542-3850