

PENNSYLVANIA  
**TURKEY TALK** Winter 2009

Publication of the PA State Chapter of the NWTF



**The Turkey Dog  
Experience**

Page 10

Visit us online at:  
[www.panwtf.org](http://www.panwtf.org)

# PENNSYLVANIA *Winter 2009* TURKEY TALK

Publication of the PA State Chapter of the NWTf

Volume 34 Number 2



Photo Credit: Henry Zeman/NWTf

## In this Issue:

From the President .....	3
Reflections on my 33-Year involvement with NWTf .....	4
PA NWTf addresses the Pennsylvania Game Commission .....	5
PA NWTf - 1975-2008: 33 years moving forward .....	5
2009 Seed Program .....	6
Old Hoda Farm Habitat enhancement project .....	8
The turkey dog experience .....	10
PA NWTf 2007 Hunt of A Lifetime Winner .....	11
Habitat Corner .....	12
The sawtooth oak .....	13
Bonnice Farm Landowner Field Day .....	14
Plotting for success .....	15
Southern End Strutters host their first Wheelin' Sportsmen hunt .....	16
Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter is committed to increasing youth involvement .....	17
2009 Hunting Heritage Banquets .....	18
Women in the Outdoors 2009 Events .....	20

## PENNSYLVANIA TURKEY TALK

**Editor**  
Walt Young

**Production and Layout**  
Lance Carowick

**Article and photo submissions  
should be sent to:**  
[turkeytalk@panwtf.org](mailto:turkeytalk@panwtf.org)

**E-Mail PA NWTf at:**  
[panwtfrep@panwtf.org](mailto:panwtfrep@panwtf.org)

*Copyright 2009*

**THE PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL  
WILD TURKEY FEDERATION**

Pennsylvania Turkey Talk is published quarterly by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Information in this publication is provided "as is" and without warranties of any kind, whether express or implied. The Pennsylvania Chapter of the NWTf makes no guarantees as to accuracy, currency, quality or fitness of any information presented in this publication. The Pennsylvania Chapter of the NWTf assumes no legal liability or responsibility for any incorrect, misleading, outdated or missing information.

The views and opinions expressed in *Turkey Talk* are those of the writers, who are responsible for the accuracy of content. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the NWTf.

The acceptance of advertising by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the NWTf does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised. The publisher assumes no responsibility or liability for the publication of copy submitted by advertisers.

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the NWTf reserves the right to cancel or reject articles or advertising deemed inappropriate or unsuitable for *Turkey Talk*.

Anyone using any information from this publication does so at their own risk, and shall be deemed to indemnify the Pennsylvania Chapter of the NWTf. The publisher shall not be responsible or liable for any damage or injury resulting from such use.

**The deadline for submitting articles for the next issue of Turkey Talk is March 2**

**NWTf Mission statement:  
Dedicated to the Conservation of the  
Wild Turkey and Preservation of our  
Hunting Heritage.**

**PA NWTF OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT**

**Jon Pries**

612 Harman Road  
Trout Run, PA 17771  
Phone: 570-634-2601  
jongobbler@aol.com

**VICE PRESIDENT**

**Harold Daub**

481 Mountain House Road  
Halifax, PA 17032

**SECRETARY**

**Joe Drolet**

124 Pine Bridge Lane  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
Phone: 717-940-9310  
jdrolet@panwtf.org

**TREASURER**

**Jim Panaro**

224 Buck Road  
Ebensburg, PA 15931  
Phone: 814-344-6632  
jim.panaro@resfuel.com

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

**Harold Daub**

481 Mountain House Road  
Halifax, PA 17032

**Dale Butler**

PO Box 4  
Noxen, PA 18636  
570-298-2438  
dcbutler@epix.net

**Skip Motts**

10 Anglemire Dr.  
Stroudsburg, PA 18360  
570-619-8880  
mottspur@ptd.net

**CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD**

**Dave Burdge**

1593 Brocious Road  
Brookville, PA 15825  
Phone: 814-328-2332  
burdge@alltel.net



**SUPPORTING MEMBER**

Cover Photo by  
**CARLPHOTOGRAPHY.COM**

# From the President

**Jon Pries**

**W**ith another (hopefully) successful fall season behind us, our thoughts now turn to the spring season and a number of activities that will occupy our time over the next several months. This is a great time to check our equipment and accomplish necessary cleaning and repairs. There always seems to be new ideas and tools available to the turkey hunter, so a quick review of the mail-order catalogs or a check online will allow us to obtain any necessary new gear. But what about your local and state chapter activities?

This time of year sees our Regional Directors driving the miles and helping local chapters hold their annual Hunting Heritage Banquets. These fundraisers are the backbone of our income for all that we do at the local and state level throughout the year. Whether your chapter is primarily involved in the JAKES program, habitat improvement, Women in the Outdoors, or Wheelin' Sportsmen programs; the banquet system is key in providing the necessary dollars to fund all of these activities. Your presence and support of these banquets will set the bar for what we can accomplish throughout the year. Along with attendance at your own local chapter banquet, consider gathering up several of your buddies and attending other nearby chapter banquets. It is always a fun evening, you get to interact with other chapter members, and you may even win a gun!

At the state level, there will be a number of changes. With normal attrition, there are several openings on the Board of Directors, and fortunately a number of highly qualified members from around the state have applied for the positions. The selection of individuals will be made at the board meeting in January and will be announced in the Spring 2009 issue of Turkey Talk. We will be forming a new Communications Committee that will be dedicated to spreading the word of the state and local chapter activities and accomplishments. Please keep in mind that you don't have to be a member of the Board of Directors to serve on some of our committees. If you feel you could help, please contact me or any of the other board members to express your interest.

Along with a successful season of Hunting

## NOTICE

Please send all change of address notifications or other problems with your Pennsylvania Turkey Talk subscription (duplicate copies, missing copies, etc.) to

**Carl Mowry**  
288 Crisswell Road  
Butler, PA 16002  
724-283-5708

cmpanwtf@zoominternet.net –  
and not to the editorial office in Altoona.

Heritage Banquets, probably the next best thing we can do as members of the State Chapter is to increase our base number of members. While we can benefit from increases in all categories, there should be a greater effort to recruit more new adult members. As our Women and Wheelin' memberships grow, and as our JAKES memberships increase – in great part thanks to Bucky Shimp – our adult membership seems to be somewhat stagnant. This will be an area of particular focus throughout the year by the state board. Our RDs have presented and are implementing ideas, and the board is developing a program that will focus on bringing new members into our state chapter. As always, we appreciate hearing from you, our members, regarding any of your ideas. Please contact any board member or any of the officers listed in Turkey Talk to share your thoughts and suggestions about membership recruitment.

## NWTF Staff Directory

### REGIONAL DIRECTORS

**Phil Ferrare, Jr.**, NW and NC PA  
2924 Haskins Rd  
Waterford, PA 16441  
814-796-6983  
philnwtf@hughes.net

**Carl Mowry**, SW and SC PA  
288 Crisswell Rd.  
Butler, PA 16002  
724-283-5708  
cmpanwtf@zoominternet.net

**Ray Smith**, Eastern PA  
1133 Canoe Rd.  
Jersey Shore, PA 17740  
570-398-0721  
rsmithnwtf@comcast.net

**Tammy Mowry**  
288 Crisswell Rd.  
Butler, PA 16002  
724-284-9201  
tammynwtf@zoominternet.net

**Priscilla Page**, PA and MD  
1008 Doctor Jack Rd.  
Conowingo, MD 21918  
412-378-2064  
priscillanwtf@zoominternet.net

### REGIONAL BIOLOGIST

**Bob Eriksen**  
27 Canterbury Rd.  
Phillipsburg, NJ 08865  
908-454-1882  
boberikesen@juno.com



# Reflections

## on my 33-Year involvement with NWTF

BY DON HECKMAN

**A**fter 33 years on the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, I am retiring. Being elected to the very first board of directors back in June 1975 and having the opportunity to watch the state chapter grow over these past 33 years has been a blessing and a gift from heaven.

As a voting board member, state chapter membership secretary for 9 years, treasurer for 11 years, Executive Officer for 7 years, and finishing as Vice President for a year has been a rewarding lifetime achievement. Being involved with and dedicated to the NWTF mission statement for the greatest wildlife conservation organization ever formed has been an enjoyment beyond imagination.

Working on and supporting many uncertain and forward-thinking ideas and issues, the urge to move beyond all those PA NWTF executive committee, board, and committee meetings, conventions, banquets, turkey calling contests, sports shows, habitat work parties, newsletter labeling and mailings, membership drives, and so on has finally won out. Now it is time to pick and chose more carefully those new ideas and issues to work on from a different perspective.

Serving in many NWTF volunteer roles at the state and local chapter level and being involved in countless state and local chapter committee chairman roles has been truly rewarding for a guy that just wanted to know more about the wild turkey, learn how to be a turkey hunter, be involved in wild turkey management, habitat improvement, turkey

hunting safety, and wanting to lend a hand in helping this new state chapter grow.

Now after 33 years of listening to my ideas and new ways brought to the state and local chapter boards, many uncertain yet forward thinking issues and answers have been addressed to help our chapters succeed and grow. Some of my goals were to improve NWTF outreach programs, increase grassroots membership levels, define state chapter communications and public relations by telling the story, work on ways to better inform and educate turkey hunters and other Pennsylvania citizens on wild turkey management and turkey hunting safety. I authored countless articles for Turkey Talk and many news releases that were distributed across Pennsylvania. Supporting a host of volunteer services, taking active leadership positions, and bringing forward-thinking ideas to the table are what drove the fire in the boiler for those 33 years.

The greatest testimony for achievement is the people, family and friends, that one gets to really know and appreciate and to say thank you for helping, thank you for supporting, and thank you for being there for the wild turkey, the NWTF, and the PA Chapter of NWTF. While serving on the Pennsylvania Chapter Board of Directors, and Michaux-Yellow Breeches Board of Directors for 27 years, it has been my pleasure to get to know and work with all the people working together as a team of volunteers with our NWTF Staff that drives home the NWTF philosophy of "One Team, One Voice."

NWTF volunteers and staff in Pennsylvania have helped the Pennsylvania Chapter and our local chapters succeed, grow, work for, and honor the NWTF

mission statement, "Dedicated to Conservation of the Wild Turkey and the Preservation of the Hunting Tradition."

Several people have had a profound influence on my life inside and outside NWTF: Jerry Wunz and Jerry Zimmerman in particular; the entire first state chapter officers and board of directors; all proceeding PA NWTF officers and board members; and my wife Sandy. Many additional friends have provided guidance, insight, and constructive criticism as challenging and difficult issues were debated and accomplished.

As I have often referred to the box at PA NWTF board meetings over the years, the "in the NWTF box" issues and decisions were usually rather straightforward to support, defend, and administer. Coming from NWTF Executive Staff and Board Member Leadership those were the decisions that formed the foundation of who and what we are. The "out of the NWTF box" issues and decisions were the ones that took courage, forward thinking, and positive attitude to a new level for me and the PA NWTF Board of Directors. These were some of the decisions that built and defined why we exist and how we created our foundation as a wildlife conservation and hunting organization.

Often the PA NWTF Board heard my ideas and some out-of-the-box preaching as I have been candidly told a few times, and they responded with a willingness to step out of the box. Most perplexing for me to come to grips with was the legislative process, like turkey-hunting license and hunting license increases, blinds, special second bird tag, season lengths, firearms, and several other legislative issues. One cannot be involved

with PA NWTF, wildlife conservation and hunting traditions, while at the same time living near Harrisburg and making many trips to Game Commission headquarters, and not find the avenues leading to Capitol Hill. I believe PA NWTF is a better known, well-respected, and accomplished wildlife conservation and hunting organization because of their willingness to step out of the box with me sometimes. Thank you all for your support over all these years.

Future challenges and opportunities to improve turkey hunting and turkey hunting safety, improve and build on wild turkey management success and accomplishments, and preserving our hunting heritage and traditions will continue to be agenda issues for our Board of Directors. Your continued tasks and responsibilities in Pennsylvania will be to continue fortifying the NWTF foundation, building on NWTF outreach programs, increasing our NWTF Hunting Heritage Super Fund, while improving and building new PA NWTF partnerships, and adding to the many wild turkey management and turkey hunting regulation accomplishments and achievements from over these many years.

Pennsylvania will always need an organization like PA NWTF, working together with our partners, conservation and hunting organizations, to work for wildlife conservation, to support and help improve our renewable and natural resources, and continue to support "in the box" thinking and decision making, while being an "out of the box" forward-thinking, results-oriented, achieving organization, while always asking "Next Issue."

Continue to Tell the Story,  
Think Safety – Hunt Safely.

# PA NWTF addresses the Pennsylvania Game Commission

**T**he Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation recently spoke with the Pennsylvania Game Commissioners about issues and proposals affecting the wildlife resources of Pennsylvania. Following are the recommendations and comments given to the Pennsylvania Game Commission at their board meeting on October 23, 2008:

■ PA NWTF recommends that the spring season be extended to close on May 31 annually, providing up to six days of additional hunting in some years.

■ Request that mentored youth hunters be provided the chance to hunt fall turkeys as soon as conditions allow.

■ PA NWTF is firmly behind the recommendations from the Bureau of Wildlife Management to reduce fall season length in Wildlife Management Units where spring harvest data indicates declining populations. The PA NWTF members are particularly concerned about recent turkey harvest trends in WMUs 2D, 5C, and 5D.

■ The PA NWTF is willing to commit financially to a study to collect data on the impact of fall hunting. There is a definite need for more precise fall turkey harvest rate data in Pennsylvania. A study of this nature

is outlined in the wild turkey management plan and should begin immediately after the conclusion of the current gobbler banding work.

■ PA NWTF reminds the Pennsylvania Game Commission that the PA NWTF consistently budgets for activities related to hunter safety and our members are available to assist the commission in any way possible to make our hunting tradition safer.

■ The PA NWTF would like to thank the Pennsylvania Game Commission for the opportunity to provide input on agency programs and for our many years of cooperative efforts in working for the wild turkey and our other valuable wildlife resources.

## PA NWTF – 1975-2008: 33 years moving forward

BY DON HECKMAN

**O**ver these past 33 years, PA NWTF and our local NWTF chapters have raised and spent well over \$4.6 million for wild turkey management and research, habitat improvement, land acquisition, turkey hunting safety education, NWTF outreach programs, support of our rights to hunt and own firearms, and improve public awareness.

In 1975, the founders of the Pennsylvania State Chapter set in place an action plan for growing the state chapter, while providing help and support for wild turkey management and research, habitat improvement, land acquisition, turkey hunting safety education. Starting in the mid-1980s, the state chapter helped NWTF grow the Hunting Heritage Super Fund Banquet and funding program, helped with NWTF outreach programs, and worked with other wildlife conservation and sportsmen's organizations throughout Pennsylvania.

Our organization has been blessed with NWTF volunteers willing to roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty, whether it be habitat improvement work, wild turkey management plan development, banquet organization, working on land acquisition projects, manning sports show booths, providing informational and educational turkey hunting and safety seminars, working

on Women in the Outdoors, JAKES, and Wheelin' Sportsmen events, and more.

We have had our issues in Harrisburg, and we have taken a setback or two while helping to win a few issues over the years there. A few of us have made the commitment over the past 30 some years to get involved with both the legislature and the Game Commission on hunting issues.

I believe the most difficult issues facing NWTF and PA NWTF will be growing our adult membership base. We have tried several different methods to increase adult membership over the years, but they have not worked to our expectations. Our statewide and local communications programs need to improve so turkey hunters know what state and local chapters are doing in their area for the wild turkey, turkey hunting, turkey habitat, and hunting safety.

There have also been many milestones in our 33-year history. We have supported trap and transfer since 1975. PA NWTF was involved with the controversial decision to close the turkey game farm in 1980. Closing the turkey game farm turned out to be a wise decision. NWTF local chapter volunteers helped with trap and transfer during the latter years of this successful management program.

Wild turkey biologist Jerry Wunz recommended a plan for establishing turkey management areas that got mixed support. PA Chapter NWTF supported Jerry's

recommendation, and in 1985, four regional management units were created across Pennsylvania.

Over the next two decades, the management areas were increased to 9, then 12, and in 2003, 22 wildlife management units were established for managing all wildlife statewide.

In 1999, the Game Commission implemented a 5-year management plan for wild turkeys. In 2007, a revised and updated 10-year turkey management plan went into effect.

Tireless efforts over 21 years to get legislative and Game Commission support for a much needed turkey hunting license to support wild turkey management and additional revenue for the Game Fund still continue today.

NWTF and PA NWTF provided much of the funding and volunteer support for a 2 1/2-year Game Commission hen telemetry research project, which resulted in eight recommendations being monitored and measured today. Game Commission wild turkey biologist Mary Jo Casalena's report on the project was featured in the latest NWTF Wild Turkey Symposium.

For 33 years, PA NWTF has worked for and continues to support sound scientific wildlife management principles. Throughout that time, the Chapter has strived to create awareness, support and improve wild turkey management and additional turkey hunting opportunities across Pennsylvania,

communicate and improve turkey hunting safety, and inform and educate turkey hunters.

For 33 years, NWTF and PA NWTF have created and published turkey-hunting safety information. A recent effort is a brochure produced by NWTF that incorporates the new hunting safety phrases "Positively Identity Your Target and Beyond" and "Think Safety – Hunt Safely."

We have stayed the course since 1975 and have been involved in and achieved what is right for the wild turkey and turkey hunting and then what is right for the organizations. While the Game Commission and PA NWTF have not always agreed on all issues, we work together to find common ground and achieve results for wildlife conservation, wild turkey management, and turkey hunting.

There is, of course, much more to do in the next 33 years. The opportunities to continue building the foundation are endless; the challenges will be to add to the many major accomplishments already in place. Over all these years, the numbers of dollars, projects, and programs tell that story. People working together, making a positive difference for wildlife conservation, wild turkey management, and turkey hunting, have been successful in their efforts. All have created milestones in the timeline of PA NWTF, and all have helped build the NWTF foundation in Pennsylvania.

December 2008

Dear Pennsylvania Member:

The Pennsylvania State Chapter Board of Directors is pleased to offer its members the opportunity to purchase Northeast/Midwest Strut & Rut<sup>®</sup> Mix or Clover Blend at a subsidized price. The Pennsylvania State Hunting Heritage Super Fund will pay for 50 percent of the seed and shipping charges.

Sponsor Members may purchase a **total of Two:**

- 20-pound bags of Northeast/Midwest Strut and Rut<sup>®</sup> Mix for just \$40.00 each, shipping included  
**(and/or)**
- 9-pound bags of the Clover Blend for just \$24.50 each, shipping included

Regular Members may purchase a **total of One:**

- 20-pound bag of Northeast/Midwest Strut and Rut<sup>®</sup> Mix for just \$80.00 each, shipping included  
**(or)**
- 9-pound bag of the Clover Blend for just \$49.00 each, shipping included

**All orders are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Quantities are limited** on subsidized seed due to the dollars allocated to the program. Both mixes will ship approximately two weeks from date of order.

**Northeast/Midwest Strut and Rut<sup>®</sup> Mix** comes pre-inoculated and a 20-pound bag will cover approximately one acre. This mixture will provide areas of food and cover throughout the winter and provide excellent nesting and brood-rearing cover during spring and early summer. This mix is great for wild turkey, deer and other wildlife. Broadcast 20-pounds over one acre from May into late June and through September in the fall. Cover seed    deep using a drag or culti-packer to insure good soil to seed contact. Soil pH should be 5.5 – 7.0. If you cannot have soil tested, fertilize with 5-10-15 at a rate of 250 pounds per acre and a minimum of 2,000 pounds of lime per acre.

**Clover Blend** is a 9-pound mixture of pre-inoculated alsike, ladino, white and red clover. Soil pH should be 6.5 – 7.0. As an alternative to soil testing, add 300-500 pounds of 3-9-9 fertilizer per acre. Broadcast 9-pounds per acre in spring. Cover seed    deep using a drag or culti-packer to insure good soil to seed contact.

\*\*\*As an additional benefit, each member can purchase additional bags of Northeast/Midwest Strut and Rut<sup>®</sup> Mix for just \$80.00 and/or Clover Blend for just \$49.00, unsubsidized but at a reduced price, in **unlimited** quantities. However, to take advantage of these savings, you must submit the order with this seed subsidy offer.

Sincerely,

Jon Pries  
Pennsylvania State Chapter President  
National Wild Turkey Federation



**PENNSYLVANIA \*\*\*Spring 2009\*\*\* Chapter Seed Offer**  
 Respond before April 15, 2009  
 Limited Quantity – First Come, First Serve - While Supplies Last



**Must mail or fax order form**  
**No phone orders accepted - unless seed availability remains AFTER April 15<sup>th</sup>**

Name (Please print or type)	Must include <b>member number</b> (Located on magazine label)	
Shipping Address (No delivery to PO boxes)		
City	State	Zip
Cell Phone	Daytime/Work Phone	
Evening Phone	E-mail Address	

**SEED SUBSIDY OFFER (Pennsylvania Super Fund Program Pays 50% Cost Of Seed And Shipping)**  
**Sponsor members may purchase a total of two (2) bags**  
**Regular members may purchase a total of one (1) bag**

9860134	I want _____	20# bag(s) of Northeast/Midwest Strut and Rut® Mix for just \$40.00 each, shipping inc. <b>Sponsor members allowed 2 bags Regular members allowed 1 bag</b>
---------	--------------	--

**AND/OR**

9860136	I want _____	9# bag(s) Clover Blend for just \$24.50 each, shipping inc. <b>Sponsor members allowed 2 bags Regular members allowed 1 bag</b>
---------	--------------	--

**NON SUBSIDIZED – BUT AT A SPECIAL REDUCED PRICE WITH NO LIMIT ON AMOUNT ORDERED**

9860135	I want _____	Additional 20# bag(s) of Northeast/Midwest Strut and Rut® for just \$80.00 each, shipping included.
---------	--------------	---

9860137	I want _____	Additional 9# bag(s) of Clover Blend for just \$49.00 each, shipping included.
---------	--------------	--

Total for my order \$ _____	<b>MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:</b> NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION
-----------------------------	---

Payment:  Check # \_\_\_\_\_  Money Order  Visa  
 MasterCard  American Express  Discover

Credit Card Number	Expiration Date
Signature	Date

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:**  
 National Wild Turkey Federation  
 C/O Pennsylvania Seed Offer  
 P.O. Box 530  
 Edgefield, South Carolina 29824  
 Fax: 803-637-9180



Source Code: PA SS09

# Old Hoda Farm Habitat ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

BY BOB ERIKSEN,  
NWTF REGIONAL BIOLOGIST

**T**he Hoda family farm was purchased by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources a number of years ago. Once a working dairy operation, the farm became part of Nescopeck State Park in Luzerne County. The park is located just off Interstate 80 and is adjacent to State Game Lands 187. In the years following the purchase of the farm, the abandoned fields and pastures began to grow into a tangle of brush and small trees. Many of the shrubs that took over the formerly cultivated fields were exotic species such as multiflora rose, bush honeysuckle, and autumn olive. These shrubs along with a number of others were introduced to the United States for use in hedgerows, erosion control, and wildlife food and cover. While they perform those functions well, many exotic trees and shrubs have a dark side. They leaf out earlier than native plants, are not generally preferred as browse by deer, and produce so much seed that they rapidly spread over large areas. Today, some of these non-native shrubs are known as invasive species because of their ability to colonize new areas and outcompete native vegetation.

Several years ago the Honey Hole Longbeards Chapter began the tedious project of trying to reclaim some of the fields and

reestablish grasses as turkey brood habitat and cover for ring-necked pheasants, cottontail rabbits, and field-nesting songbirds. The Nescopeck State Park staff and Game Commission land managers worked closely with the chapter in planning some of the initial work and progress was made. The process looked to be a long-term operation that would take many years of work to complete. That is, until Kevin Wenner, a diversity biologist with the Game Commission became involved.

Kevin worked with park personnel, enlisting the interest and support of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), local NWTF chapter members, Pheasants Forever, the Ruffed Grouse Society, and the North Branch Land Trust. He developed an ambitious plan for managing the abandoned fields as wildlife cover and presented the plan to interested parties last March.

Plans were made, meetings were held, and in September of this year, work on the project began in earnest. Contributions of dollars came from the Natural Resource Conservation Service Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), the Honey Hole Longbeards Chapter through the

Pennsylvania Chapter Hunting Heritage Super Fund, from Pheasants Forever Northeast Chapter, and the Northeast Pa. Ruffed Grouse Society Chapter. Volunteer labor was supplied by members of the Honey Hole Longbeards and the local Pheasants Forever Chapter. A large work

crew assembled on two Saturdays in September, and the labor of clearing the fields began. This was the first stage of the three-year project. The plan was ambitious, but the dedication of

concerned hunters from these organizations made it happen. The Ruffed Grouse Society supplied the essential piece of equipment, a Caterpillar skid-steer with a large brush-hog attachment known as the Ambussher.

Volunteers gathered, using chainsaws, shovels, and axes to follow up after the Ambussher worked on the thick brush. Work parties were scheduled for two Saturdays in September, and a good number of volunteers participated on both days. The organizations involved in the project supplied bottled water and cooked hot dogs for lunch. Saws buzzed, a tractor with spray booms treated the fields with herbicide, four-wheelers carried water and lunch to the crews, and volunteers carried and stacked brush after it was cut. The local volunteer fire company trucked in water for filling the spray tank on the borrowed tractor and spray rig. While the Ambussher was available, NWTF volunteer Joe Cortese operated the machine for thirteen straight days. He seemed to enjoy running the equipment immensely, and he accomplished more than any of us thought would be possible. By the end of September, almost every field that needed treatment had been affected.

This project is a classic example of the volume of work that can be completed when





# Flashback Scene

SUBMITTED BY KATRINA SKRAPITS  
PICTURED ARE RUSSELL KREBS AND  
KATRINA SKRAPITS

**F**lashback: A warm spring morning in Snyder County during May 1973, posing with Grandpa and his 20-pound longbeard. I was 7 years old, looking cool and confident with a toothpick hanging out my mouth. Don't let this face fool you; I was petrified!

I remember it like it was yesterday. Although this cherished moment standing with my Grandpa warms my heart, the feeling of this ugly longbeard's cold, bloody, bumpy, stubbly haired head will be etched in my brain forever – as

it winked at me –I swear it did.

**Present:** I have overcome. I now hunt and work for this majestic, handsome bird. And oh yes, I clean them myself – blood, guts, and all!



## Local PA NWTF chapters donate turkeys to local food banks through the Turkey Hunters Care program

**T**he Peters Creek Trail Chapter donated 200 turkeys to five western Pennsylvania food banks for the holiday season. Participating in the NWTF's Turkey Hunters Care program for a third year, the 138-member chapter raised \$2,900 to purchase the turkeys. The Chapter donated the turkeys to the Mon Valley Food Bank in Finnleyville, Round Hill Presbyterian Church in Elizabeth, Glassport Assembly of God Church, Central Fire Hall in Elizabeth, and Intersection, a food bank and community center based in McKeesport that hosts a Thanksgiving dinner.

On Nov. 18, members of the Allegheny Mountain Chapter donated 68 thanksgiving turkeys to the St. Vincent DePaul-Assumption Chapel food pantry in Altoona. The chapter also donated an additional 40 turkeys to the St. Vincent DePaul/Knights of Columbus in Lilly and 12 turkeys to the New Enterprise Church of the Brethern.



Left to right: St. Vincent DePaul-Assumption Chapel volunteers Jim Smith, Sam Coen, Fred Pasquini, Ray Amato, Bill Weigley and Allegheny Mountain Chapter member Matt Zunich.

# The turkey dog

BY MARK MACHAMER AS TOLD TO  
HAROLD DAUB

**T**urk is an Appalachian Turkey Dog from John Byrne's stock. Byrne did very selective breeding to produce the dogs he offers today. A finished turkey dog will provide the fall turkey hunter with a wonderful hunting partner. Searching the woods for the scent of a turkey flock, the dog will track the flock once one is discovered, running into the birds and barking excitedly. After the successful break, the trained turkey dog will return to the hunter, where it will sit perfectly still (usually in a custom-made sack) and will watch as the hunter calls a bird back to the gun. Following is the story of Mark Machamer's turkey dog, "Turk."

Mark Machamer first began going to New York around 1990, spending many fall and spring days there in pursuit of the wild turkey. In 2001, while reading Internet articles about turkey hunting in New York, he came across an article about Appalachian Turkey Dogs. One particular article talked of using John Byrne's turkey dogs, and it piqued Mark's interest about turkey dogs.

At the time, turkey dogs were not legal to use in Pennsylvania, but Mark was hunting as often as possible in New York, where they were legal. Mark contacted John Byrne to inquire about the famous Appalachian Turkey Dogs. Byrne informed Mark that he could be added to his waiting list of folks who were interested in the dogs, which he did.

A year later, in April 2002, Mark received a phone call from John, asking if he was ready for a puppy. That evening, Mark discussed the puppy situation with his wife, Brooke, including

how much training the dog would require, the cost of the dog, and the added difficulty of not being able to use the dog for turkeys in Pennsylvania. Brooke was actually the first to suggest they go through with the adoption, and eventually put her foot down, knowing how much Mark wanted one of the dogs, saying, "Stop worrying about the money, call Mr. Byrne, and let's take the dog!" Then, Mark's daughters, Ashley and Maura, got involved in the puppy project. Being that the pup was to be a turkey dog, they felt "Turk" would be a good name for it.

Next, the Machamers were on their way to Lowry, Virginia, and the home of John Byrne. The puppies were at John's son J.T.'s home, a short distance away. Mark would have his choice of the remaining male puppies, so after getting acquainted, the Machamers and Brynes went to see the litter. Once there, Maura led the way down to the porch where the puppies lay asleep on a rug. One of the pups awoke with a huge yawn, stood up, and went trotting to Maura. The search for Turk was over at that moment.

Soon the family was headed north for Pennsylvania with Turk lying in Brooke's lap. It didn't take long for the new pup to demonstrate his bird sense and his nose when he flushed a flock of sparrows from a bush at a rest stop during the trip. Mark knew right then, "This was the start of something great."

Turk's training was started immediately upon his arrival at his new home. In addition to the regular routine of housebreaking, the Machamers also started Turk's special training. The first of those lessons was to be trained to sit quietly while concealed in a camouflaged bag or sack. Mark reports that Brooke again took the lead with that

task as Mark was busy working swing shifts and also a second job. One day she had Mark sit down with Turk's bag and instructed him to call for Turk. Turk surprised Mark by crawling right into the bag, allowing Mark to zip it up with just the dog's head exposed!

Mark purchased a domestic turkey from a local farmer, and this bird was used to introduce Turk to his intended quarry. Mark reports that just as the instincts of the Lab or beagle take over in their training, the turkey dog displayed that same instinctive attraction to the large bird.

Also instrumental in the early training of Turk was Mark's hunting partner Jeff Bordner. Jeff and Mark built a turkey pen where they housed a small flock of domesticated turkeys, which they would use to train the dog further. As fall approached, the pair was very anxious to head to New York to do some actual hunting with Turk.

From the start, Turk proved to be a valuable asset to the fall turkey hunters. Both Mark and Jeff report that their first thought after seeing the dog work to break a flock of turkeys was how much safer it was using the dog versus humans. They would watch as Turk would get "birdie," spend a few seconds in figuring out which direction the flock had moved, and then make beeline in the appropriate direction. Usually within thirty seconds, the turkey dog would begin barking, signaling he had located the flock and was in the act of scattering the birds.

Jeff relayed the story of a break he was able to observe, as Turk broke a flock in an open field in New York this past fall. He said the dog picked up the scent, figured out which direction he had to go, and then sped toward the feeding birds. As the birds realized the

# og experience

presence of the dog and began to run, Jeff said he could see Turk displaying amazing speed, which propelled him amongst the flock, making them flush.

After the break, the dog returns to his handler and the hunters attempt to call a turkey into shotgun range. Mark explains that at times the birds will begin to call almost immediately. Other times, the turkeys will sit in the trees and will not return to the ground nor call for quite some time.

Turk will be seven years old this spring. Mark is very happy that in June of 2007, Pennsylvania law was changed to allow the use of dogs when hunting fall turkeys. He passes along his thanks to the PA NWTF and to all of the individuals who worked so hard to change the Pennsylvania regulations. Mark still enjoys his trips to New York with Turk, but it is so much nicer now that he can also enjoy watching his prized family pet work the turkey woods here in Pennsylvania.



## Enhancement Project

hunters and other conservation minded people work together. Much credit is due to the volunteers from the Honey Hole Longbeards and the Pheasants Forever Northeast Chapter. Kevin Wenner deserves much credit as well because he is the one that put the plan together. There is still work to be done on the Hoda Farm, but the groundwork has been laid. These groups will continue to work on the land to finish what has been started. Once the project is complete, the same groups will devote time, energy, and their hard-earned funding to maintain the project site. Congratulations to everyone who played a role in this fine work!

from page 08



# Habitat Corner

## What Should I Plant?

BY BOB SCHMID –  
NWTF HABITAT PRO STAFF

As the New Year begins, it often is a time when food plotters start planning what they will plant this year. A question that often comes up at my food plot seminars is “What one thing can I plant to attract a particular favorite species?” To answer the question I have to ask a host of other questions myself. What size is your food plot? What equipment do you have or is available to you? What time of year do you want to attract or provide nutrition to that target species? How often do you want to replant this plot? What other food plots do you have or are nearby?

So often, we want an easy answer to the question. We want to know that one “magic bean” that will attract bountiful supplies of that target species. In this issue, I would like to explore several types of grains and forages that you might consider planting in 2009 and hopefully lead you to the answer to the question what should I plant this year?

One basic question to be answered is how often do you want to plant or replant this food plot? If you want multiple years out of the planting you will do this year, then you need to look at perennials. Perennials are those plant species that live for multiple years. A good example is clover. Annuals, on the other hand, live only one year. Corn and soybeans would be an example of an annual plant. The annuals need to be replanted every year, which may factor into your decision on what to plant this year.

The size of the plot and the equipment you have available to you go hand in hand. If your plot is multiple acres you better have larger equipment available or you will be spending a whole lot of time in all the phases of developing and maintaining that food plot. One misconception that I have heard recently is the need for at least three acres to have a successful plot of corn. This might be true in areas where the deer population is very high, but I have had success with planting corn and soybeans in as small as a one-acre plot. Remember sunlight is a key component to good food plots, and the smaller the plot usually means the less sunlight available.

When deciding what to plant, some consideration should be given to what other sources of food might be in the area and what time of year you hope to provide nutrition to that target species. For turkeys, I want to have clover available to them early in the spring and then again in the summer. Early in the spring, the turkeys seem to forage for those first green shoots, and the clover plots seem to attract them. Then in summer when the poults are actively looking for bugs, the clover once again gets their attention. The clover is providing food for bugs at that time, and the turkeys are there to feed on the bugs.

In the winter, I want to have corn available to the turkeys. I

found over the years that if I don't have corn in the winter, the birds will find food somewhere else, and they seem to drift away to other properties. Corn doesn't really provide much nutrition until the ears develop, and corn can also attract non-target species like raccoons and bears. Recently, I have found that turkeys will eat soybeans in the winter, so this is now becoming one of my favorite types of annual. The seed is cheaper than corn seed, and soy beans are a nitrogen-fixing legume, which means you can buy fertilizer with a lower nitrogen content that is usually cheaper. Although we use a traditional planter for planting our beans, I have heard of people who broadcast spread, then drag their soybean seed when planting. They typically spread at a higher rate per acre when they broadcast spread, but they are having success when using this technique to plant. This can mean using less expensive equipment if you are just getting started.

We usually have deer on our list of target species, and again, soybeans are great for feeding deer. The leaves provide lots of nutrition from mid to late summer; then the beans attract deer all winter long, or until they are totally consumed. Another good annual for attracting deer is brassica. Brassica is fast growing, easy to plant, and easy to care for. It can be planted early or late in the season, and it will provide nutrition quickly to the deer. I have planted brassica in late July, and it still produced good forage and tolerated the dry

conditions of summer. Brassica is known for being more attractive to deer after the first hard frost of the season. The sugar content in the leaves is raised after the first frost, and the deer seem to prefer the brassica after that. However, I have observed deer happily feeding in my brassica patch in August.

Of course, clover is the king of the food plot seed when it comes to feeding deer and attracting other species too. Clover is

what got the food plot industry going, and any discussion on seed has to include clover. If I was forced to pick only one thing to plant and I had a limited amount of time to work on my food plot, I would choose clover. If properly established and maintained, clover can last for five years or more. Clover provides nutrition to a wide variety of animals and over a wide period of time during the year. Clover is easy to plant and can be used in small food plots as well as large food plots. I have planted clover in small plots using a garden rototiller, backpack sprayer, a rake, and a broadcast bag spreader.

So what is that magic bean that you should plant in 2009? The answer depends on many things that you should consider before you buy seed. Hopefully, you will have a better idea now as you look through the seed catalogs on these cold winter nights. For more information on creating food plots and other habitat management techniques log on to <http://www.panwtf.org/habitat.php>.



# The sawtooth oak

BY JOE KRUG

**I**t was late September, and I managed to find time to do some pre-season scouting for the upcoming archery season. Always being the type of person who liked to kill two birds with one stone, I would also use the occasion to look in on some sawtooth oak plantings.

As I approached the young trees, my optimism escalated. From a distance, I could tell that the trees were considerably larger than during my last visit. Hopefully, they would now be producing some fruit. What I found exceeded all expectations. Almost all of the trees were supporting generous numbers of shaggy-capped acorns. Even more exciting was these same trees were covered with very small acorns, which would produce next year's crop. One specimen was even holding a few weather-darkened caps from the previous year. Acorns three years in a row – almost unheard of with most native oaks!

My reasons for excitement were not confined to this species' productiveness. What was most encouraging is that this was all happening on some very infertile surface-mine soil. I managed to make some other observations of notable importance. Some trees were protected from deer by wire cages, and some had no protection at all. The unprotected trees showed almost no evidence of deer browsing. In this same region, most native oak seedlings struggle just to survive.

On a recent hunting trip to Ohio, I was fortunate to have an opportunity to observe the progress of a large-scale oak

planting. The red, scarlet, and chestnut oaks were all suppressed by deer browsing. Most had their work cut out for them just to rise above the whitetail, and I am certain many will not survive.

However, the burr oaks were faring much better. They did show signs of browse damage, but it was limited, and their prospects for survival looked good. The young sawtooth oaks in this same planting were by far the largest of all the oak species. Almost all were too tall to be affected by deer and showed next to no damage from browsing. It all sounds almost too good to be true.

On the previous strip-mine site, some of the oaks were interplanted with autumn olive. Most of the sawtooths that were growing next to autumn olive bushes were almost double the size of the ones that were not. The autumn olive were serving as nurse trees for the oaks, which in turn were obviously benefiting from the nitrogen-fixing abilities of this species. Autumn olive is very shade intolerant, and eventually the oaks with shade it out. Perhaps if one desires to control the aggressiveness of autumn olive, oak plantings would be more favorable than chemical controls.

My experience with sawtooth oak began about a decade ago. I had an opportunity to chat with Ned Weston, who was a regional land manager for the Pennsylvania Game Commission at the time. Ned was very high on sawtooth oak. He told me that it was doing very well on some strip-mine locations in his region, and it was beginning to reproduce and spread without assis-

tance. Armed with this information, I contacted my friends at the Game Commission and arranged to have a few seedlings shipped to me.

When the package arrived, they were pretty much what I had anticipated – small seedlings, each with a short section of a huge taproot, typical for a nut-bearing tree. These are non-controllable factors that make oaks difficult to transplant and slow to establish themselves.

In my backyard nursery, I can grow an apple tree to a height of around six feet in two growing seasons. Expect sawtooth oak to be no more than three feet high at the end of three growing seasons due to transplant shock. With apple, crabap-

ple, and hawthorne, I like working with a tree in the five- to six-foot size. But with oaks, I want them no more than three feet high. On our oak plantings, I lost some of the largest trees due to transplant shock, while almost all the smaller-sized specimens survived.

I prefer to work with container-grown tree stock. After a couple of years, the roots of the young trees will begin to protrude outside of their containers. On species with large taproots, this is an undesirable condition. Keep your young oaks on the small size, and they will transplant much better.

Sawtooth oak is native to Japan and the Near East. It is somewhat smaller than most native oak species, topping out around 50 feet tall at maturity. It is reasonable to expect this species to begin to produce fruit about seven or eight years after planting. With most native oaks, 40 years is a realistic expectation.



# Bonnice Farm Landowner Field Day

BY BOB ERIKSEN, NWTF  
REGIONAL BIOLOGIST

Cooperation and coordination are often necessary to carry out a plan or to sponsor an event. A handful of conservation groups gathered last summer in northeastern Pennsylvania to initiate a landowner field day in Susquehanna County. The Susquehanna Branch of the Quality Deer Management Association, Northern Counties Full Fan Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Wilson Moore Chapter-NWTF, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Richmondale Hunting Club sponsored a field day and JAKES event on the Bonnice Farm near Fairdale in mid-September. The participating clubs met on several occasions to begin planning the event and look for speakers. Bob Wagner of the Susquehanna Branch and a NRCS employee was instrumental in initiating the process. Bruce Bonnice graciously offered his family's 400-acre farm as the place to hold the event. Members of the Full Fans Chapter, the QDMA group, and others worked at developing a schedule for the day, lining up tractors and hay wagons to haul people around the farm, and gathering tents, tables, chairs and cooking equipment.

QDMA Branch and Northern Counties Full Fans Chapter members pounded the pavement for donations to use as door prizes, raffle items, gifts and silent auction items to offset costs. QDMA sponsored lunch

for the event and provided the essential portable toilets. PA NWTF supplied coffee, doughnuts, brochures, and folders for attendees to keep their information together. Lunch consisted of hamburgers and hot dogs grilled by the gourmet cooks from the Richmondale Hunting Club. Adult attendees were treated to hay-wagon tours of the Bonnice Farm where they could observe and discuss food plot installation and maintenance. The tour featured warm-season grasses performing their function of providing nesting cover for birds and escape cover for deer and cottontail rabbits, conifer buffers, well-managed hedgerows, wetlands restoration, and good timber management. In addition, there were educational sessions under the "big top" on properly managing deer on your property, planting nutritious food plots for deer, managing wild turkey habitat, and managing warm season grasses. NWTF Habitat

Pro-Staffer Jack Sorber, Dave Sienko, Bob Eriksen, Bruce Bonnice, and Bob Wagner conducted seminars. Displays provided information on USDA Farm Bill Programs, judging whitetail antlers, food plot seed products, QDMA, and NWTF.

While the adults were learning how to better manage their land, children participated in an all day JAKES event run by members of the Northern Counties Full Fans Chapter. Each JAKE spent time shooting on the DART system under the supervision of Kevin Urian and Jim Dovin. Every youth attended a session on aging deer taught by QDMA members Dave Taylor, Rusty Ely, and Dave Sienko and built a box call from scratch with Full Fans Chapter members. Two high school seniors, Scott Sienko and Carlos Cuevas, took the JAKES on a woods walk where they

observed wildlife sign and learned more about the outdoors. If there was any extra time, the youngsters were welcome to wet a line in the pond.

Larry Lee, Jim Holbert, Jim Dovin (both Jr. and Sr.), Bob Wagner, Jack Sorber, and others helped with the job of setting up tents in the rain on the evening prior to the event. Art Lucarelli and others assisted with registration and many other details. The tractor tours were operated by John Butler, Ken Singer, and Ed Grasavage. There were many other volunteers at work to make this event a success. Rain threatened all day, but it held off until the event was over. In all, 55 adults and 22 young persons attended the event and had a day filled with learning, fellowship, fun, and food. Many thanks are due the Susquehanna Branch, the NWTF Chapters and the Richmondale Hunting Club members who worked hard and prepared the food. This was a great event and a classic example of a cooperative effort by these conservation groups. Well done, everyone!



# Plotting for Success

BY KEVIN TITUS

Several years ago, the Schuylkill Spurs chapter agreed to partner with the Pennsylvania Game Commission in what was to become an exemplary food plot project on State Game Lands 326 near the towns of Frackville and St. Clair in Schuylkill County. This project lies on the top of a rock-studded mountain, and none of us really knew if it could be pulled off successfully, but we had dream. After several years of trial and error, filled with both delights and disappointment, we have nearly achieved our goal, and it can only get better.

The project began with Game Commission personnel clearing twelve plots of various shapes and sizes by cutting and bulldozing trees, then pushing the stumps and limbs onto piles surrounding the plots. This provides plenty of security cover for the cottontail rabbits that now abound in many of the plots. It's also not a bad place to set up and ambush a turkey being called into the opening. Because the topsoil had been pushed from these plots when the stumps were removed, the prospects of growing lush food plots were poor. One advantage, however, was that most of the dormant weed seeds had also been removed.

The following spring, the Game Commission limed and fertilized the food plots, and the NWTF volunteers plowed, disked, and seeded all thirteen acres. Most were planted in Northeast-Midwest Strut and Rut, which was obtained from the NWTF, while two were planted in Pennington Seed Company's Durana white clover, with two more being planted in a blend of chicory and staghorn plantain from Saddle Pro Seed Company. The last plot was planted in a brassica mix from Saddle Pro. A word of caution is in order concerning the Strut and Rut mix. It contains annual rye grass, which can completely take over a food plot if left unchecked. We now prefer a blend of red and white clovers and chicory in our perennial food plots. This ensures there will always be some clover at various stages of maturity, and the chicory is a great supplement during periods of extreme drought.

During the following months, some of our food plots began to look really good, but some were dismal. The soil in some plots was

quite sandy, and some others were mostly shale. Among the plots with better soil, we noticed that the best of the bunch were the plots that were seeded with a hand spreader, rather than using the Plot Master planting machine. Hand seeding takes a little longer but seems to give much better seed dispersal. We watched and waited patiently throughout the summer, wondering what the following year would bring.

When spring arrived, we noticed some changes in the plot where the brassica had been planted. Approximately fifty percent of this brassica mix had been purple-top turnips. White-tailed deer had eaten the tops off after a heavy frost sweetened them, but the huge, softball-sized turnips had remained largely undisturbed. These were decomposing in the ground and replenishing the organic matter that was lost in the topsoil. There was a dis-



tinct difference in the color and texture of the soil. We were onto something here!

Through talking to some long-time farmers and experimentation by myself on my own private food plots, we decided to follow up the turnips with a crop of buckwheat. Buckwheat, if planted early enough and protected from hungry deer, will reseed itself and produce a second small crop in late summer. The buckwheat stems, when plowed under and allowed to decompose, will aid subsequent clover crops in more readily extracting much needed phosphorus from the soil.

Wild turkeys like few things better than buckwheat seeds, but if there are many deer present, they seldom give unprotected buckwheat a chance to reach maturity. Our secret weapon has been the Plot Saver Deer Barrier System. This consists of a ribbon suspended thirty inches above the ground with plot saver concentrate sprayed on every thirty days.

Deer will avoid the smell of this saturated ribbon, while turkeys will go under it to feed on insects in the plot. When the buckwheat matures, take the ribbon down, and the deer can enjoy the leaves while the turkeys continue to feast on the insects and seeds. We have also used this system successfully on corn and soybean plots to keep deer out and allow turkeys in.

We plan on keeping most of these plots on SGL 326 in clover and chicory blends but will rotate crops as needed, keeping three or four plots in annuals every year. Our standard procedure on these mountaintops, where topsoil is thin to nonexistent, will now go something like this: during years one and two, plant purple-top turnips, followed in year three by buckwheat, and finally, a clover and chicory blend in year four. It is not recommended that you plant turnips in the same plot for more than two years in a row due to possible complications from fungus. If, after planting buckwheat in year three, you still feel like you need to build up your organic matter, you can plant turnips again. Remember, however, that your decomposing buckwheat stems are also building your topsoil. Also, proper soil amendment is still necessary, and lime and fertilizer should be applied according to an annual soil test.

In the past few years, Schuylkill Spurs volunteers have also planted on SGL 326 crabapple and gobbler sawtooth oak trees, which were obtained from the NWTF, and a small orchard of red delicious apple trees obtained from the Game Commission. We still have some changes and improvements to make, and of course, no one is ever done learning, but our program is fast becoming the talk of local sportsmen and conservationists. Thanks to the tireless efforts of our NWTF volunteers and the Pennsylvania Game Commission, these food plots now harbor an abundance of white-tailed deer, cottontail rabbits, black bears gorging themselves on blueberries along the sunny field edges, ruffed grouse enjoying clover and the insects it harbors, honeybees busily flying from blossom to blossom, and, of course, wild turkeys feasting on a little bit of everything! By the time our recently planted trees start to bear fruit, all of our food plots should be in great shape, and everyone will be happy with our efforts. Well, at least the wildlife will.

# Southern End Strutters

## host their first

# Wheelin' Sportsmen hunt

BY JOHN GROFF – CHAPTER  
PRESIDENT, SOUTHERN END  
STRUTTERS

**O**n May 17, 2008, the Southern End Strutters Chapter hosted our first annual Wheelin' Sportsmen spring turkey hunt. The hunt took place in southern Lancaster County. We had permission to hunt three different farms, and the evening before the hunt, three volunteers went to each farm to try to roost some birds for the next day. That day we had an inch and a half of rain and wind, which made scouting almost impossible. No one could seem to find the birds. The Thursday before the hunt, one farmer had seen two birds in one of his fields, so we decided to hunt that location.

May 17 was a perfect morning for turkey hunting, sunny, clear, and calm. The antici-

pation of hearing a gobble was high, but on that morning, all that we would hear was the springtime sounds of some chirping birds. We hunted our first location until 9:30 and then decided to relocate to another spot on the farm. We hunted this spot until 11:00, hoping to find a lovesick gobbler, but unfortunately, we never did.

Our hunter, Dave Smith of Lancaster, was never disappointed. He told us that he was very grateful that someone would take the time to take him out hunting. In my opinion, a successful hunt is one in which everyone involved has enjoyed himself. Just having the opportunity to get out is what it is all about. Harvesting an animal is just a bonus. Many people take for granted all the things that they have. We all need to stop and be thankful for all that we have. After the hunt, we had a picnic at Muddy Run Park. All the volunteers involved got together and enjoyed some food and great hunting stories, which

added to making the day a great success.

I want to thank all the volunteers from the Southern End Strutters for donating their time and efforts. Without them, none of it would have been possible. Thank you to all the sponsors involved in the day's events: Lee Bowles and Dave Stock of South Penn Turkey Calls for donating calls to our hunter; "Smokey" Roberts Enterprise for providing the videography; Bobbi Jean Martin of Single Stitch Embroidering for donating hats for the event; Fred Ressel for donating a custom-made call to our hunter; Hernley's Polaris ATV dealer for donating a Polaris Ranger ATV for the event; Charlie Smithgaull for granting us permission to hunt his farm; and most important, the NWTF and the Wheelin' Sportsmen Program. Thank you all for everything. We can't wait until next year.

Through the planning and preparation of this event, I learned a lot. I think that many persons are naive about what the NWTF is all about. There are so many things, as a chapter, we can do for conservation and hunting heritage. This was by far one of the most rewarding things that I have ever done in my life. The pleasure that Dave Smith got out of a few volunteers taking a little time out of their schedule to take him hunting was unbelievable. This man didn't even hear a bird, and he was completely satisfied. If for no other reason than seeing the satisfaction that Dave got from this hunt, that is the perfect reason to push forward and do more for the NWTF so that we all can experience what some Southern End Strutters did on May 17.

I have met and made friends with so many wonderful people through the NWTF. There is no doubt in my mind that the NWTF will always be number one. Thanks to the PA NWTF and the Wheelin' Sportsmen Program for all that you do for us.



Back row, from left to right: "Smokey" Roberts, videographer; Mike Trout, chapter treasurer and guide; Tim Martin, chapter vice president and guide; Jay Shenberger, chapter member and guide; and John Groff, chapter president and hunt organizer. Front: Dave Smith, hunter.



# Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter is committed to increasing youth involvement

BY DANIELLE STALEY

**T**he Penn's Woods Chapter held their third-annual JAKES Field Day at the Trafford Sportsman's Club on the first Saturday of September. The event was attended by over 30 kids and their parents and was filled with hands-on activities. Members of the sportsmen's club were on hand to provide instructions and pointers. The events included shooting trap, archery, .22s, black powder, and the interactive DART system, with some gener-

al information about the wild turkey and hunting safety. All attendees enjoyed the opportunity to experience each of the different outdoor activities and learn new techniques for some they may have already tried in the past. All children in attendance received a JAKES membership courtesy of the Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter so they can continue to learn more about the outdoors and the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Along with the annual JAKES Field Days, the Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter pays a yearly visit

to a local elementary school and uses the NWTF Education Box while speaking with their third-grade students. The elementary school located in Penn Hills has an environmental focus and works with the Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter to increase the awareness of their students about the impact we can make on the environment. The Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter President, Jason Straley, visits the school and first speaks with the class and shows the videos provided in the Education Box to familiarize the students with the North American wild turkey and the National Wild Turkey Federation. Afterwards, they take a nature walk in which Jason will ask questions of the students about the wild turkey

materials from the Education Box, representatives from the chapter have attended troop meetings and presented information to the kids regarding the wild turkey and the National Wild Turkey Federation. The troop members learn about the history of the NWTF and get to work with the different calls and learn about the turkey and their habitat. During one of the most recent visits with a local Girl Scout troop in Monroeville, members assisted the girls in making turkeys out of pine cones, feathers, and felt for Thanksgiving decorations. The members of the local troops also receive JAKES memberships courtesy of the Chapter so they too can continue their involvement with the NWTF.



and use some of the various turkey calls to try to bring a response. The children always enjoy their time on the nature walk and are always surprised when a bird will respond to their call.

The Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter has also done work with local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops. Again, using

The work that the Penn's Woods Spurs Chapter does helps to ensure that future generations have an understanding and appreciation of the outdoors and the North American wild turkey. We hope that they continue to be involved and enjoy the outdoor sports for years to come.

# 2009 Hunting Heritage Banquets

<b>Date</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Feb. 13	Kinzua Allegheny Longbeards	Sheffield Fire Hall, Sheffield	Rob Arnold 814-436-1048
Feb. 14	Col-Mont Gobblers	Danville Elks, Danville	Matt Swartz 570-436-1048
Feb. 21	Gobblers Knob Chapter	Punxsutawney Country Club, Punxsutawney	Scott Aarnt 814-375-7839
Feb. 27	Steel City Spurs Chapter	Alpine Hunting & Fishing Club, Bridgeville	Ed Planinsek 412-221-0515
Feb. 28	Roger Latham Memorial	Chapter Junior's Restaurant, Coraopolis	Dallas Stewart 412-262-2435
Feb. 28	Stoney Valley Chapter	Lower Swatara Fire Hall, Middletown	Dave Plouse 717-948-0130
Feb. 28	Lake Marburg Chapter	Porters Community Firehall, Spring Grove	Dave Fraizer 717-225-5842
Feb. 28	Moshannon Chapter	Dubois VFW, Dubois	Brian Stoddard 814-371-6634
March 6	Wolf Creek Longbeards Chapter	Grove City Rescue Squad, Grove City	Dean Osborne 724-458-6078
March 6	Jerry Zimmerman Memorial Chapter	Days Inn, Allentown	Bruce Dietrich 610-298-2424
March 6	Shade Mountain Chapter	Port Royal Comm. Building, Port Royal	Don Geedey 717-436-6433
March 7	Pococno Mountains Chapter	Towamensing Fire Company, Kresgeville	Skipp Motts 570-619-8880
March 7	Mon Valley Longbeards Chapter	Carol Twp. Social Hall, Monongahela	Tony Bertram 724-930-8880
March 7	Terrace Mountain Chapter	Smithfield Vol. Fire Co., Huntingdon	Emily Jenkins 814-207-1565
March 7	Delaware County Longbeards	Ballrooms @ Boothwyn, Boothwyn	Chuck Mathues 610-496-5930
March 7	Susquehanna Chapter	Knights of Columbus, Clearfield	Bill Shaw 814-765-8512
March 13	Red Rose Chapter	Lancaster Host, Lancaster	Ray Smith 570-398-0721
March 13	Friendship Hill Spurs Chapter	Fayette Co. Fairgrounds, Dunbar	Kevin Yonkura 724-246-2006
March 14	Schuykill Spurs	Landingville Fire Hall, Landingville	Jeff Post, 570-366-7783
March 14	Wapiti Roost Chapter	Red Fern, St. Marys	Mike Haines 814-781-6273
March 14	Tuscarora Longbeards Chapter	American Legion, McConnellsburg	Shawn Mowen 717-267-2590
March 14	Warrior Trail Gobblers Chapter	Waynesburg Moose, Waynesburg	Francis Watt 724-228-8011
March 19	Laurel Highlands Committee	Four Points Inn, Greensburg	Ed Maczka 724-423-7703
March 20	Lakefront Gobblers Chapter	Franklin TWP Fire Hall, Edinboro	Dennis & Brandie Wade 814-756-3669
March 21	Millcreek Chapter	Limestone Fire Hall, Limestone	Bud Wills 814-379-3759
March 21	Lower Bucks Longbeards	Eagles Lodge Hall 3489, Fairless Hills	Bucky Shimp 215-493-5602
March 21	Nittany Valley Longbeards	Lambert Hall, Bellefonte	Matt Hassinger 814-237-5102
March 21	Peters Creek Trail Chapter	West Newton Firehall, West Newton	Melvin Gouker 724-929-2966
March 21	Ten Mile Valley Chapter	Alpine Club, Washington	Jeff McCombs 412-997-8413
March 21	Cascade Thunderin' Toms Chapter	Shenango Twp Firehall, New Castle	David Boston 724-924-2209
March 22-	Bald Eagle Longbeards	Red Eye Club, Flemington	Walter Long 570-748-4379
March 24	Shenango Valley Beards and Spurs	Hermitage VFW, Hermitage	Chris Bradac 814-962-5611
March 27	Armenia Mountain Spurs	Troy Fire Hall, Troy	Tommy Caulkins 570-287-5123
March 27	South East Silver Spurs	Best Western, Kulpsville	Ray Donis 215-723-1486
March 27	Allegheny Valley Chapter	Futules Harmar House, Cheswick	Mike Zourleis 724-265-0903
March 28	Lake Region Longbeards	BeneOcos Beef & Brew, Hamlin	Mark Davis 570-698-7917
March 28	Honey Hole Longbeards	Lobitz Hall, Hazleton	Jan Pasdon, 570-455-8004
March 28	Fort Chambers Chapter	Fayetteville Fire Co. Event Center, Fayetteville	Dennis Barnhart 717-263-5952
March 28	Endless Mountain Chapter	Sayre Elks, Sayre	Terry Catlin 607-739-3993
Apr.2	Alleghney Sultans Chapter	Cross Creek Resort, Titusville	Vanessa Rockavich 814-677-6989
Apr.4	2nd Chance Tom's Chapter	Ambridge Sportsmen's Club, Ambridge	Don Short 724-846-0875
Apr. 4	Lykens Valley Longbeards	Kevin's Place , Lykens	Harold Daub 717-362-8059
Apr. 4	Tamarak Turkey Talkers	Corry VFW, Corry	Steve Anderson 814-664-9807
Apr. 4	Kinzua Valley Chapter	American Legion,Mt. Jewett	Alan Reynolds 814-778-6809
Apr. 9	Arnie Hayden Memorial Chapter	Tioga Co. Fair Grounds, Whitneyville	Jack Wise 570-662-7860
Apr. 16	NW Thunderin' Toms Chapter	Meadville ELKS, Meadville	Bob Morgan 814-587-2780
May 2	Juniata Gobblers Chapter	Breezewood Firehll, Breezewood	Jamie Spade 814-735-2026
May 9	Wilson F. Moore Memorial Chapter	Montrose VFW, Montrose	Ray Smith 570-398-0721
May 16	Shippensburg Strutters Chapter	Penn Twp Fire Co., Newville	Spencer Miller 717-776-7288
May 29	White Deer Jakes	Allenwood Social Hall, Allenwood	Scott Letterman 570-568-0839
May 30	Northern County Full Fans	Heart Lake Lodge, Carbondale	Kevin Urian 570-282-7545
May 30	Cameron County Longbeards	Emporium VFW, Emporium	Ray Kratz 814-546-2687
June 6	North Boro Double Beards Chapter	North Side Sportsman's Assoc, Warendale	Bob Schmid 412-766-7687
June 10	Allegheny Plateau Chapter	Ace's Lounge, Johnstown	Bill Nagy 814-341-2008
June 11	Reading Ridge Runners	Reading LiederKranz, Reading	Pete Nelson 610-286-0975
June 12	Yellow Creek Chapter	Rustic Lodge, Indiana	Rick Roser 724-479-0779
June 13	Central Limbhangers	Houtzdale Fire Hall, Houtzdale	Joan Myers 814-339-6557
June 13	Whitehorse Mtn. Longbeards Chapter	Oakhurst Tea Room, Somerset	Doug Koscianski 814-701-8080
June 14	Kit-Han-Ne Chapter	Kittanning Twp Firehall, Kittanning	Don Smail 724-545-9585

Continued on Page 19



## 2009 Pennsylvania Events

**D**o you enjoy activities in the out of doors? Would you like to learn outdoor skills or brush up on old ones, and network with other women who enjoy the same outdoor activities as you enjoy?

Then come and participate in a National Wild Turkey Federation's Women in the Outdoors event! You will learn outdoor skills in a non-competitive environment. Skills that you can take home and share with family and friends. Make new friends and maybe take up a new hobby.

### March 7

Moraine Chapter  
Tammy Mowry, 724-284-9201, tam-mynwtf@zoominternet.net  
Butler City Hunting & Fishing Club, East Butler (Butler County)

### May 16

PA State Chapter and Black Moshannon State Park  
Michelle McCloskey, 814-342-5960, black-moshannonsp@state.pa.us  
Tammy Mowry, 724-284-9201, tam-mynwtf@zoominternet.net  
Black Moshannon State Park, Philipsburg (Centre County)

### May 30

Kinzua Allegheny Chapter  
Jessica Arnold, 814-436-1048, duckdog@outdrs.net  
Chapman State Park, Clarendon (Warren County)

### May 30

Sherman's Valley Strutters Chapter  
Judy Bitting, 717-834-5908, judybitting@hotmail.com  
Duncannon Sportsmen's Association, Duncannon (Perry County)

### June 13

Jerry Zimmerman Memorial Chapter  
Katrina Skrapits, 610-760-1689, kskrap@ptd.net  
Ontelaunee Rod & Gun Club, New Tripoli (Lehigh County)

### June 12-14

PA State Chapter and Sinnemahoning State Park  
Jackie Flynn, 814-647-8401, jallynn@state.pa.us  
Sinnemahoning State Park, Austin (Cameron County)

### June 20

Wilhelm Chapter  
Annette Tobin 814-734-1691, lattobin@peoplepc.com  
Lake Edinboro Sportsman League, Edinboro (Crawford County)

### June 27

Tuscarora Longbeards Chapter  
Michelle Rossetti, 717-977-0798, michelle.rossetti@lmco.com  
Greencastle Sportsman Association, Greencastle (Franklin)

### July 18

Moraine Chapter  
Tammy Mowry, 724-284-9201, tam-mynwtf@zoominternet.net  
Butler City Hunting & Fishing Club, East Butler (Butler County)

### August 8

Mt. Pisgah State Park  
Nicole Carman Harris, 570-297-2734, nicolecarman@yahoo.com  
Mt. Pisgah State Park, Troy (Bradford County)

### August 15

Lower Bucks Longbeards Chapter  
Dawn Secrest, 267-253 9002, girlshunt2@comcast.net  
Langhorne Rod & Gun Club, Southampton (Bucks County)

### August 22

Bald Eagle Longbeards Chapter  
Mary Probst, 570-748-3339  
Western Clinton Sportsmen's Association, Hyner (Clinton County)

### August 22

Lakefront Gobblers Chapter  
Brandie Wade, 814-756-3669, BrandieWade@parapack.com  
Presque Isle State Park, Erie (Erie County)

*For a current list of events or more information, contact: Tammy Mowry, National Coordinator at 724-284-9201 or by e-mail at tammyrnwtf@zoominternet.net.*

## Banquets Continued

June 14 Mason Dixon Chapter  
June 19 Southern End Strutters  
June 20 Tussey Mountain Strutters Chapter  
June 27 Brush Valley Chapter  
July 25 Susquehanna Longbeards  
Aug. 15 Walking Purchase Chapter  
Aug. 16 Western Regional Chapter  
Aug. 21 Mehoopany Creek  
Aug. 21 Allegheny Mountain Chapter  
Aug. 22 SUN Area Chapter  
Aug. 22 East Coast Thunderin Toms

Emigsville Fire Co, Emigsville  
Lancaster County Sportsmans Assoc., Holtwod  
Morrison's Cove Banquet Hall, Martinsburg  
Tall Ceder's Banquet Hall, Sunbury  
Linden Fire hall, Linden  
Lehigh Twp. Country Garden, Cherryville  
Lawrence Co. Sportsman;s Assoc, Wampum  
Dotti-Lou Grove, Tunkannock  
Bavarian Hall, Altoona  
Grace Covenant Community Church  
Comfort Suites, Bethlehem

Tom Bunty 717-292-9444  
John Groff 717-786-3774  
Chris McNally 814-224-5555  
Dan Straub 570-648-3399  
Bill Bean 570-322-3392  
Katrina Skrapits 610-760-1689  
Gary Huff 724-946-2350  
Diane Ogin 570-833-0793  
Kevin Kunsman 814-317-7535  
Glenn Dressler 570-374-1059  
Kelly Cameron 570-515-1041

Non-Profit Org  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Altoona, PA  
PERMIT 150

## JOIN THE NWTF — THE RESOURCE NEEDS YOUR HELP!

**YES** I'd like to join the National Wild Turkey Federation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of the hunting tradition. This membership also enrolls me in my state and local chapters.

**Sign me up as:** *(check one)*

- Regular Member - \$30     Sponsor Member - \$235  
 Women in the Outdoors - \$30  
 JAKES Member \$7, ages 13-17 - \$10  
 Wheelin' Sportsmen Member - \$30

**Charge my:**     Master Card;     Visa

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name: *(please print)* \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Make checks payable to the NWTF)*

**Send completed application to:**

Tammy Mowry; 288 Crisswell Road; Butler, PA 16602

## Take A Number!

The Pennsylvania Chapter WT registration license plates are still available. Promoting the Pennsylvania Chapter and the National Wild Turkey Federation with our license plates is a great way to show your support and love of the wild turkey. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope with your membership number and phone number to Skip Sanderson, 6063 Glatfelters Station Road, Seven Valleys, PA 17360-8416. A signed application will be returned to you. Complete the application and send it with a check for \$20.00 to PennDot. Your plate should arrive in two to three weeks.

