

# *partner* *in action*

*Issue No. 34*  
*2021*





## 2021 Supporters

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Amazon Smile  
Andrea Burch  
Andy Akins  
Ann Peterson  
Anoka Pheasants Forever  
B&F Fastener Supply  
Blackbaud Giving Fund  
Bob Lindig  
Brent Nelson  
Brooklyn Center Legion Post 630  
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Clam Outdoors  
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Courage Kenny  
Craig Weiss  
Crystal VFW #494  
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Elk River / Rogers VFW #5518  
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Feast Your 'Eyes Guide Service  
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Napoleon & Artis Brunear  
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Tina Knafla  
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Twin Cities Muzzle Loading Club  
University of Minnesota  
Underground Tools Inc.  
Violet Foster  
Wells Fargo  
Wildlife Research Center

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## partner in action

### 2021 OFFICERS

President: Darren Dorn 763-301-0538  
 Vice President: Chad Fix 763-229-1719  
 Secretary: Dean Petersen 612-388-0156  
 Treasurer: Evan Newton 952-831-6758  
 Past President: Nate Sjolín 763-286-9086

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## Capable Partners

Capable Partners was conceived in the early '80s and incorporated in 1986 as a non-profit organization whose volunteers provide outdoor activities for the physically challenged. We serve those who used to hunt, fish, and enjoy the outdoors but are no longer able to without additional support. We bring together friends, family, and other capable partners to remove the barriers to participation. We are dedicated to making participation affordable and members are able to have fees waived when needed.

Today, our organization, with a membership of 240 individuals, about half of whom are physically challenged, thrives with events every month of the year. We have successfully partnered with the Minnesota DNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for greater access to hunting areas; we testify on behalf of legislation that might impact the disabled hunter; we continually improve the organization by seeking ways in which the physically challenged can better experience the outdoors with the help of their capable partners.

### Mission

Capable Partners' purpose is to provide opportunities for personal growth and independence for physically challenged persons and able-bodied partners through participation in fishing, hunting, and related outdoor activities.

### Our Values

- Helping individuals realize their potential
- Promoting ethical hunting and fishing
- Enhancing relationships with family and friends
- Creating more accessible opportunities
- Increasing the number of people we serve
- Building the organization from within

### Our Methods

- Create accessible outdoor opportunities for more participants, with more locations, and events.
- Develop our membership through experience and teaching to obtain skills needed to organize member activities. These individuals will become the future leaders in the organization.
- Include, encourage and assist new and existing members to participate in outdoor activities.
- Educate about issues for the physically challenged and advocate for change, increased access, and solutions.



***Our organization defines physically challenged as, “a physical impairment that substantially limits a person from participating in outdoor activities.”***



## Letter from the President



2020 was an eventful year – no doubt. I would like to start out by saying thank you to all our members and all our helpers. I'd also like to give a special shout out to everyone that has donated to Capable Partners, to help this organization to continue to run. COVID-19 has definitely put a damper on things. However, we made the best of it; we continued to go fishing, our deer hunters had incredible success, and the waterfowl hunting was the best we have ever had. We did it all safely too – certainly something to be proud of.

I want to see this organization grow, and a great way for it to do so is to see that it's running like a well-oiled machine. And when there are bumps in the road, I want to ensure that we devise solutions to continue making it a smooth ride. Unfortunately, we had to cancel the 2021 annual banquet, due to COVID-19. But thankfully we still put together a 5-gun raffle with some incredible prizes. I also want to apologize for our website's being down. We, as a board, worked hard to get it operating again, but we also want to make it even easier for our members to use.

On top of all this, we're migrating our Board of Directors over to Microsoft Teams, which is helping us centralize our documentation, increasing collaboration, improving our communication, and, in turn, allowing the organization to operate more effectively.

To be even more effective as an organization, we need help in many different areas. This is why I call on all members to help. If you have been wanting to help, but being on the Board or coordinating events isn't for you, there are other ways we could use your expertise. Are you a graphic designer? We need your help to rebrand with a new logo. Marketing or communications? Can you help with advertising, managing our social media outlets, membership emails, monthly newsletters, or writing grants? Networking? Our membership committee would love to have you. A knack for sales? Our fundraising committee would appreciate your being a part of the process. Maybe it's a photo, a story you have to share, or even a simple suggestion to offer us. It doesn't matter how big or small your contribution is; please don't be afraid to raise your hand – we truly could use the helping hand with whatever you can offer. We'd love to have you volunteer to help be a part of something great.

Let's continue to work together and keep making this great organization even greater. Here's to all of us making 2021 our best year ever!

With gratitude,

*Darren Dorn*





## Ice Fishing Extravaganza



**Story by Darren Dorn Fishing Coordinator**  
**Photos by Chad Fix and Brian DesLauriers**

The 3rd Annual Clam Ice Fishing Extravaganza, held on February 25th at Lake Waconia this year, had a great turnout with over 49 participants registered! Fish were caught but most were small and the action was sporadic. Volunteers served up grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for lunch to the hungry anglers and crew. Prizes (including ice rod and reel combos, lures, and other ice fishing items) were drawn for every participant.

Special thanks to our sponsors who helped make it possible: Matt Johnson Outdoors, Clam Outdoors, Ice Team, Scheels, and In-Towne Marina for making a great experience for our members. They scouted the area, drilled holes, and set up ice shacks with all of the equipment needed. There was a pro angler available to help our anglers in each pre-heated shack.

To make the fishing better, we are planning improvements for next year's Fourth Annual Clam Outdoors Ice Fishing Extravaganza, and may add another event, which will be an overnight at a resort.



Clam guide Matt Weber



Clam Outdoors guide Matt Johnson



Clam Outdoors guide Jack Conrad







Clam Outdoors guide Shaine Gaston setting plywood for wheelchairs



Clam Outdoors guide Jack Conrad



Front: Rod G., Clam Outdoors guide Mike W., Rick W. and Terry H.



Josh Scanlon and interns at Clam, Tucker & Tyler



lunch hamburgers



snacks and buns



lunch hotdogs

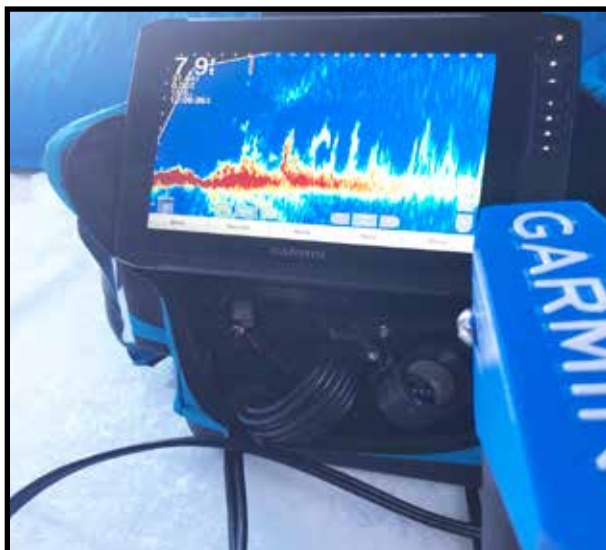




## Ice Fishing Extravaganza



Nate Sjolín, Darren Dorn, Ben Vic and Clam Outdoors guide Zach J.



Christina L. and Darren D. drawing prizes for members



Clam tip-up for northern pike or walleye







Dean Clapp and Evan Newton



Ken Johnson with a great largemouth bass



Craig S., and Clam Outdoors guides Zach J., and Christina L.



Jerry Zumbusch with nice sunfish





## Ice Fishing Extravaganza



Greg Hance and Jim Vorderbruggen



Ben Vik with a nice pumpkinseed



Steve Scheunemann, Keith Bode and Ed Sjolín



Evan Newton and Justin Salzl





## New Fish House

### Story by Darren Dorn

In the summer of 2020, I learned that Mountain Dew was donating money to non-profit organizations for outdoor events. We decided to use the money to purchase another Ice Castle fish house, with the color being Mountain Dew green and decals with their logos. To our surprise, in late fall, we were notified that we would be receiving \$5,000 from Mountain Dew.

With COVID-19, Ice Castle is overwhelmed with its workload. Our hopes are to have it built this summer. It will be similar to the orange fish house; 17 feet long with hydraulics and there will be one or two sleeping bunks to accommodate overnight fishing. There are plans to decorate the inside with the Mountain Dew cardboard check.

We will keep you updated on the website and via email, as to when and where it will be available to use.

*Photo by Chad Fix*



Front: Darren Dorn and Stan Koich Back: Quinn Willmarth and Rob Klett



This is a similar model and color





## LQP Ice Fishing

**Story & Photos by Dean Petersen Ice Fishing Coordinator**  
**Photos by Tom Scheunemann**

The 2021 Lac qui Parle (LQP) Lake ice fishing season started off late due to unsafe early ice. The 21 foot Ice Castle fish house was finally put on the ice during the third week of January. The house was booked up for almost every weekend with members who planned on or spent a couple of nights out on the ice fishing. Being that LQP is 120 miles west of the metro, by Montevideo, I recommend that a person should plan on staying at least a couple of nights out on the lake.



Numerous members caught their limits of crappies averaging 12-13 inches with Bob Hagen catching one at 16 inches. There were several nice-size northern pike caught by members. What did surprise me and most of the locals was that after mid-way through January, the walleyes were difficult to find. As most saw throughout the state, the temperatures were mild except for a ten-day stretch in early February, when the temps dropped to 30 below zero, had 30-40 mph winds, and the wind chill was around -60°.



Sun is out and the crappies are biting



Susan with a big crappie



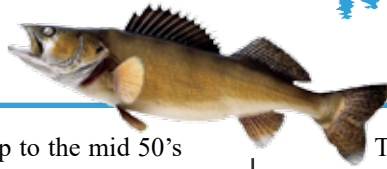
The evening bite was good



Custom made ice fishing vehicle







Shortly after that cold spell, temps jumped up to the mid 50's above zero. One evening Chad Albrecht, Lance Tebben, and Bob took advantage of the unseasonably warm weather to have a potluck supper with family and friends. Chad brought his fish house and one of the guys drove a pretty unique tracked ice fishing vehicle.

Tentatively, the fish house is scheduled to be back at Milan Beach Resort for camping during the summer months and back out on LQP lake next winter. Feel free to give me a call with any questions or to reserve a time for summer camping or ice fishing, Dean 612-388-0156.



Members enjoying a day ice fishing and a meal



George Bruhn, Jr. with a fine crappie



Volunteer Chad Albrecht



Nate Sjolín with a nice crappie





## Ice Fishing Lake Sarah

### Story by Nate Sjolin Ice Fishing Coordinator

This year was the second year that Capable Partners has had the orange fish house. As winter arrived in Minnesota, I was hopeful we would have safe ice early! But, like our last few winters, the ice was not safe until later into January.

With the help of Darren Dorn, Ben Vik, Brian Shriver, Bruce Shriver, and Chelsea Hoppe doing some scouting, the orange shack was on Lake Sarah in Hennepin county February 6th. The fishing was good, with many anglers catching 9"-10" crappies. We had more than 30 different members use the fish house multiple times. We kept the fish house on the lake until the removal date set by Minnesota DNR, which was March 3, 2021.

I am looking forward to coordinating again next year and hopefully we will have safe ice in December, so we have a longer ice fishing season! I would like to thank Darren Dorn, Jesse Smith, Brian Shriver, and Bruce Shriver for all their great help in making this ice fishing season successful!

A special thanks goes out to Edie Wagner for graciously letting Capable Partners use her property for storage.



Jim Vorderbruggen and Greg Hance



Fish house all setup on Lake Sarah

Photo by Darren Dorn





## Pontoon

### Story & Photos by Evan Newton

Who doesn't love fishing? Rife with memories of time spent on the lake, maybe with your grandpa, fishing is one of our most popular activities. So, as the board was searching for ways to expand our fishing opportunities, we decided to buy a pontoon boat that could be used weekly to get members out fishing in May through September each year. Isanti County Sportsman Club donated money to buy a boat, Perry Bauer found us a deal, and we bought a 2002 Crestliner 22-foot pontoon with a four-stroke motor and a two-axle trailer. The wide gate and open floorplan allow multiple anglers in wheelchairs onboard simultaneously.

The program will have six to eight trained skippers, who will pick a day and a lake and meet members at the lake to take them fishing. We have fishing supplies such as life vests (everybody must wear one), rods, and tackle. Nate Sjolín has volunteered to coordinate the pontoon boat and has already taken it to a mechanic to make sure it's in top running condition.

Our insurance requires us to have safety equipment, and a training program for skippers and first mates. After training was developed, the call went out for volunteers to be skippers and first mates to take members out on the boat. Seven people showed up for the first dry land training, which was in September. Then we went to the lake for "On the Water Training," but we ran out of time.

We will provide training again soon. We are calling for people who are willing to skipper or be first mate several times over the Summer. Contact Nate if you are interested in driving or helping drive the boat.



Evan Newton and George Peters, George passed away sadly October 2020



Vern, Bruce Shriver and Brian Shriver



Front: Evan Newton Left: George Peters and Bruce Shriver





## 2021 Board



President Darren Dorn



Vice President Chad Fix



Secretary Dean Petersen



Treasurer Evan Newton



Past President Nate Sjolín



Board Member Graham Hendrickson



Board Member Jeff Jacobson



Board Member Steve Scheunemann



Board Member Terrie Schrank



Board Member Craig Simpson



Board Member Quinn Willmarth





## Gun Raffle

Unfortunately, in 2021 Capable Partners was unable to have our annual banquet. We will be having our next annual banquet March 12, 2022 we look forward to having our family back together to enjoy fellowship!

Fortunately, we were still able to have our annual gun raffle. This year we had five weapons that were purchased at H & H Sports Shop in Maple Lake, MN, with the option of winners getting the cash value of the weapon.

Raffle profit was \$6,216.00.

Thank you to everyone who helped sell tickets, as well as to those who bought. This raffle was one of our top fundraisers despite the challenges of COVID-19.

### Winners:

Bob, Kimber Aegis,

Cheryl, Mossberg MMR

Jeanne, TC Pro Hunter

Quinn, Weatherby 6.5

Clay, Savage 220

### CAPABLE PARTNERS 2021 GUN RAFFLE



**KIMBER AEGIS ELITE CUSTOM 9MM**



**MOSSBERG MMR HUNTER 5.56MM**



**TC ENCORE PRO HUNTER SS 50 CAL, MUZZLELOADER**



**WEATHERBY VANGUARD WEATHERGAURD 6.5 CREEDMOOR**



**SAVAGE 220 CAMO 20 GAUGE**





## Lake Mille Lacs

### Story & Photos by Violet Foster Fishing Coordinator

After cancelling three trips due to COVID-19, it was great to be on the lake in late August. It was a beautiful evening with a slight breeze. The stars were huge; so big and bright you could almost touch them. The 52-foot launch headed in with the light of the moon. Eight members caught bass, northern pike and walleyes. After dinner on-board, we were treated to a fireworks display. All around the resort there was a “fourth of July” treat of fireworks.

We had several new members on board who enjoyed the fishing, the sky and the boat ride.

As we docked the boat, members stated they can’t wait until next year’s trips. With any luck and ways for us to be safe from the virus, there will be more trips in the future.



Todd Thornton with a walleye



Chuck Lukkason with a walleye



Keli Thornton with a walleye







Darrell Erickson with a nice walleye



Boat Captain with a good walleye



Boat Captain with a walleye



Keli Thornton with a fine walleye





## Major Ave Spring Pheasant Shoot

### Story by Russ Eigen

I experienced several “firsts” during our Spring Major Ave outing. This was the coldest Spring shoot that I had participated in; the beginning temperature started at 40 degrees and “warmed” to 44 degrees by the end. This was also the wettest shoot I had experienced; the day started with a light mist that morphed into a light drizzle producing wet, muddy conditions - raingear was required. Further, we were to meet at 8 a.m. instead of 9 or 10 a.m. and we assembled in the big shed instead of the clubhouse due to a scheduling conflict. Another first was that we weren’t greeted with coffee and pastries due to COVID-19 precautions.

Coordinator, Greg Hance had logged a full roster of 33 participant days earlier, but the day of the shoot saw nine people withdraw for various reasons. A final “first” was the absence of a hot lunch served (again due to COVID-19). However, there were plenty of assorted, individually bagged chips along with beverages to wash them down! Some statistics: of

125 birds released, 93 were brought down by the gunners in the blinds. Another 20 pheasants were added to the kill by “scratch” shooters, bringing our total harvest for the day to 103. Of the participants, 10 were physically challenged and we were fortunate to have 14 able-bodied helpers. We were each awarded four pheasants to apply our culinary skills on.

Thank you, Greg, for putting together this event despite the COVID-19 scheduling, and facility change obstacles that you faced! Thank you, Major Ave Hunt Club personnel, for fitting us in and taking care of all the tasks necessary that make these outings so enjoyable. Thank you, dog handlers; your contribution and that of your retrievers is invaluable! And lastly, a big “shout-out THANK YOU” to our much-appreciated helpers! You are called AB’s (able-bodied helpers), but you are really EB’s (Enabling-body helpers) because you enable us to participate in these events that we couldn’t do without you!



Members meeting in big shed



Craig Simpson, Sarge and Doug Link



Left: Cade Myers and Nate Sjolín with four big roosters







Greg Hance with five great roosters



Tom Scheunemann and Zephyr holding a rooster



Xena and Joe Yartz with a hen & rooster



Darren Dorn and Darrin Gotsch with three colorful roosters



Zephyr and Steve Scheunemann with a nice rooster



Sarge with one of many retrieves that day





## Lake Pepin

### Story & Photos by Brian DesLauriers Fishing Guide

Scenic Lake Pepin is a 26-mile-long wide spot on the Mississippi River. The lake has a long history after French settlement in the 1600's by Jean Pepin after whom it was named. Water skiing was invented in 1922 in Lake City by Ralph Samuelson. Fort Beauharnois was a French fort (or fur post) built on the shores of Lake Pepin in 1727. When steamboats began travelling the waters of beautiful Lake Pepin, settlements began to sprout up all over.

Lake Pepin may be one of the best kept secrets for walleye fishing in Minnesota. I started taking Capable Partners members there in 2019 when my business, Feast Your 'Eyes Guide Service, began donating a trip to raffle off at the annual banquet. What I have learned over the last two years is there are other guides that claim, "I'm not set up for that," or did not return calls to members after telling them about their disability. That drives me to get more members out.

Depending on the season, Pepin can be a numbers or trophy opportunity. I love nothing more than to get members out looking for big fish! I have been blessed to have been able to fish with members Jeff Jacobson, Dave & Arlene Martti, Keith & Kyle Bode, Mark Paddock, Ed Sjolín, en Johnson, Jerry Zumbusch, Karl Anderson, and Jim Hamlin.

2020 was a difficult year for many Capable Partners events. Hopefully 2021 gets us together more often. As a new board member, I would like to add several pontoon trips to next year's schedule. Mark Paddock has expressed interest in helping with his personal pontoon to be able to get more members participating each outing. The drive to do more trips comes from the number of friends I have made at Capable Partners. I have really enjoyed your company in the boat.

Many members had personal best walleyes in 2020, and we were able to even get some to hang on the wall. The following pictures are all from last season.



Jim Hamlin



Arlene Martti



Jerry Zumbusch







Dave Martti



Jeff Jacobson



Karl Anderson



Ken Johnson



Keith Bode



Kyle Bode





## My Years of Hunting & Fishing

### Story & Photos by Emery Balts

I am one of the old-timers of Capable Partners and have been asked to write an article for the newsletter. I am honored to give it a try.

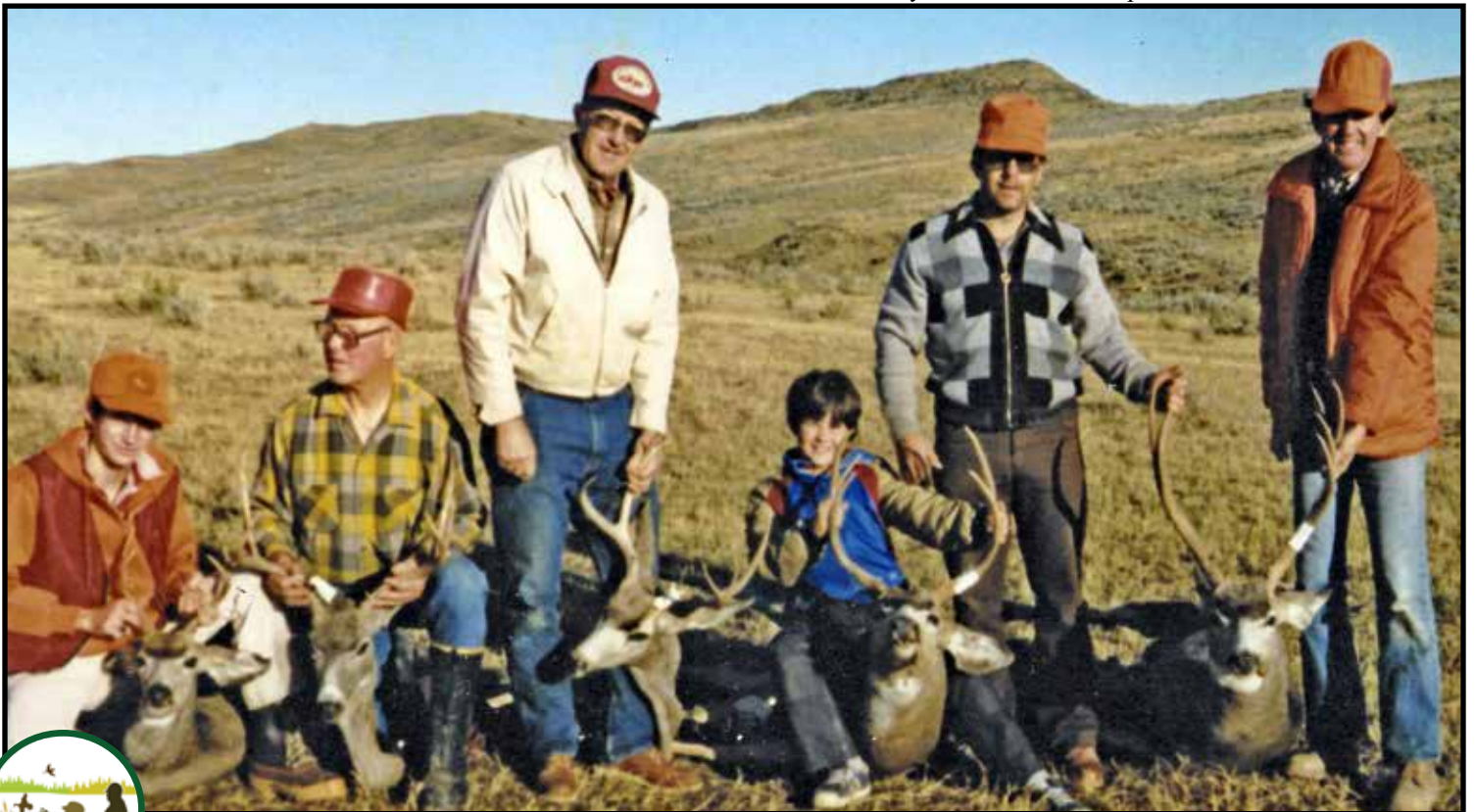
My family was living in the small town of Cadott, Wisconsin, when, in 1944, at five years of age, I contacted Infantile Paralysis, better known as Polio. The disease affected my upper body – my right arm and lungs being the most severely afflicted. Thankfully, my legs remained healthy and strong. The care I needed was not readily available in Cadott, so my parents moved me and my brother Wally to Minneapolis, where I received therapy at Sheltering Arms and St. Barnabas Hospitals.

I still live in the Twin Cities metro area. My wife Amber and I have a blended family that includes six children plus thirty-seven grandchildren and great-grandchildren (and perhaps more on the way). I must say that my faith in Jesus Christ has guided me throughout my life. Overall, it has been a great life and quite incredible to me. I feel truly blessed in spite of the difficulties. Now, to the hunt!

I remember my first bow hunt with Capable Partners. I had just purchased a \$150 Barnett Wildcat and made a few practice shots with it. Rather than mount the cheap scope, I opted to use the iron sights. What a bad decision!



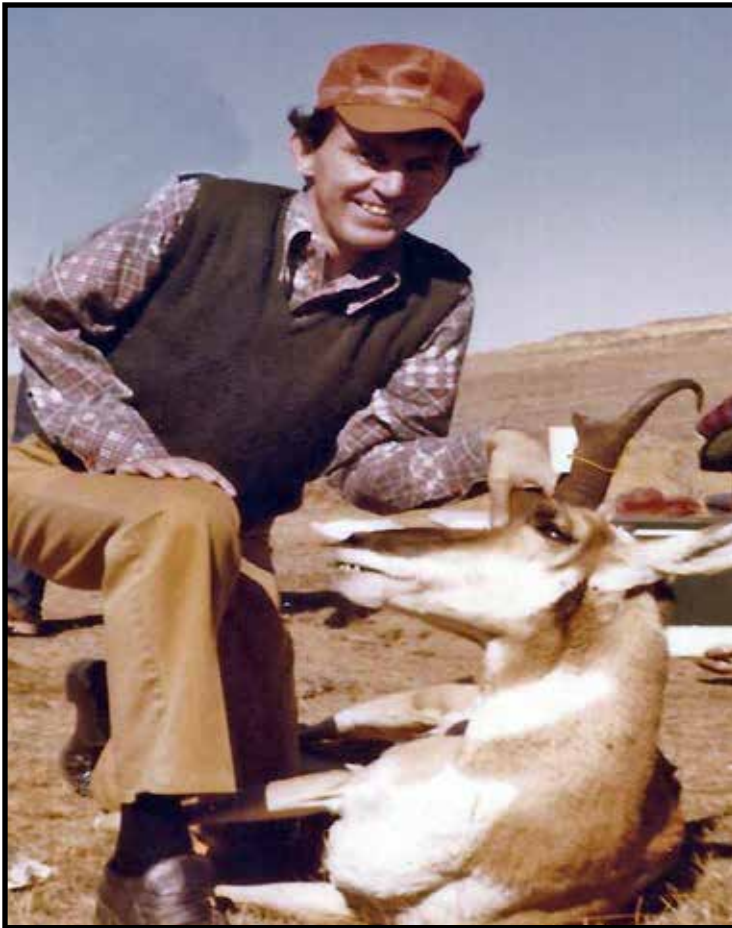
Emery's first deer with Capable Partners



Scott Balts, Orland Gustum, Levi Call, Darwin Balts, Richard Balts and Emery Balts







Emery with his first antelope

I was assigned to hunt on the second day at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Looking back on it, I was not a member of Capable Partners in September of 1994. I was eligible for the hunt because I worked at the Veterans Administration and the cemetery was a part of the VA.

In the early morning, I was at my post and waiting with my crossbow. As it was getting light, I heard footsteps. Finally, a four-point buck appeared broadside. Wow! I shot – and the arrow went over his back. The buck proceeded to flip its tail at me as if saying, “Ha, ha!” I would have bragged to all who would listen had I made that shot, but the experience actually humbled me. Some of the hunters at the VA razzed me terribly, but I decided this was not my first miss with a crossbow and it probably wouldn’t be my last!

I have to drift back to the 70’s in hunting the west near Buffalo, Wyoming, on a private ranch pursuing antelope, whitetails, and mule deer. The license was \$25.00 per animal, and the rancher charged the same per animal. We hunted with cousins, sons, dads, uncles, and friends. The hunt was not guided, and we mostly walked the land up the hills and down the valleys. We stayed in an old abandoned ranch shack. We put plastic on the open windows and swept out mice turds and dust so we could bunk on the floor.



Emery’s mulie and antelope

No Holiday Inn for sure. We arrived a day early to the ranch and decided to play a game of football. For the football we used a large onion, which did not survive the game; we all smelled like onion.

Next day was hunting. My friend Levi had already shot a buck, but he spotted another larger buck later and took us to that spot. I found a large boulder that was perfect for resting my .270 on for a shot. I fired and the deer appeared wounded. Seeing the deer closer, cousin Richard said, “Holy Balls it’s a reindeer,” The horns were 27” from base to tip. Not wide but my trophy. I am not a great hunter, but have had great mentors guiding me for many years in the west and in Minnesota. The mental picture of this hunt is etched in my mind as a “Boone and Crockett” experience!

On an antelope hunt with friend Jeff, we hiked over a ridge, looked down into a small valley, and spotted a herd of antelope. I rested my .243 on a large boulder and watched panicking animals running in circles since they were unable to jump a nearby fence. The largest animal stopped and I fired the killing shot. This ranch was not well known for a lot of antelope so we were pleased with our successful hunt.





## My Years of Hunting & Fishing

Several years ago, I was invited by my good friend Ralph to go on a fly-in fishing trip to Nester Falls, Ontario, Canada. We flew out 180 air miles in a float plane to Cairns Lake, which is 10 miles long and loaded with tons of walleye and northerns. We gathered up our gear and portaged to our cabin. It turned out to be a fishing haven. My first morning we had breakfast at 9:30, a short Bible study, grabbed gear and headed out to the lake.

My first northern was 36" and my giant turned out to be 41", shown in the picture. The largest northern caught was 44". All northerns were catch and release. I jokingly told the others, "My wrist is sore from setting the hook." Another fishing story goes, "We caught a fish so big it takes three men to carry the picture." We caught a lot of walleye for our daily shore lunches. I have many memories of catching fish, joking around, playing cards, and much comradery.

My wife Amber and I were walking around Lake Harriet a few years ago and saw a fisherman and his daughter catching a muskie from shore, and I asked the fisherman, "What is your set-up and bait?" He showed me the quick-strike rig and gave it to me! I took a young boy Chris, whom I had mentored, to Lake Harriet to catch a muskie. To my surprise, there were four other fishermen in my fishing spot, and I cautiously slipped in next to them. I used a 13" sucker minnow for bait and made a cast. After some time, I saw my line was moving so I set the hook as fish appeared to be on for about three seconds and was off. My second and third time I continued to lose fish. The next time one of the men made the cast out for me. Another strike. A good set and I reeled in as hard as I could. My first and only muskie was 42" netted and released.



Emery with his 41" northern



Nester Falls, Ontario Canada



Emery holding his 42" muskie





The old saying “A thousand casts for a muskie” did not prove true in this case.

I recently experienced a bow hunt in Maple Grove. My helper John Thompson set up his blind for me, with a view down a hill, and a doe decoy about twelve yards to my front right. I now have a faster Barnett, equipped with a red dot scope. Around 6 p.m. a nubbin buck appeared. It stopped in front of me. I bleated and fired and the deer went down with a thud. I had hit it in the spine and a second shot was needed. Wow! What a rush! This was the second deer I have harvested in Maple Grove. I love to hunt, not for big horns, but for the enjoyment and for the meat. My son Scott says, “We kill deer and harvest vegetables.” That nubbin buck is prime eating!

Hunting with my son Scott and the grandkids is perhaps the most rewarding of all endeavors for me. Hunting with buddies in Capable Partners is also right up there on my scale. To me, hearing of their successes and misses is part of the hunting heritage. When I shot the nubbin buck, I said, “Happy early birthday.” I will be 81 years old spring of 2021, I am blessed!



Emery and Scott Balts with a Pine County MN buck



Scott Smith and Emery with his 2009 archery deer



Emery's "Hilton" in Pine County



## Rainy Lake



### Story & Photos by Nate Sjolín Coordinator

This year was a very different year for our Rainy Lake Fishing trip. With the COVID-19 restrictions, we were not allowed to go into Canadian water. Saturday night into Sunday morning there was a big storm, which was going to make for challenging walleye fishing. The storm pushed the fish off the structure they were on the days prior. We headed to some of the walleye spots, marking a few fish on the fish finder. We did manage to catch a couple walleyes, but the bite had turned off. Captain Ben Gilbertson had made the move to get out of the wind and try for

He was born with his disability and uses a wheelchair. Boy, he doesn't let his disability stop him. He can light up a room with his smile and joyful, carefree personality. His mobility is limited, and he is unable to hold on to things very well, which is why this trip was so eye-opening.

The first night after fishing, I got a call from Captain Ben wanting to tell me all about the day. As Ben started to recap what had happened, I could hear in his voice that he knew what Capable Partners is all about. He said, "Nate, the fishing gods were shining down on Tyler.

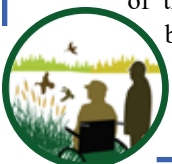


Back row: Keith D., Ed S., James L., Jeff J., Dave P., Dwayne O., Jim P., Kyle B and Keith B. Front row: Steve S., Nate S., Tyler P. and Ken J.

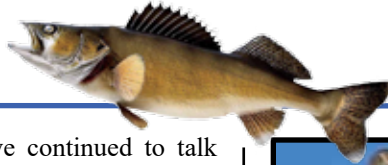
crappies. His decision to do so would not only help us get on fish, but also be a big reminder of why we all put these outings together. This year in Ben's boat we had Tyler Pinor, James Lawson, and my dad Ed Sjolín. Dave Pinor also came along to help Tyler. Tyler and James made the trip one of our most memorable; James was so proud of the walleye he caught! Tyler was the highlight of the trip. He out-fished everyone and caught the biggest crappie, at 14¼ inches. Many of you may not know Tyler as he is one of our newer members.

That kid put a beat down on the crappies and out-fished everyone else in the boat!"

He mentioned Tyler was having problems controlling his rod while reeling at the same time. As fishermen, we all know how important it is to keep the line tight to keep the fish on the hook and get them in the boat. In true Capable Partners style, Ben helped Tyler, who was not only able to catch fish but out-fish everyone on the trip. I'm not going to sugar-coat







this. Ben and I had tears in our eyes as we continued to talk about the day's events and then planning the next day of fishing.

The next day, all but one boat headed out to fish crappies again. Again, Tyler was the man of the trip, catching plenty of fish and his second 14 1/4 inch crappie. We all caught almost our limits the second day as well. As you can see from the pictures, everyone had big smiles on their faces with all the fish we caught and fun we had.



Front: Tyler Pinor, Jamie Lawson, Back: Dave Pinor, Ed Sjolín



Tyler and Dave Pinor with his two 14 1/4 inch crappies



Ken Johnson with a great walleye



Steve Scheunemann with a nice walleye





## Leopold's Optional 360

Story & Photos by Rob Klett

Photos by Chad Fix

He was born in central Wisconsin, the last pup standing in a litter of 11 boys, left behind by a man who didn't tell his pregnant wife he had placed a deposit on another addition to the family. Luckily for me, the timing was perfect, and my email inquiry to the breeder came at the opportune moment allowing me to capitalize on this poor fool's lapse in judgment (his wife's words, I'm sure).

He is a stout powerhouse of a dog, who meets unidentified "friends" in the dark of the duck blind with an attitude that says, "This is my spot... stay out!... at least until your scent gives me positive ID that you're indeed a friend... then come on in – especially if you brought the doughnuts!"

Anyone that has shared the blind with him knows his addiction (not doughnuts), and anyone who hasn't quickly learns. It's an addiction for which there is no known cure, nor has any professional taken up the issue to find said cure.

So, what's his addiction? He does what my friends and I used to call the "optional 360" – a reference to when we lost traction in our vehicles and spun out unintentionally back in our younger years. Leopold's optional 360 is different in that it is very intentional, albeit still not something I plan for or allow IF he asks permission. It typically plays out like this...



Leo performing his 360



Rob and Leo on a Mississippi hunt

After the shotgun goes off and a duck is down, I line him up and call out "Leo FETCH!!". He hits the water running. Initially he appears to have radar lock on the downed bird as he swims, head down, legs pulling him as fast as he can go, grunting slightly with each stroke.

Then it happens. I can now instantly recognize it as his head lifts ever so slightly and cocks to the left, just enough for me to catch the smirk on his blocky face. The "optional 360" ensues, while still swimming, as his front paws lift high out of the water and his tail rudders him now in a tight, counterclockwise circle. His big, brown paws smack the surface of the water as he intentionally splashes the water in front of him so he can bite at the upturned water. At each nip at splashed water, he simultaneously barks at the waves he's creating. Circle after circle after circle. Yip! Yip! Yip! None of us knows when the circling will stop after it starts; we only know that if the bird we knocked down is wounded, we had better grab the boat.







Leo retrieves a nice green head at Minnesota River Valley

I've pondered this "issue" since his first hunt, thinking initially he'd grow out of it, but now as a 6-year-old Chesapeake, that seems unlikely. I've discussed trying to correct the issue with those I hunt with, but they get a kick out of it and assured me it's not bothersome. Regardless of whether or not I feel my hunting buddies are being polite in saying that, I recognize these "optional 360's" are done by Leo out of pure joy for being in the water, doing what his lineage has done since their inception. Yes, he eventually does right his course and finds his focus for the task at hand, but it's on HIS schedule, which is true-to-form for his breed when given the opportunity. Right, wrong, or indifferent, I've come to the conclusion that attempting to correct his habit would in some way break his spirit and the love for what he does, which would break my heart. He pulls through in many ways when I need him most, so I guess this addiction to romping around in the water is an addiction I'm willing to feed.

Isn't that what the out of doors feeds? We were all made for it – it clearly nourishes our souls just like it does to our faithful, furred companions. I hope those who are reading this will reignite that ducking bug within themselves or try a new sport, look me up, and come witness it in action this fall. Leo would gladly welcome new friends to the duck blind, and put on a show. Just bring the doughnuts!



Leo waiting for a retrieve





## A Hunter Wanna Be

Story by Willow Schrank

Photos by Terrie Schrank

I was born to hunt. My Dad, Timber's Gitchee Gummi Hunter, MH (Master Hunter), is a national field champion. When I grew up, I wanted to be a hunter just like him. As a puppy I followed my older brother, Rocky's, example of pointing at critters in the brush; catching them (except for toads – they tasted awful), shaking them until the squeaky stopped, then bringing them back to my human Mom, Terrie. What I didn't understand is why she always threw my gifts to her in the garbage can. Rocky taught me how to catch dragon flies in mid-air, but try as hard as I might, I never could catch a bird in mid-air like him. Because birds didn't have squeakers, he would bring them unharmed to mom and she would just let them fly away.

With the help of Can Do Canines (CDC), a service dog training organization, Mom, who has Multiple Sclerosis (MS), was training Rocky to be her mobility assistance dog. I was a sponge listening to Mom as she taught Rocky how to open and shut doors, get her medicine out of the fridge; help take her coat, shoes and socks off; pick up and retrieve anything – even a credit card; and deliver her clunky crutches, even through narrow corridors. I was in awe of his talent.

November 24, 2007, I was 6-months old and I will never forget that day; it changed my life forever. I watched Rocky jump our 4-foot backyard fence, chasing down a rabbit to present to Mom. He ran into a thicket on the neighbor's property; then I heard a single gunshot followed by Rocky's pain-filled yipes. A pause, then one more shot,



Willow Wanna Be



Rocky

followed by three more quick shots. Then silence. Mom screamed: "No-o-o-o!" The property owner denied any knowledge of the event, even after the local sheriff got involved. I waited by the fence for days, mom cried, I even tried howling for him, but we never saw Rocky again.

Grieving, Mom's MS took a turn for the worse; she couldn't walk, talk very legibly, or see clearly. She obviously couldn't keep up with a rambunctious 6-month old pup like me, so I got sent to boot camp in a hunting school, On Line Retrievers in Ogilvie, MN. There I fine-tuned my hunting and retrieving skills with birds I could actually catch! I had great fun doing what I was bred to do; I knew I was definitely a Hunter Wanna Be!

After a few months of boot camp, I got to go home. Mom was better but her MS didn't go away. In my heart I knew I wanted to help Mom just like Rocky. I surprised her one day when I brought her the clunky crutches when she was having trouble walking. Mom was amazed because she didn't teach me that, but I learned from the best, Rocky! It didn't take long for Mom to realize that I, Willow (the runt of the litter with an extra set of batteries – according to my vet), could be her new mobility assistance dog. After examining my temperament CDC, accepted me into their training program. For a couple years I learned new social skills like going in an airplane and scrunching under the seat, manners with other dogs, ignoring surprising noises, and of course, special skills like getting the fridge meds. It was time for my final evaluation, and CDC came to our home to film my progress. They asked if I could get an emergency phone (a cordless







Terrie Schrank and Willow

phone mounted just above the floor) and bring it to Mom any where in the house if she fell. We hadn't heard of that skill before! CDC said they would give us 6 weeks to learn the skill and then come back to complete the eval and accept me for graduation if I could perform the task.

It was time to put my "extra set of batteries" to work with my great hunting and retrieving skills. While most dogs would be able to learn this new skill in 6-weeks, I didn't. As soon as CDC headed down the driveway, Mom got to work; and three hours later me and my batteries were delivering her that phone anytime she asked! We called CDC and they came out the next day and filmed me; I was pronounced ready for graduation.

I'm almost 14-human years-old now and Rocky continues to visit me in my dreams. Especially on November 24. Mom has told me many times she watches my paws twitch like running and my tail wags away as I sleep on the ottoman in our living room on that day. I do love being Mom's service dog, helping her out and about, and comforting her when she is in the hospital; but deep down, Rocky and I both know I will always be a Hunter Wanna Be!



Willow and Terrie Schrank





## My Buddy Maxus

**Story & Photos by Darren Dorn**

**Photos by Chad Fix**

At the end of 2016, my uncle Jeff asked me if I wanted a dog. I got pretty excited and said, “Yeah, but I can’t really afford an expensive dog.” Jeff replied, “Well, let’s talk to Tom (my cousin that bred a litter of British Labs out in South Dakota) and see what he says.” It turned out that Tom wanted to gift one of the pups to me.

My uncle made the trip out to South Dakota to pick up a pup for his family and another for me. I asked for the calmest male of the litter, while his family chose a female. My uncle brought the calm male to me and I instantly fell in love with my new best buddy.



Maxus first week with Darren

I think the feeling was reciprocated because he immediately followed me everywhere. I named him Maxus after the Browning Maxus shotgun I bird hunt with. A lot of people like using common names, so I wanted to give him something unique that represented the reliability of my Browning Maxus since day one.

I started training him immediately, and it showed quickly that this boy had drive and wanted to retrieve with how excited he would get. After months of training, it was time to see what he could do. I am a hands-on person, so I thought the real deal would be good for him.

Capable Partners members had an opportunity to hunt at an organized pheasant shoot at Whispering Emerald Ridge, which is sponsored by Pheasants Forever. The helpers had pointers running out front to sniff out any birds. They would point while the helpers got me situated where I would be comfortable to shoot from the back of the UTV. I was sitting good, so the pointers flushed the bird and I knocked it down near a creek. The helpers said, “Maxus watched that bird...let him go get it.” So, I gave him his fetch command: “Maxus”.

Off he went after the pheasant. He stopped for a drink at the creek (typical rookie!) and continued



after the bird. You could see his nose going and tail wagging while searching in the brush by the creek. His tail started going crazy, and the bird jumped up while he immediately followed, catching it in mid-air. Then he brought it past the two helpers and came right back to me with his tail wagging like crazy, as if he had done it 1,000 times already. I was almost in tears I was so proud and happy. That was just the start of Maxus’s life of retrieving.

This past waterfowl season was Maxus’s fourth season, and it started out with a bang. The Sunday of opening weekend, a group of five of us hunters and Maxus went to one of our Capable Partners spots in the Minnesota Valley NWR. We paddled Stealth kayaks across a lake, where we have access, to a point we have never hunted before. The water level was low, which made for a lot of hard work paddling in the two to six inches of water and sticky mud. Maxus was sitting in the Stealth kayak with me, watching the water and looking around while we got all set up before shooting time.

He was so happy and excited to be out there. Once shooting time rolled around, birds were flying all over the place. A pair of ducks flew in and we shot both. Now at this point Maxus was really excited – he watched both birds go down and was ready to get working. I said, “Maxus” and pointed towards the first one. He splashed in mud and water to bring it right to me. Then he sat back down and waited for the command to get the other, which



Darren and a young Maxus on a successful hunt







Darren and Maxus eyeing up a pheasant

I gave. Like clockwork, he goes out, gets it, and brings it right back. I'm thinking to myself, "this is going to be an awesome season with him as he is doing exactly what I want and doing it as if he has been doing it for the previous three years."

I praised him, but then got grief from my buddies in the blind. They said, "Man you sound so monotone when you say, 'Good boy' to him – you need to make it sound more exciting." So, I started working on my inflection and it actually seemed to help out. Then the best part of the day happened.

My buddy Nate and I both called at a pair of flying geese. We got them to turn and come right for us. At the last moment, they



Maxus patiently waiting for a retrieve



both turned and Nate could not get a safe shot off. I could, so I pulled up and dropped both geese – with one shot each. Again, Maxus looked at me waiting for the command to make the retrieves. I directed him to the farthest one first, as that one was moving in the water a little. His "swim", in mostly muddy, shallow water, was more of him jumping than dog paddling out to the first goose and was even harder with a 15-pound goose in his mouth on the way back. With his arrival of the first goose came his excitement for the other as he did the same with the second bird: he waited to be released, and, upon release, he quickly brought it back. This time, though, he chose to sit in the mud because there were more geese flying.

Not soon after, Nate shot one goose working the spread and it hit the water. I waited to send Maxus since there were more birds in the air working close, but they flew away, so I sent him



Maxus powering through a muddy retrieve after Nate's goose. It was swimming away from him on the water as wounded birds tend to do from time-to-time. Every time Maxus got close, the goose tried to get farther away. At this point, Maxus is across the lake – maybe 300 yards or more.

The shallow water was definitely making Maxus tired, but he really wanted the goose. He got a big boost of energy and started blasting through the water when the goose started flapping its wings until Maxus latched onto it. He finally arrived back to my kayak, gave me the goose, and hopped in the boat. I got all excited (making sure I sounded happy and not monotone), giving Maxus a big old hug even though he was full of mud to praise him.

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## My Buddy Maxus

Later we shot a couple ducks, and they fell in extremely tall grass where it wasn't going to be easy for any of our able-bodied helpers to walk in. So, I said, "Maxus will find them – I have a lot of confidence in him today." Sure enough, he came back with one of the birds and the helpers were praising him saying, "Good boy!" I lined him up at the second bird in the tall grass, and again he came back with it.



Sass and all, the last four years with this dog have been amazing; I wouldn't change a day (in-season and during the off-season). His antics crack me up. I mounted his very first drake mallard, which is also one of the biggest mallards I have ever shot (and just one of the hundreds he's retrieved). As we pass the offseason time together at home, I ask him where his bird is. He will turn slowly and stare at his duck. He knows it is his.

I want to give a huge thank you to my cousin Tom for blessing me with a dog that would change my life and my uncle Jeff for the gracious delivery. Speaking of delivery, I look forward to what the years going forward bring with this dog. It's clear that he's got heart that not only drives him on to retrieve but also demonstrates his big heart of love for me. Thank you, Maxus, for being my best friend. Don't let my monotone voice fool you... I love you!

Your dog dad,

Darren



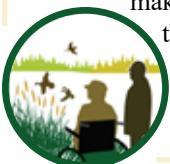
Maxus on a successful mallard retrieve

At this point I thought he was really beat. He didn't even make it back to my kayak. Instead, he climbed in Nate's kayak and gave him some love by shaking off the muddy water on him and lying by him. Everything about the day went great; Maxus retrieved five ducks and five geese, which were not easy retrieves in the muddy, shallow water, the distance he had to chase some of the birds, and having to do blind retrieves. Clearly, the boy has heart!

Fast forward to the last day of the hunting season, my waterfowl buddies and I were in the blind and one of us crippled a drake mallard. Maxus took off after it while breaking ice and chased it down in an open pocket of water. It kept diving each time he'd close in on it. I could tell, at this point, he was frustrated. So, the next time the bird dove, he put his head under water, grabbed the duck, and brought it back. I told him, "Good boy!" Instead of handing me the duck, he threw it at me for making him do extra work to get the bird, and for the monotone praise I gave him – I think anyone that has ever met Maxus knows he has a dash of sass!



Maxus with a nice green head





## My First Bear

### Story & Photos by Craig Simpson

**T**his adventure starts out a long time ago. The first time I ever tried to harvest a black bear was in 2003. I was at my in-laws' property in Hibbing, Minnesota. I was told there were many bears in the area, but unfortunately, we never had a bear sighting between me and my wife Ann. My second attempt at harvesting a black bear would be in 2010 at my parents' property in Trego, Wisconsin. It took me five preference points to receive a bear license or a "tag". Again, there was plenty of bear in the area, but sadly we didn't bait properly and never saw a bear. My third attempt would be 2017 in Wisconsin, again, and it took me five years to draw a bear tag again. Unfortunately, this time my parents had sold the farm and had moved back to the Twin Cities.

So, the Spring of 2017 started out by pursuing an opportunity to hunt bear on a Wisconsin property set up with a bait site or two for the Fall. I was fortunate to have a good friend, Dick Anderson, who had property and was willing to bait. I had met Dick 14 years ago through Capable Partners, Dick no longer lives in the Twin Cities, but has moved up to Hayward, Wisconsin. Dick was so pumped up for the opportunity to help me harvest a Black Bear!

Wisconsin alternates their first part of the bear season every year. This year the dog hunters would go the first six days. I was a little concerned the bears would be all riled up after the first week of being chased by dogs, but Dick reassured me the area that I'd be hunting did not give anyone permission to run dogs.

Planning the trip would be difficult; my bear season started September 13th and ended October 10th. It seemed to be feast or famine on hunting opportunities. Earlier that year I had drawn elk and antelope tags for the state of Wyoming. That season started September 15th, and my good friend, Big Al McCarty, at Chairbound Hunters, had me penciled in to start hunting September 16th. I talked to Dick and was wondering if I should come up and hunt September 13th. Dick suggested I wait until I returned from my hunt in Wyoming since his daughter's wedding was on September 14th.

I arrived back home from my successful elk and antelope hunt on September 23rd. At that time, I thought about possibly hunting a couple days during the week. Dick had informed me that there was a bumper crop of acorns, and the bears were no longer coming in to the bait. On September 30th we celebrated the life of my father, who had died at 90 years old. We made plans to hunt the first week of October. Dick notified me that it had rained five inches in the past three days, and it was a swamp where we would be hunting. So I had to wait a few days to let the area dry out.

On October 4, my friend, Forrest Wilkinson, was able to drive me to Dick's house. We arrived at Dick's residence at 2:00 p.m. The game plan was to get me out to the blind by 4 p.m., where

we could legally hunt until 7:10 p.m. Dick had trail camera pictures that showed two different bears coming to the bait between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. We drove two vehicles out to the hunting area. The trail going in had dried out quite a bit, but was still too wet to drive a vehicle on. Dick made the decision to get me on the back of the four-wheeler rack, and Forrest would hold on to me while we drove out there.

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Trail camera black bear #1



Trail camera black bear #2





## My First Bear



We were within 40 yards of the blind when we stopped. We decided to put a rope on the front of my manual chair, take the wheelie bars off the chair, and pull me the last 40 yards to the blind. This would keep the noise down and avoid some mud. That worked slick; so good that we made the decision that we should just pull me out of the woods instead of going through all the work of loading me onto the four-wheeler. Dick did an excellent job of setting up the blind on top of some scaffolding 20 inches off of the ground to get us out of the mud and allow me to see better. Everything went smoothly lifting me into the blind.



Craig Simpson with first night blind setup

Once in the blind, we proceeded to get set up for the evening hunt. We mounted the shooting rest to my wheelchair and then strapped the Ruger M77 Gunsite Scout in .308, equipped with an AAC .30 caliber suppressor, onto the shooting rest. Due to a severe shoulder injury, I cannot tolerate heavy recoil from a high-powered rifle, so the suppressor tames the recoil allowing me to continue to hunt despite my injury. The next step would be to make sure the elevation was correct on the shooting rest. Once that was done, we loaded it with a 150 grain Barnes bullet. The bait station was 75 yards away in the form of a cut out log that had cookie dough in it. It had a heavy granite slated rock and two 10 lb. rocks on top of that. Dick explained to me that the bears made it look easy to slide the heavy granite slate off the stump with their paws.

We sat there with a lot of anticipation of seeing a bear. Unfortunately, the bears decided not to cooperate. We did have a little visitor, a beautiful spruce grouse, which is rare to see. We also heard two great horned owls and a pack of coyotes. We left the blind at 7:40 p.m., and Dick checked the trail cameras the next afternoon; there was a bear at the bait from 7:53 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. Really! Just missed

him! How ironic to think there was a bear on the bait listening to our conversation at the vehicles while we loaded up!

We went back to Dick's house and made a plan to get up at 3:30 a.m. and hopefully be out at the blind at 5:00 a.m. Legal shooting time was at 6:45 a.m. We sat there watching a gorgeous sunrise and listening to the woods come alive until 9:00 a.m. The only sighting was a red squirrel. Everybody was a little tired from the lack of sleep, so we decided to go back to Dick's house for breakfast and to take a nap. We decided to meet up at 3:00 p.m. to get back out to the blind by 4:00 p.m. for the evening hunt.

As we settled into the blind, all we could do was listen and watch for movement. At times Dick was looking over to the north like he was hearing or seeing something, but he never tapped me on my shoulder to signal a bear coming. Eventually Dick tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Prime time!" This is when you have the most activity at the bait site. As we got better situated for potential bear coming in for a shot, Dick reached over and took my gun safety off.

It couldn't have been more than 10 to 15 minutes and something caught my eye from the left. I couldn't believe it! A beautiful black bear was walking at a fairly good pace toward the bait sight. After he proceeded to walk past the bait, he laid down behind some brush. I was unable to see him anymore.



Blind was setup two weeks before hunt







View from blind, overlooking bait

Fortunately, he only stayed there for about 15 to 20 seconds. As he got up, he walked perfectly broadside to us. I put the crosshairs on him, took a deep breath and bit down gradually on my bite trigger. As I heard the sound of the gun go off, I watched through my scope, and I could see I had made a nice shot on the bear.

We could hear the bear running through the woods. I've been told that the bears give out a loud moan at the end of their life, but we never heard that moan. Since there was only an hour of light left in the day, Dick was eager to go check for blood, but before he did that, he called the guys that were 20 minutes away to come and help. It didn't take long for Dick to find blood about 20 yards from the shot. Because of the heavy underbrush, Dick found it very hard to look for the bear. Every stump seemed to look like a bear. He made the decision to wait for the other guys. Once they arrived, Dick and Helmut went to track the bear together, and Forrest stayed with me. It didn't take long before we heard them hollering, "We found it!"

I was so elated, I had this huge adrenaline rush go through my body. Finally, after my third attempt to hunt bear, I was so thankful to harvest this beautiful black bear. Everyone met at the blind to do high-fives and congratulate me. They also made a game plan of how to get the bear out of the thick brush. The guys were fortunate enough to pick their way through the woods with the 4-wheeler to where the bear laid. It didn't take long for them to field dress it and load it

up. I think there was a little adrenaline rush going through everyone. I finally was able to put my eyes on my first black bear. How exciting it was! A beautiful Wisconsin black bear. I couldn't have been more excited! As the daylight was leaving us, we packed up and proceeded to go out to the vehicles. But before we loaded the bear into the truck, we took some pictures on the logging road. After we arrived at Dick's house, they were nice enough to quarter the bear up for me to take home to the butcher the next day.

A big thank you goes out to my good friend Dick Anderson for all his hard work to give me the opportunity to harvest my first black bear!! I want to thank Forrest and Helmut too for all of their help. I'd like to thank Pat and Ruth Moore at Silent Ability for talking me into trying Pat's suppressed .308 Winchester. They convinced me to not give up on my dream of shooting a high powered rifle for big game. Also, Jon Fettig at Engineered Silence LLC, for helping me obtain the gun, mounting the scope, and installing the bite trigger and suppressor. It was a great team effort! Without everyone's help, this would not have been possible.

Thanks again, everyone, for all the awesome memories!!!



Craig Simpson with his first black bear





## ATV Ride

### Story & Photos by Darren Dorn

**B**ecause of COVID-19 and for the safety of our members, we cancelled the August 1st, 2020, ATV ride, but I decided to gather a group and go anyway. I love ATV riding! So, I got in contact with about a dozen people. Some were Capable Partners members and some were not. We all met up in Isle, Minnesota, to keep the tradition of the annual ATV ride going. Isle has an off-road trail right there, called the Soo Line South trail. We had great weather, and being outdoors, it was easy to social distance.

The group of us took off down the trail and rode to the Red Top loop, which is northeast of Isle. We spent a couple hours there and then rode a little farther north, hitting some mud holes on the way



back. We stopped a few times to take breaks, snack on some food and get hydrated. We had a great time! What a group of friends to do it with! By the end, we had spent a total of six hours and ridden 53 miles.

I hope to expand to a couple different ATV events in the coming year or two. So, I'm working with the current coordinator Ken Johnson to make that happen. He eventually will pass the coordinating duties on to me, which I have happily accepted.

Thanks to Ken for all the great years of making the ride happen, and I look forward to having you and other members participate in the future. Getting muddy with your friends and family is always a blast. Ride safe and have a great year.



Riders enjoying a day on fantastic trails



One of many water breaks







Riders waiting for Darren Dorn



Lining up machines to be loaded on trailers





## Major Ave Fall Pheasant Shoot

Story by Greg Hance Pheasant Hunt Coordinator

Photos by Chad Fix & Josh Roach

**W**hat did the weather man forecast for the day of the hunt? Rainy and cloudy! Not ideal for hunting. But alas --- the day was perfect and the hunt went on.

With COVID-19 on our minds, everyone gathered in the field and off we went to shoot birds. 125 birds were released and 96 were harvested. We are very grateful for all the volunteers that help and support the group.

Thank you to Dave Goldberg, owner of the hunting lodge, along with his team of dog handlers. All seemed to enjoy the hunt but also to be able to visit with friends. This year, with the COVID-19 upon us, this proved to be a bit challenging. The group was smaller than the usual, but again the virus dictates.



Coordinator Greg Hance



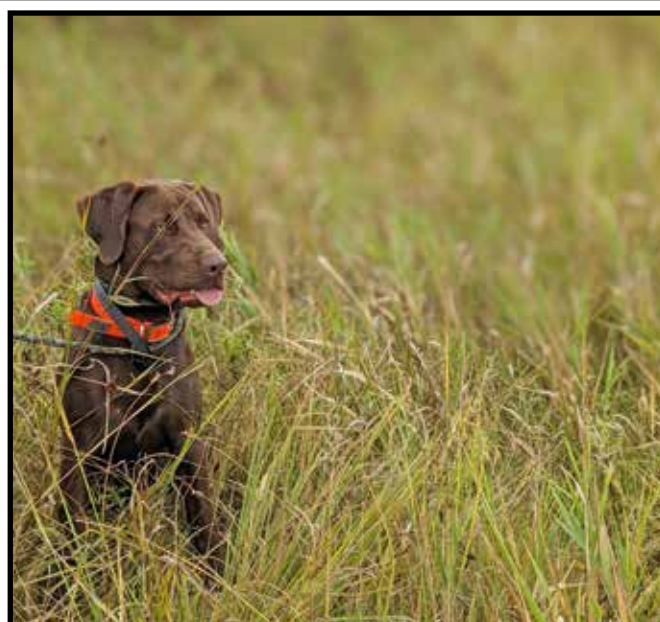
Grace Sweeney putting the bead on a rooster







Darren Dorn and Maxus eyeing up a rooster



Sarge waiting for a retrieve



Quinn Willmarth dropping a nice rooster



Pheasant release tower





## Marsh Lake Duck Shoot



**Story by Steve Scheunemann Coordinator**

**Photos by Chad Fix**

**W**e had another great turnout for the Marsh Lake Duck Shoot in 2020! Twenty-six hunters participated - despite COVID-19. However, we had to change things up a bit to stay safe. Instead of meeting indoors to sign waivers and deliver the safety talk, we did them outdoors. We also wore masks and maintained safe distances. Another change we made was to have

I explained that the hunt is at Marsh Lake Hunting Preserve in Victoria, a game farm, where no license or waterfowl stamp is required. We have four or five shooting stations that face a tree line, and when the ducks are released, they appear above the trees, heading right at the shooter. You are not limited in how many shots you take, but when you shoot your four birds, you are finished and another hunter takes your place. You go home with four frozen and cleaned birds.



A good turnout of Capable Partners members

a staging area in a nearby parking area instead of having everyone on the hill behind the shooting area. We then called up hunters as the shooting blinds became available. As usual the mallards were flying and the sky was a constant flurry of birds.

Earlier in the year, it had been my pleasure to meet fellow member Jim Purtle. We both were selected for the 2020 Capable Partners Rainy Lake fishing outing and since Jim is blind, I drove us both. During the several hours drive, we talked about many things, including the Marsh Lake Duck Shoot.



Shooter Jim and James Purtle



Shooter Don Savage sadly passed away March 2021, friend David Reichow







I was happy Jim showed up along with his two sons James and Jack. I have a hard time shooting birds out of the sky and I have great eyesight, so, when I saw Jim shooting birds left and right, I was in awe. To see the hunters' joy, as they complete their shoot, is worth all the effort and time that goes into coordinating this event. I remember when my dad came after not hunting for 20 years. To see his face, looking like a kid again, was priceless!

It is always great to see the wide variety of members' disabilities represented, and we make duck shooting accessible to each. All members are welcome. For those of you who have never been to this event, I hope you will want to participate in a future shoot.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 precautions, we missed the after-shoot lunch that Andy Akins provides for us inside the clubhouse, but we are looking forward to that coming back in 2021.

As always, many thanks to Andy Akins who co-coordinates this event with me along with Shaun and the Marsh Lake Hunting Preserve that puts on the event for us. Also, thanks to the other members that helped the hunters at the shooting stations like Chad Fix, Tom Fix, my brother Tom, and others. We are looking forward to an even better and bigger shoot on September 18th, 2021.



Joe Yaritz



Chuck Lukkason and Quinn Willmarth



Dean Clapp and Jim Vorderbruggen



Shooter Cole Clark and Tom Fix



Steve Scheunemann



Jack Purtle





# THE GALLERY



*Nicole Fix WI Archery Whitetail*



*Scot Bowman and Don Shrircliff MN*



*Pat Kellin NE Merriam Turkey*



*Jeff Anschutz KS Whitetail*



*Terrie Schrank MI Lake Trout*



*Bill Vice OK Whitetail*



*Lee Zeman MN 50" Sturgeon*



*Karl Anderson SD Mule Deer*



*Stan Koich MN Eastern Turkey*



# THE GALLERY



*Jim Vorderbruggen MN Eastern Turkey*



*Brigitte Kurkowski MN Bluegill*



*Calvin Benedict MN Whitetail*



*Brian DesLauriers MN Walleye*



*Pat Kellin SD Whitetail*



*Scot Bowan MN Eastern Turkey*



*Evan Newton MN Eastern Turkey*



*Michael Koich ND Green Wing Teal*



*Kent Dirks Archery WI Whitetail*

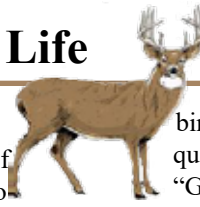


## The Biggest Buck of My Life

### Story & Photo by Lance Tebben

I was sitting in blind 11 Sunday night, the second day of the hunt, at 7:21 p.m. with my able-bodied helper, who is no ordinary helper, but a backup helper, named Jeff Bloch at my side.

A doe and her fawn had come through going towards blind nine just one hour earlier and since then, nothing. It had been quiet that evening until just moments before the hunt was to expire when off to my left, I heard the sound of the long grass rustling. I snatched my binocs. "Surely that's antlers on that doe isn't it?" I put the



binocs down and took a deep settling breath and whispered quietly to my helper, "Get the gun ready".

"Why, what do you see?"

"Two deer."

The one in front was massive. I shouldered my gun and bleated to halt his forward movement. I aimed and shot. Missed, right over his back. Lowering my aim, I fired again. Strike! In the neck this time. He reared and spun around and my helper said "One more to bring him down." I aimed, fired, connected, this time in the spine.

Jeff left the blind in search of blood. The buck that I had shot had been coming up onto the road and after rearing and spinning had fallen back into the long grass next to a thicket. As Jeff began to ascend the crown of the road, there was the second deer, an eight-point, about 20 yds away facing him.

We found the buck not far away from where he had fallen. He had fourteen points!

The biggest buck of my life!

I can't wait to see him on the wall.



Jeff Bloch and Lance Tebben





## Maple Grove Archery Hunt

Story by Lee Zeman Archery Coordinator

Photos by Emery Balts & Craig Simpson

This year we had five different hunters at Maple Grove. One nice nubbin buck was taken by Emery Balts. It's awesome Emery is still hunting at the young age of 81.

Everyone saw plenty of deer and many close encounters. I'm sure Craig and Mike would love to tell you about their encounters, or maybe not... Everyone is looking forward to fall of 2021 and I think it's going to be the best year yet for the Maple Grove Archery Hunt.

All the hunters would like to thank the city of Maple Grove for giving us this great opportunity!



Emery Balts with his nubbin buck



Member brushed in for the evening hunt



View from blind in October



View from blind in December





## LQP Deer Hunt

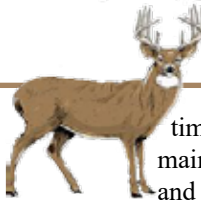
### Story & Photos by Lance Tebben LQP Coordinator

**W**e had 14 hunters participate in this year's hunt on Rosemoen Island outside of Watson, Minnesota, October 3-11. The lucky hunters gathered and harvested a total of 13 deer consisting of three bucks and 10 does.

The weather and the deer were very cooperative this year. The hunt started each morning on time at 5:30, as in years prior but the evening hunts were moved up to 4:00 p.m. to accommodate for the later time of the year. This was the first year we have held the hunt in October; previous years, the hunt has always been in the month of September providing longer daylight hours. This change seemed to be popular with the hunters that participated because of the cooler temps and fewer bugs.

As this year's coordinator, I was able to have Prairie Sportsman (a local public television show) come out and film the opening morning hunt. It had been 10 or 11 years since the last time that had taken place. Brent Amundson and his cameraman Dillon were welcome guests in the blinds of a couple of our hunters at 5:30 a.m. on that chilly morning.

(I'm not sure that is their exact sentiment.) I would like to thank them along with my assistant coordinator, Bob Hagen, another BIG thank you to the Legion Riders for donating the funds and their



time fixing/repairing the blinds, and to the DNR for maintaining and preparing the island for the hunters and for all their help in making this a safe and successful hunt.



Paul Brey with a nice doe



George Bruhn, Jr. harvested two does



Bob Hagen with a good 8-pt buck







Dean Petersen with a big doe



Nate and Ed Sjolín with three exceptional does



Dave and Tylor Pinor with a nice doe



Graham Hendrickson with a great 8-pt buck



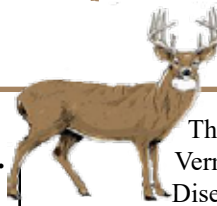


## Dakota County Deer Hunt

**Story & Photos by Gregg Runyon Coordinator**  
**Photos by Bob F., Jerry G., Terry O. and Terrie S.**

I didn't know if we were going to do the deer hunts. With COVID-19, we had canceled most of our events. I started working with Bob Fashingbauer, Area Wildlife Supervisor of Vermillion Wildlife Management Area (WMA), and Jim LaBarre, DNR Supervisor – Wildlife/Carlos Avery WMA. I submitted a plan on how we could safely do the hunts, by keeping safe distance and wearing masks. We also asked the hunters to make sure they had a helper that they knew so we could lower the chance of getting COVID-19.

We would have a meeting outside to keep safe 6-foot distance, and if someone had to enter the buildings, masks would be required. We supplied the hunters with disinfectant spray, to spray the deer stands. Bob & Jim looked over the plan and made some adjustments. The plan was good to go for both the Vermillion WMA & Carlos Avery WMA hunts. So we sent out notices for the hunters to get signed up.



Then Bob came back with another problem: the Vermillion area was in the SW Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Management area, where every harvested deer had to be tested. They also had to be skinned and quartered to be able to leave the area. Furthermore, there could be no heads with brain matter still in them leaving the area. So the volunteers had another job added to them - to process the deer within these requirements. The guys came through with flying colors on the task of processing every deer for the Vermillion WMA hunt. They had a tripod to hang deer, a table, and a dumpster to safely dispose of remains. Thanks to Ryan Klopp, Paul and Eli Doelz, Gus Muench, and Joel Linter for processing the deer.

We had our meeting for the September Dakota County Vermillion hunt in the parking lot. We had 12 hunters signed up, and stands assigned. So the hunt was on. We had the hunters go out to the stands. We took six does, two fawn does and one buck fawn. Barry Hite took a doe. We couldn't find her Saturday night. We went and looked on Sunday morning. We found her just down from where the guys were looking the night before. So of course, being the nice guys we are, we started sending Barry pictures of the deer. Well, Sunday morning he was trying to do his Sermon, which we knew. He called us back after he was done with his Sunday morning duties. We had his deer all registered and processed.



Jerry George and Glenn Picha with a big doe



Barry Hite with his nice 6-pt buck





We had two hunters score a double; Ken Johnson got a fawn buck and a fawn doe. Terrie Schrank shot two does. We ended the September hunt with nine deer. We did the late October hunt with a surprise - SNOW. We had enough snow to cover the ground. As it turns out, the snow really helped for tracking. New hunter Terry Oakes shot a 10-point buck. After a mile of tracking the buck it was recovered.



Terry Oakes with a impressive 10-pt buck



Terrie Schrank with 1st doe and helper Wade Wiebold

Without the snow we would have not recovered that deer. Thanks goes out to trackers Jerry George, Trapper Bob, Gus Muench & Joel Linter for an excellent job. We ended up taking two 10-point bucks, Past President Mike Hanson harvested the other 10-pointer. Barry Hite got a nice 8-pointer. Tom Gindorff shot a doe. Dale Schons harvested a fantastic buck with 15 scorable points. The snow again played a major part in recovering this deer. This one was found and put down after about a mile tracking job. Tony Gutzwiller, Dale's helper, would not give up tracking with Jerry and Bob. It was after 9 pm when we recovered the buck. When we got it back to the garage, we decided to wait and process it the next morning. I suggested we take the head off because I didn't want to have someone take it during the night.

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Terry Oakes with his european mount



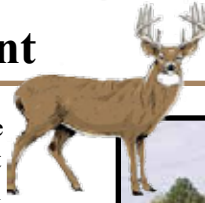
Dale Schons with a fantastic 15-pt buck and friend Tony Gutzwiller



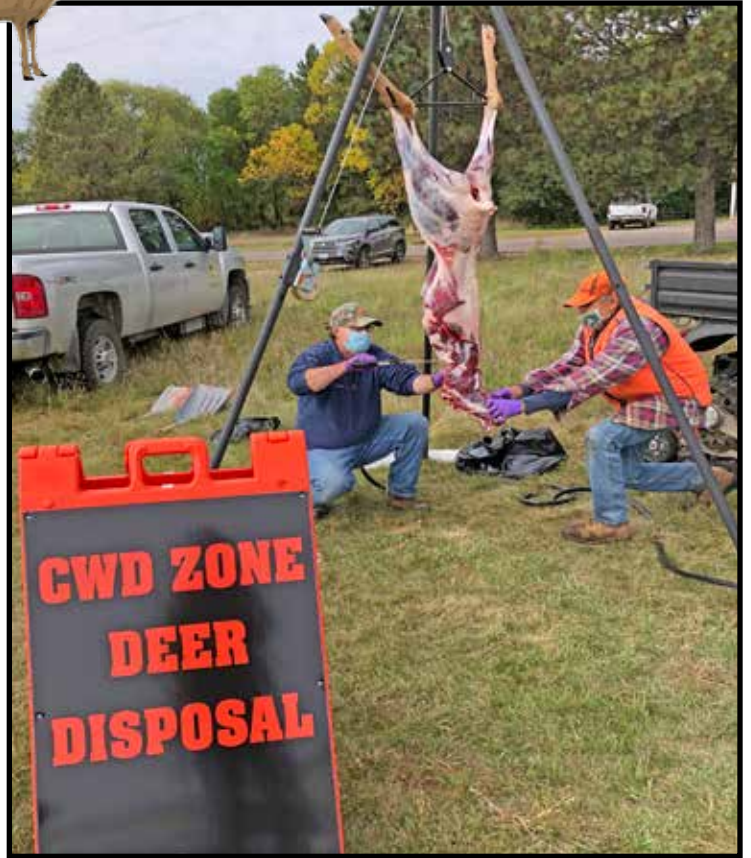


## Dakota County Deer Hunt

We got back on Sunday and the buck was still there. So we had two 10-point bucks, one 8-point, a doe and a 15-point buck. Not a bad way to end the season, seeing we didn't even know if we were going to have the hunt. I give a big thanks to all the helpers this year! There was a lot more they had to do this year. Thanks to Bob Fashingbauer



Wade Wiebold and Terrie Schrank with her 2nd doe



Tony Gutzwiller and Jerry George



Mike Hanson with his biggest buck



Volunteer crew





## Tim's Blind Experience

### Story & Photos by Tim McAndrew

After a decade's long hiatus from hunting, I felt the need to get back into the sport. Even more, I had never shot a trophy buck. With my new job of being a Personal Care Attendant to Craig Simpson (quite the sporting quadriplegic), I had buck fever like I never imagined. And what's worse, I have never even seen a buck in the wild, let alone harvest one. I had shot two small does in high school. I remember thinking that does were the way to go. The venison was tender...but the victory was as well.

This was the first time I was aiding Craig directly during his hunt. Previously, I had set him up in his archery blind, and he would hunt by himself. But this time we were both sitting in a small wooden blind at Carlos Avery WMA, and I would stay with him the whole time. He was using a 12-gauge shotgun with a slug. Craig had me clean out the brush directly in front of him and from a small area to the right of our position.

Hunting from a wheelchair is an elaborate process. Craig has set up his hunting chair with a lot of jigs and rigs...most of which he made himself. Hunting is complex in and of itself. Whenever I go out in the woods with Craig, I see all that he has to go through (and put his aid through :), and it tells me how much he loves hunting and how valuable time in nature really is.

There were about 20 minutes of daylight left. I was sure my chance to see a deer (and even more, a buck) was gone. After looking to the left and right, which felt like 100 times, I turned slowly to the right and I SAW IT! Nothing but horns! He just slowly emerged from that very brush spot I had cleared earlier, on Craig's instinct that doing so would create a more favorable shooting zone to the West. I slowed my breathing so as to not shriek in toddlerish excitement. As calmly as I could, I leaned over to Craig, who was faced 90 degrees to the South, and whispered, "Craig, there is a huge buck over here." Later Craig would confess, "I thought as a newbie a big buck to you would be like a 6-pointer."

He was right. I would have been equally excited about that as well. But this... this scion stag... this heir to the forest fortune... this dashing young blade had over twice that amount! 13-points in a slightly uncommon configuration.

Craig's eyes grew as large as I had ever seen.

I was oddly calm and he oddly dropped his phone. I thought that loud THUD would end the moment. It did not. I thought the bit of struggle to get his chair turned would end the moment. It did not. I certainly thought all the moving, whispering, and aligning his gun sight around the middle post of the window frame would send the big buck scurrying. Fortunately, there the animal stood like a monument to freedom and marksmanship. Craig later told me the buck was focusing on the doe decoy I had put out about 50 yards from the buck.



Tim McAndrews



Still, I thought the chance was gone. This playboy of the western world started strutting away from us. Not in a hurry, not with a care about anything. But he no longer presented his favorable flank for a target; he showed us his rear end and therefore what he thought of us as huntsmen. Craig is a very conscientious hunter. There is no way he was going to shoot that monster from behind....then...BOOM! I've never been in a small space like that with a shotgun going off right alongside of me! After recovering from the shock, I looked to the right and figured I would see that gentleman deer sprinting hard to the setting sun. But I didn't see him at all! Craig had dropped him dead in his hooves. I could not believe it! Apparently, it is possible to shoot a deer from behind and not merely wound the animal. With Craig's angle, the buck was slightly showing his right side. He had placed the crosshairs behind its right shoulder, the only spot that would drop the deer.

This was no small feat. It would have been impressive for any hunter to bag that amazing buck that day. If I alone had shot it, I would have been very proud. But between Craig and me, there is an incredible division of labor that I am finding hard to describe. As smartly as Craig had me set him up for optimal shooting success, there is no way to know where the opportunity is going to present itself, at what angle, and behind what obstacle. The more I thought back to all the teamwork between Craig and me, the less likely it was that we would be successful. Craig had to be sitting perfectly, he had to quietly instruct me how to move him, and I had to gather my own usually fumbly-bumbly movement for him to even hope to get a decent shot. That he was able to drop the buck with one shot, one kill...is a testament to something..I just don't know what....but it worked and it was an awesome, exhilarating experience.

With the aid of some great help from the other hunters, organizers, and assistants, we got the deer field-dressed, tagged, and loaded onto Craig's van. I was the recipient of an outstanding lesson in gutting a deer from one of the earnest helpers. I recovered the heart from the gut pile as a trophy for my small part. I did share it with Craig and of course it was delicious.



Craig Simpson with his 13-pt buck





## Carlos Avery Hunt

Story & Photos by Gregg Runyon Carlos Avery Coordinator

**W**e did the Carlos Avery hunt under the same COVID-19 rules as Dakota County / Vermillion. So, we had our meeting in the parking lot with everyone keeping social distancing. We had a wet and windy hunt, but the deer were moving.

We took 11 deer. Craig Simpson took a 13-pointer. Carlos Martinez took a nice six-point; I think his biggest deer yet! Curt Farrow took an eight-point. Ken Johnson harvested a nice doe. The best deer taken was a by Karl Gertz, because it was his first deer!!

New hunter Terry Oakes took a doe. I even had an opportunity this year to hunt and took a button buck. So, we ended up with ten deer: a 13-point, an eight-point, a six-point, seven does and a button buck for a total of 11 deer. Not bad for a season we didn't know was going to happen.

A special thank you to the helpers and the Carlos crew!!



Curt Farrow with his nice 8-pt buck



Karl Gertz with first deer and helper Kevin Montroy



Carlos Martinez with his 6-pt buck and friend Jeff Anschutz





## MN River Valley Archery Hunt

Story & Photo by Evan Newton Archery Coordinator

While we did not harvest any deer in the valley this year, we did improve our opportunities by replacing some plywood platforms, adding a platform, scouting Chaska and building an elevated platform. Several of these efforts were spear-headed by my co-coordinator, friend, and avid archer George Peters, who passed away in October 2020. My thanks to George for all he did in Capable Partners including working to do everything we could to improve our archery deer opportunities.

George was also a consummate networker who told everybody about how Capable Partners does great things, and he brought many people into volunteering in the organization. After he got to know them, he would tell them Capable Partners had saved his life by keeping him engaged with activities.

As for archery deer hunting at our three locations, weather conditions were pretty good; we weren't flooded out this year. However, many hunters, concerned about getting COVID-19, limited any trips outside of their homes. Later in the season, one of my helpers had COVID-19 and wasn't able to get me out.

All three plywood platforms at Long Meadow Lake (LML) had been lost to flooding. Several volunteers and George built two new 8' x 8' platforms and placed them at LML. We unburied a platform at Bloomington Ferry (BF) and cut branches out of the steel frame of the blind. Then we added another platform with a blind north and west, right on a couple of well-used game trails. Over at Chaska, even though a section of road had eight inches of very fine silt, we scouted and found two good locations for blinds. When I checked the area in November, my van got stuck but one of the other volunteers pulled my van out. There were reports of a 150+ class buck near a dry wash in range of our blind.

At all three locations, we continue to see good deer numbers, and lots of deer sign. There's always a chance at a trophy buck! New co-coordinator Rod Guthier and I are looking forward to seeing you this year.



New raised platform



Jason Sorenson helped build raised platform



Whitetail doe in hiding



Evan Newton waiting for a wiley whitetail





## Nature Haiku by Terrie Schrank

Soybeans Mask the Field  
Tiz the Season of Covid  
Terrie, Wade, Spy Boys

Sweet So Many Bucks,  
Three Young Ones Come to My Grunt  
Wise Two Choose to Eat

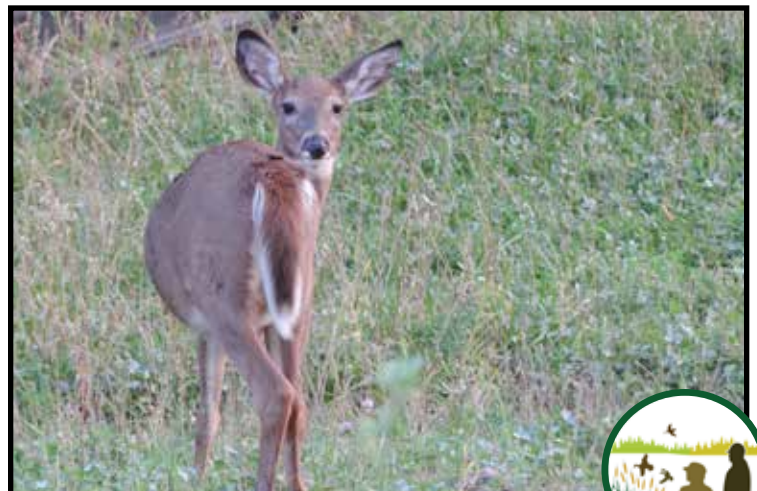




During the 2020, COVID-19 Conscious, Vermillion Deer Hunt, Terrie enjoyed young bucks' antics at 25 yards; harvested 2 does at 38 yards; and wished the wise guys would have gotten closer than 186 yards!

Blaze Or'nge, Nature's Fire  
Night Sky, Autumn Leaves, Duck Feet  
Gun Season's Color

Buck Undercover  
Now You See Him, Now You Don't  
Hey, Boy Here I Am!





## A Parallel Universe

### Story & Photo by Terrie Schrank

The Capable Partners Dakota County/Vermillion Deer Hunts persevered this year despite the COVID-19 pandemic and the hunt location lying within a Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) area. CWD is a contagious neurological disease of deer caused by misshapen proteins known as prions. These prions are spread by an infected deer's bodily fluids and can last on the ground for up to three years. There is no cure. In March of 2020, a Farmington roadkill deer tested positive for CWD. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) rules for containing CWD require any deer taken by hunters within a

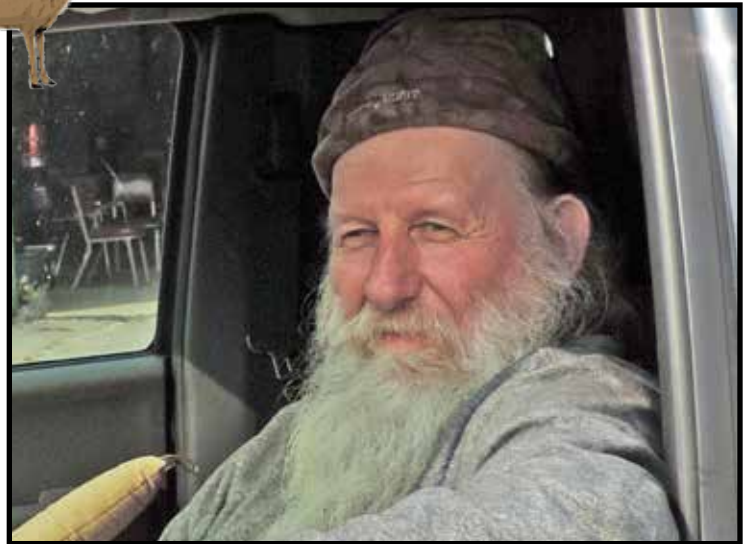


Wade Wiebold and Terrie Schrank

10-mile radius of a positive deer must then also be tested. The Vermillion hunt is within that circle. Any deer taken were gutted and quartered on-site and skulls, and backbones were tested at the DNR Regional Facility located within U-More Park, where the hunt occurs. Hunters were then notified within three to four days of the test results.

As most know, COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a novel strain of the corona virus, first identified in 2019 in China. The disease has shut down nations and killed more than 1.81 million people world-wide as of January of 2021. In March of 2020 Minnesota Governor Tim Walz announced Covid pandemic restrictions causing shutdowns across the state that affected us all, including Capable Partners (CP). Many of CP's scheduled activities had to be cancelled throughout the rest of the year.

Our CP Board, meeting via Zoom; coordinators and members; the DNR; and a group of volunteers made necessary changes to meet these parallel Covid restrictions and CWD requirements and allowed for the safe ability for the Vermillion hunts to continue. Masks were strongly recommended at the weapons sight-ins.



Gregg Runyon

For the hunts, social distancing was required, hand and blind sanitizing was in abundance, and there were no group meals or indoor gatherings. Hunters had to have a bubble buddy in the blind and had to stay put if a deer was taken while volunteers would do the tracking. The procedure was professional, thorough, quick and clean.

As we headed towards the deer hunting season, I expected that I would miss out on the 2020 hunts. Due to my compromised immune system from Multiple Sclerosis, damaged lungs and decreased white blood cell count, I judged the risk of being exposed to COVID-19 was too great. I had been isolating at home since March and resolved that would have to continue. Because of the changes that were made to the Vermillion hunts by the aforementioned groups, I was thrilled and grateful to experience the wonder and beauty of being in the hunt!



Gus Muench, Joel Linter and Ryan Klopp





Many deer made themselves available to me. I shot little bucks with my camera while waiting for some big boys who were out of range; however, they proved too wary to ever give me a chance. On day two, I took two decent sized does so there would be meat in the freezer. While it is up to the individual to decide to eat meat from an infected deer, the last but not least part of my hunt was finding out that neither of my two take-downs tested positive, and I could share my venison with family and friends worry-free. Along with thanking all who made the hunt possible, I would especially express my gratitude to hunt coordinator Gregg Runyon; Bob Fashingbauer, DNR Wildlife Supervisor; and Wade Wiebold for being my CP/COVID/CWD Bubble Buddy!



Joe Buckingham and Curt Farrow



Glenn Picha and Bob Fashingbauer



Evan and Kerrick Newton



Karen and George Peters



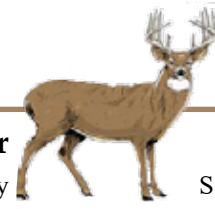
Dale Schons





## Becklin Homestead Deer Hunt

Story & Photos by Scott Linder & Jeff Jacobson Becklin Deer Hunt Coordinator



Excitement was in the air at the outdoor pre-hunt meeting on October 8, 2020, at the Isanti County Sportsman Club for the upcoming Becklin Homestead WMA deer hunt. This is Capable Partners' only deer hunt in the rifle zone and takes place before the regular state-wide gun-deer season. A total of 13 disabled hunters attended the pre-hunt meeting to go over the rules, show qualification, and review regulations for the hunt.

Opening day was on Saturday, October 24, 2020, and it was chilly and snowy. Six hearty hunters participated in the opening afternoon hunt. Over the chilly week there were seven deer taken, five does and two bucks filling members' freezers.

Special thanks to co-coordinators Violet Foster and Jeff Jacobson and all the other helpers; without their assistance our hunt wouldn't have gone as smoothly as it did.



Scott and Nick Linder



Scott Linder with a big doe



Jeff Jacobson with a nice 8-pt buck







Bob Alexander with a big doe



Carlos Martinez with a great doe



James Lawson Jr. with a good doe



John Johnson with a buck





## LeBlanc's Pheasant Shoot

Story & Photos by Violet Foster LeBlanc's Coordinator

What a beautiful day? It was sunny, warm, and just a slight breeze. After our safety meeting, it was off to the hunt. 16 hunters were looking to see pheasant fly. In all, 64 birds were harvested.



As the hunters changed stations there were a few members being teased about missing birds.

As usual the Rice Creek Hunting Preserve boys did a great job helping where needed. I am quite sure the dogs need a rest after all the birds they retrieved.



A good turnout of members enjoying a day of fantastic shooting



Ken Johnson



Dean Clapp







Curt Farrow and Megan Buckingham



Bo and Ray Peterson



Joe Yaritz and Xena



Jerry George





## Veteran Waterfowl Hunt



### Story & Photos by Chad Fix Waterfowl Coordinator

The 2:30 a.m. alarm had me flop out of bed, trudge to the kitchen, put fire to the percolator, pack the truck, and hit the road. “Kickstart My Heart” throbbed through my ears while sips of piping hot “black tar” – as my wife calls it – pumped through my veins. A quick pit stop at Cub for some donuts was made before I scampered over to Rice Lake to pick up an A-frame blind for our hunt on Blue Lake – time, to every waterfowler, is of the essence prior to shooting light.

I had 15 minutes to make it over to Blue after unlocking the gate at Rice – speed was key as I motored to the parking area and made the 80-yard run to the point. The inch of snow that had accumulated overnight gave a muffled crunch with each, sprinting kick until I made it to the blind area where my headlamp spotted the A-frame sheltered under some plywood sheathing inside one of the permanent blinds. It was at this point I took a few breaths to just listen; under normal circumstances at Rice, when it’s mid-November, there is a chorus of hen mallards contentedly quacking across the lake. This season, however, it was fairly rare to hear them at all – but listen I did.

Just 50 yards to my left, a hen started quacking, then another next to it, and then another just 30 yards from me. I shut off my headlamp, and my eyes slowly poked over the edge of the blind I was in. Most of the lake was blanketed in white – an indication that the lake was iced over from the overnight snowstorm. The only black (open water) on the lake appeared right off of the point where the blinds were located. A half minute went by until my eyes acclimated to the dark of night and revealed a pile of black dots on the water. “Oh boy!!” I thought as I slowly dropped my head and slinked out of the blind until I was out of their eyesight.

CRUNCH, CRUNCH, CRUNCH... back to the truck I ran with the A-frame over my shoulder and then I slowly drove the truck out to the road and made a left turn over to Blue. Under normal circumstances, Rice would be the spot to be, but this morning’s hunt was special; it had nothing to do with my thoughts or opinions – instead, it was about what our veterans wanted.

Today was to be our first annual Veterans Day Hunt. So, around the horn I went with the phone calls. First to Justin Lang (Marines) and his carpooling brother, Joe Lang, who isn’t a veteran but got an honorary vote because it was his birthday. Then to Quinn Willmarth (Marines), and eventually to Rod Guthier (Navy), once he was able to get out of his driveway after getting plowed in. They all wanted to give Rice a go, so I informed my old man (Tom Fix), who wanted to be a helper at this hunt, of the change of plans while spinning a U-turn and speeding back to Rice.

Joe, Justin, and I made haste tossing out a spread of ten dozen decoys just after flushing the same number of live birds that overnighted in the open water in front of the blind. Meanwhile, my old man spruced up the blind with more brush with a sprinkling of snow and then helped Rod with his gear go down to the blind. With 15 minutes prior to shooting light, we kicked back with our hot coffee and donuts in hand while enjoying an unforgettable spectacle. Wings whistled overhead from all directions. Chuckles and quacks complimented the ambient, whistle-filled sky. Birds poured into the

spread in groups of 10, 20, and 30. Anticipation grew in our hearts as our index fingers were eager for the trigger, watching the birds tarry in our spread just long enough to maintain open water before they’d take flight.

“One minute,” I whispered to my blind mates. Four mallards splashed in as we all slowly hunkered down. Just the whites of our eyes peered over the edge of the blind to see a drake taking a drink before realizing the other three he was with weren’t too sure of what to think of all the lifeless look-a-likes floating next to them. Seconds before legal shooting light, they left the last ripples our little open pocket would have for quite some time.

It all went “radio silent.” We all looked at each other in bewilderment. Quinn broke the silence by chatting with Justin about their times in the Marines. Rod then steered the conversation to his tour that his buddy put together of the restaurants that offered free meals to Veterans. “Don’t go booking brunch just yet, ‘The Rod.’ They’ll give this another look; we’ve got to be one of the few places in the county with open water; it’s just a matter of time,” I tried consoling in semi-blind faith. In the back of my mind, there was a trace of doubt in what I said; who truly knew if they’d be back?

Considering most birds don’t migrate until dark anyway, why would they completely abandon the area after weathering an overnight snowstorm? They shouldn’t. But who am I to deliver absolutes to some of the wildest and free-spirited animals on the planet? I was nervous now after pitching “an audible” to all these guys versus an almost sure spot at Blue Lake, where in the previous month we shot over 250 birds, while just one fifth of that number was taken on Rice in the same time. I took another sip of coffee and breathed a quiet sigh to myself, hoping I hadn’t oversold the spot.

“Two to the left,” Joe voiced.

Like clockwork, the pair cupped and committed to the spread and were stilled by a bismuth and steel curtain that Rod, Justin, and Joe blasted from their chilled 12s. My old man sent his pup, Kylie, after them. She made it all of 20 feet before slamming the breaks from the cracking of sharp ice at her feet – this was her first time dealing with ice. Her neck contorted back like a scared cat. Then she started barking at the ice as if to say, “I’m not sure what you are, but I’ve got important matters to handle...now go on and get out of my way because you’re not making this easy.” With a little more coaxing from my old man and her own blood pressure building to a boil, she put her head down and began jumping to break the ice – all the while continuing to bark in frustration – until she reached each bird on successive retrieves. Warm laughter and praise caused a cloud of exhaled steam from us hunters in the cold blind at the exhibition she had put on.

“Pintails,” my old man announced and continued, “two pintails...a drake and a hen.”

“No kidding?” I asked.

“Yeah, pintails,” the old man confirmed.

“Wow, I don’t know what it is about this season, but our pintail streak continues; we’ve shot at least one pintail every outing since opening weekend! I’ve never seen so many pintails in the 24 years I’ve hunted.” I responded.







Kylie retuning from icy retrieve

Then a solo bird dropped down just like the pair before it to meet another blended bismuth and steel curtain from the triumvirate on the left side of the blind. Kylie's mouth – full of feathers – confirmed a drake pintail. Then a hen mallard.

I told Joe it was his pup's turn; Kylie was at four retrieves, and I wanted to be sure Knight got at least a couple of retrieves. So, we switched out dogs, which isn't a bad thing to do with young pups on a cold day – it keeps them fresh and promotes a positive psyche. While Kylie got to warm herself back up in my old man's truck, Knight got to partake in the party.

Not long after Knight settled in the blind with us, a drake mallard circled from the right. After giving it a few quacks through my call, I heard a few high-pitched whistles to my right. There Knight was with his eyes as large as frisbees panting at Joe exclaiming, "LET ME GET IN THIS WATER NOW!!!" (as if he knew what was already about to happen). The drake was undeterred by the dog's yipping – he liked what he saw from above and took four, quick volleys from the Lang boys before folding its wings and dropping clean.



Knight waiting for the flock to decoy in

"DAD! DAD! DAD!" Knight's head implied as he'd look quick at the drake, then Joe, then the drake, then Joe, then the drake until Joe lined him like he's done a thousand times in training and sent him. WHAP! WHAP! WHAP!

Knight bounded and made quick work of the ice breaking retrieve. "This is pretty remarkable to have two young pups so undeterred by ice. You both [looking to my old man and then over to Joe] should be very proud."

Speaking of proud, Rod continued sharing a bit about his glory years in the Navy when another mallard hen dropped into a 12-gauge ovation that folded her clean. An additional, raucous set of booms dropped another pair of pintails minutes later.

"We're at five pintails total, boys...being there are six of us and each can only shoot one per day – that leaves us with just one more pintail that can be shot." I announced.

Rod, Joe, and Justin had dropped the first three (Quinn, my old man, and I didn't even shoot). With this pair that we just dropped, I asked my old man if he had shot. "Nope, I figured you all had them," he remarked. "Good," I replied, "Then I know for sure that pair that we just knocked down was dropped by Quinn and me because we were the only shooters. So that means you have a pintail to shoot on a pintail-filled morning, Pops. That said, guys, it's going to be tough with the sun glaring in on our faces (and therefore silhouetting a lot of birds), so it's best we don't shoot at anything unless we know exactly what it is – anything questionable we put our guns down and let my old man shoot, or we risk going over our pintail limit," I instructed. The band of blind mates agreed with the plan.

Then I asked Joe if he'd mind if we swapped out Knight for Kylie since he got four retrieves. He happily obliged, "He's had a blast, but he could use the heat and a warm bed in the truck."

Kylie, all freshened up by a quick, warm breather, returned to the fold from my old man's truck while a 45-minute lull in the action ticked away. Then something happened that none of us hunters in our over 150 years of combined experience had ever witnessed.

Rod marked a bird off to our left, making its approach to the decoy spread. The brown dot of feathers casually swung through – close enough for the old man to put a shot on it, which hit true, but not enough to kill it. His tried-and-true Wingmaster neglected to shuck out the shell to allow a follow-up kill shot. The bird sailed 100 yards and crashed on the ice, lying motionless. Sometimes a fall like that is enough to kill them, so we assumed it had met its demise. About five minutes later, Justin saw it poke its head up and then its body.

"Well, that's going to make for a fun retrieve... best I get on it now before the retrieve gives me a heart attack... what the?! Are my eyes messing with me?" I questioned. "No, that thing is waddling back here on the ice... Now, give it a chuckle." Quinn responded.

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## Veteran Waterfowl Hunt



A few quacks, drake grunts and a mixing of feeder chuckles brought it right into gun range.

“Well, it sure as heck doesn’t look like a pintail, so you two (directed at my old man and Quinn) take it since you’re closest to it on the right side,” I instructed. Kylie was after it, and to our surprise, the brown ball of feathers turned out to be a hen redhead.

“Joe, what the heck is with these redhead hens this year? First it was the hen that was flying with a flock of pintails a month ago up at Legend’s cabin that not once, but twice landed in our spread while the pintails incessantly circled just outside of gun range. Now it’s this?!” I joked.

Halfway through the laughter Justin pointed out something I had reminded them all to keep their eyes out for: the 30-bird flocks of green-winged teal. They had been zipping, under the radar, through our spreads for a few weeks – literally flying so low on the deck that you couldn’t see them until it was too late. Within seconds they ripped down the center of Rice, hooked hard along the shoreline and were within 20 yards of us at the next eyeblink.

“Take ‘em!” I yelled. Our guns erupted in a smattering of random percussion. In less than a second, it was all over. Our shots had to be true at these agile Spitfires of the sky. All of us recalled shouldering our guns, swinging on a bird that ducked behind another, then reappeared only to disappear in the sun’s blinding reflection off of the ice in front of us. When we’d go for our next round, we could hardly put a proper bead on a bird in the back of the flock because they then erupted like a nest of angry hornets – just try to focus on one when they’re zig-zagging so fast, after getting partially blinded from the sun.

I closed my eyes and kept them pressed hard shut to not only relieve my eyes but also to soak in all the stimuli from that lightning bolt of action. “WOW!” I thought to myself and then began to open my eyes.

I pinched myself after quickly seeing six on the water and quickly reassessed when Rod pointed at two more, and then all of us eventually saw ten ducks were down. “Joe, you may want to go get Knight!” I said elated.

Kylie and Knight made quick work of the greenies. The outcome from the retrieves began to puzzle us: a drake, another drake, a drake, a drake, a hen, a drake, a drake, a drake, a drake, and – you guessed it – another drake. “How on earth did we manage to drop nine drakes out of ten birds when we couldn’t even make out any distinguishing color characteristics from their sun-silhouetted bodies in that split second?” I questioned and continued, “Not in a million tries could that have been done again, right? Especially when two of the guys in the blind didn’t even shoot because they admitted to not being able to see from the sun’s blinding glare.”

That essentially was our conversation for the next 20 minutes until Joe mentioned, “We all know why Quinn didn’t shoot... he was too scared to whip out his little sawed off.” WHOOSH! A hen, hooded merganser clipping at



Quinn Willmarth

Mach 3 buzzed our tower. Quinn’s forehead furrowed at the sight of it taking a sweeping turn and gave us another look. One shot was all he needed (as usual with his sawed off Super Black Eagle). “Huckleberry Quinn, why on God’s green earth did you shoot that?” Joe asked.

“Because I need one for the drake I already have mounted. Any other dumb questions?” Quinn deathstaringly asked back at Joe. “Yeah, how much did you lead that?” Joe asked between laughing breaths, knowing that by asking that, it would send Quinn into a mental funk “Heh heh...” Quinn responded in sarcastic distaste while the rest of us reacted in an eruption of laughter.

“My face hurts from all this and now is making me have to piss like a race horse.” I voiced while making my way out of the blind. Out also went Joe wanting to check on Knight who had been tucked back into his warm truck after earlier helping Kylie retrieve the ten-pack of green-winged teal. His departure couldn’t escape Quinn, who also got up to go stretch his legs, but we all knew it was to begin the bombardment of razzing Joe.

The banter continued until we were startled to see a flock of 20 greenies buzz the blind with Rod, Justin, and my old man still in it. Then came the barking percussions from their guns. It looked, from our distant perspective, that three were dropped until Quinn and I finally made it to the blind with Rod chuckling at what had just happened saying, “This is a hell of a lot more fun than making the rounds for free meals all day! How many did we drop?” “It looks like six!” Justin replied and then looked at me with a big grin, “I spotted them doing the same thing as that first big group.” “How you spot those suckers from a distance is insane... you’ve got eagle eyes!” I exclaimed then looked back and yelled, “Joe, get Knight! We need the dynamic duo to tandem retrieve!”

Looking forward again, I saw my old man lining Kylie up on a bird and noticed a different one stand up on the ice outside of the spread 30 yards away. “Pop that before it runs off any further,” I mentioned to Justin and Rod. While they started shucking a shell in their unloaded guns, the green-winged took off flying like a phoenix.







I flipped a shell in the chamber, swung out ahead of it, and fired. The bird folded and fell like a brick.

“You’ve gotta be sh\*\*ing me!” Rod exclaimed. “No kidding! What on earth are you shooting, heat seeking birdshot?!” Justin continued. “Remember those shells I told each of you earlier this season about? ..That there is TSS at its finest, boys! I’m not taking credit for that – it was all the TSS,” I replied. “That stuff is nasty...look at where you dropped it; that’s gotta be at least 80 yards.” Justin remarked. “Wanna know something even crazier?” The old man questioned

us and then continued, “Kylie has brought back two drakes.” “Yeah, Knight brought a hen first and it looks like the one he has now is a drake,” Joe added. “I guess I’ll have to go see that heart shot bird that one of you boys dropped out there... (pointing towards a bird out 60 yards from the blind)... and then make way to the little phoenix that almost put a slip on us,” I replied.

Off I went with Quinn’s antique, Alumacraft Ducker in front of me breaking ice as I plodded my way out to the birds that crashed on a half inch of ice glazed over 2 inches of water and 2 feet of the stickiest mud you’d never want to set foot into. Huffing and puffing to the first bird confirmed another drake. The track record held up with the final one another drake.

We called it a wrap after that – the Vets had a hankering for their free lunch. Encircled around a table mowing down burgers, we confirmed the morning’s events to be summed up as the most bizarre, successful hunts of our lives: two young pups undeterred by most dogs’ worst nightmare – ice – where they retrieved 14 drakes in 16 total green-winged teal, a redhead that didn’t learn her lesson the first time, not one but two Hail Mary shots, and more pintails than any of us have ever experienced bagging in a Minnesota blind.

“Speaking of pintails, just as we were about to pick the spread up, all of us but the old man were unloaded. A pair of pintails flew by at 30 yards. I thought he doesn’t miss?” one of us questioned.

“Huh, I guess we can add that to the list too...”



A very successful day of beautiful green wing teal



Rod Guthier, Quinn Willmarth, Chad Fix, Tom Fix, Justin and Joe Lang





## MN Valley NWR Duck Hunting



### Story & Photos by Chad Fix Waterfowl Coordinator

One of these years, conditions will be ideal. There won't be flooding that has cut out large chunks of our season. There won't be a multi-year road construction project that closed lake access. And let's hope and pray we don't have to hunt in lakes with an inch or less of water like this past season!

That last sentence was what my knees barked at me while I applied some ice packs to them a handful of hours after the season had closed. The pedometer on my phone estimated I "walked" 10-15 miles per hunt; if only it knew that most of those miles weren't on solid ground – rather it was steps for pulling, pushing, and hauling in some of the gnarliest I snapped back at the whining creaks from my knees, "If it gets them on birds, what difference does it make to you two...."



Flock of mallards decoying in



Josh Scanlon, Nate Sjolín, Maxus, Darren Dorn and Stan Koich

most of the hunters this past season didn't need their knees to shoot more birds than what we have in the previous three seasons combined...how about you appreciate that you're still a part of the process and start healing up for next season!"

I don't think there will be another season like this season; there were unprecedented lows (water levels) and highs (bird counts) and a whole heck of a lot of firsts for us waterfowl hunters in the MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge last season.

We were granted full access to two lakes. We hosted our first ever hunt for our Veterans. We hunted out of watercraft on every week of the season, which is the primary reason why we killed 619 birds. Never in the history of Capable Partners have ten of our hunters shot their limit of ducks and geese in a single day – it took us less than a few hours on one, fine October morning.



Darren Dorn harvested a banded mallard from Lansing, Michigan





Jacie, Chad Fix, Tom Scheunemann, Paul Johnson, Zephyr, Darrin Gotsch and Steve Scheunemann

Knight waiting for birds

Our success cannot be overstated with the use of hunting kayaks and our disabled membership giving them a try. Without their willingness to break away from the comforts of their chair (physically and psychologically), they would've been sitting on the sidelines watching the action unfold; thankfully almost all that went out in a kayak had nothing shy of a bang-up hunt at some point during the season. By bang-up hunt, I mean their guns are shucking shells like corn on a cob until they got their limit while donning a beaming smile from ear to ear. **continue to page 72**



Joe Lang setting out a spread of decoys



Rob Klett and Jacie





## MN Valley NWR Duck Hunting



Darren Dorn, Chad Fix, Maxus, Darrin Gotsch, Jacie, Nick and Nate Sjolín



Set of snowy decoys



Get ready, big green head has it's wings set

We were safe too. COVID-19 was something that over 50 of us hunters avoided this season – something not to be understated. No one was hurt or injured either, despite the lengths we'd go to get our hunters on birds.

Even greater than keeping safe and shooting 619 birds in a 60-day season (yeah, you did the math correctly, that's averaging over ten birds per day), we did something that typically goes unnoticed. We managed to recover 93% of all the birds we dropped. For perspective, it's estimated that the national rate is 75%.

Incredible dog work was the main reason. Secondly, our able-bodied helpers also would go to incredible lengths to go after ones that were beyond a dog's capabilities. And finally (and most importantly), it was our ensuring we were each taking ethical shots at birds in effective gun range. Add those three aspects up and that's why we only lost 7% of our birds. I'd challenge anyone or group or guide service to be that successful over the course of a season – I'd wager my life savings that none could top our mark.



Beautiful flock of trumpeter swans



Decoys spread with a thin coat of ice





## Wyoming Hunting Opportunity

Chairbound Hunters is a nonprofit organization designed exclusively for persons who use a wheelchair, are blind, or terminally ill. Veterans with a disability are also welcome. These persons are taken out to hunt antelope, deer, elk and /or turkey by one of our board members or a qualified helper.

We request that our hunters be full-time wheelchair users. Paraplegics must be able to maneuver well in rough terrain for short distances, perform transfers, etc. Quadriplegics are welcome, but please bring an attendant to help assist.

Why only wheelchair users? We realize there are many different disabilities; however, not being able to use one's legs at all gives the hunter a distinct disadvantage. Also, we feel that, although there are many wonderful organizations helping hunters in wheelchairs, there are just not enough. We will consider each individual on a case-by-case basis.

The persons selected must have hunting and shooting experience/practice at distances of as much as 400 yards. First and foremost, we want to be absolutely safe, we also owe it to the game that we hunt to be as humane as possible and put them down quickly.

No alcohol or illegal drug use of any type will be tolerated while hunting. If a hunter is caught with any amount, he/she will be immediately dismissed from the hunt. We will hunt out of pickups (the hunter must have a permit through Wyoming Game and Fish to shoot from a vehicle), side-by-sides, and/or ground blinds.



Most of the area that we hunt will be rugged, so keep in mind it won't be a smooth ride. Chairbound Hunters is a small group of people committed to helping give hunters who use wheelchairs the opportunity to experience quality hunting in beautiful Southeast Wyoming.

Our reward is seeing the enjoyment our clients receive.

All donations are appreciated and are tax deductible.

If interested, please contact  
Big Al McCarty 307-331-1143

[www.chairboundhunters.com](http://www.chairboundhunters.com)





## Silent Ability Recoil Relief

Silent Ability came about when its founder, Patrick Moore, realized one of his long-time friends, Craig Simpson, was going to pass a chance to go on his first elk hunt due to a shoulder injury making it impossible for him to use a large caliber rifle without permanent damage to his shoulder.

Pat had suppressors he had acquired for recreational purposes but quickly realized they could be a very necessary piece of medical equipment for his friend. So Pat set to work doing the legal paperwork and finding the machinists and engineers needed to outfit Craig with a shooting rest for his wheelchair and suppressor to go hunting. From this first project, Silent Ability was born.

Now Pat and Craig wish to help others benefit from their knowledge of outdoor equipment. Pat and Craig are joined by a small group of dedicated volunteers who desire to help one physically challenged person at a time outfit for their dream hunt. Silent Ability is a non-profit organization that is committed to helping physically challenged people remain active in outdoor sports, especially hunting and shooting. We recognized the use of suppressors (aka silencers) on firearms can be essential to people with physical challenges due to the reduction of recoil as well as the obvious reduction in noise.

Many people with physical challenges suffer from upper body injuries that prevent them from shooting firearms that recoil significantly. The use of suppressors can allow these people to continue to use the firearms they need to pursue their dreams of remaining active in the hunting and shooting sports. Silent Ability shall promote the legal use of suppressors and help outfit people with physical challenges who can benefit from the use of suppressors and any other mobility equipment needed to maintain their participation in hunting and the shooting sports.



President Pat Moore

Silent Ability will draw on its attorney, engineering, and machinist resources to use donor money to outfit physically challenged people.

If you would like to apply and/or read success stories, please visit. <http://silentability.org/>

If you have questions, contact Pat at [pat@silentability.org](mailto:pat@silentability.org)

Story by Pat Moore



Craig Simpson and Jon Fettig sighting in





## UFFDA

United Foundation For Disabled Archers (UFFDA) is a non-profit organization sponsoring archery (bow and crossbow) hunts at various locations across North America, with major hunts in Minnesota and Wisconsin, for people with physical disabilities, since 1994. The major hunts pair the hunters with a local guide who aids them in the hunt. They accept up to 25 disabled archers at Camp Wilderness Boy Scout Camp just north of Park Rapids, MN, or at Camp Tesomas, near Rhinelander, WI.



Due to my increasing limitations from Multiple Sclerosis (MS), I thought my deer hunting days were done, but in 2006, I was introduced to UFFDA. With the encouragement of its President, Dan Hendricks, my husband Jerry and I joined and have been a part of the UFFDA family ever since. When I say family, that is the vibe that UFFDA cordially embraces with its 1,400 members and their own rousing cheer at dinner each night, "From the land of sky-blue waters comes the cheer of UFFDA sons and daughters - UFFDA! UFFDA! UFFDA!!!"

I have enjoyed many UFFDA deer hunts in Park Rapids. These four-day hunts take place the first weekend in October. Camp Wilderness is not only base camp but we also enjoy fabulous food, fun and fellowship. Because of the generous support of many volunteers and donations received, this wonderful event is absolutely free for members and their families.

I strongly encourage other disabled archers to join the UFFDA family.

Check out their website – <http://www.uffdaclub.com/>  
or this heart-warming story by member Doug Bermel -  
<https://bowhunting.net/2014/07/united-foundation-for-disabled-archers-uffda/>





## AmazonSmile



Do you use Amazon to shop? You can support Capable Partners through AmazonSmile.

Every item you purchase through Amazon is also available through AmazonSmile ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)).

Capable Partners is a listed charity on AmazonSmile, which will donate .5% of eligible purchases to us at no extra cost to you.

In 2019 and 2020, we received \$130/year from your making this simple change. Our goal for 2021 is \$300.

Please consider donating to us by using Amazon Smile rather than Amazon and choosing us as your charity.

## Include Capable Partners in Your Will

Estate planning is never a real popular topic to talk about, but it is better to plan now than leave your heirs wondering what you wanted to do. You can also take the time to sort out what you want to leave as a legacy. Capable Partners is hoping that you will consider us when you start your planning.

Please dedicate any amount of money, equipment, or real property to Capable Partners, Inc. You may donate to our general fund, a group of activities like fishing, and/or a specific event. We will keep that money separate and use it as you wish. From \$2 to \$200,000, any amount is good. We can memorialize your donation or let it remain as an anonymous donation.

You may donate in the form of a charitable trust. We can act as the trustee for your charitable trust if you want to transfer larger donations or real estate while retaining control of the asset during your lifetime.





# Capable Partners, Inc.



*Providing hunting, fishing and related opportunities for the physically challenged*  
*capablepartners.org P. O. Box 27664 Golden Valley, MN 55427-0664 p.(612) 299-1329*

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND DONATION FORM

*Complete this form online or manually and print, then mail to the address above*

Please sign-up on our website using  
credit/debit card, PayPal or mail a check

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Capable Partners updates only)*

Optional - Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you work full-time? Yes ☐ No ☐

What is / was your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have transportation? Yes ☐ No ☐

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

*In the event of an emergency, please identify any  
information to be relayed to an emergency caregiver:*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### I AM: (check all that apply)

☐ PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED

What are your limitations? \_\_\_\_\_

☐ ABLE BODIED ☐ SCOOTER ☐ CANE

☐ POWER CHAIR ☐ WALKER ☐ CRUTCHES

☐ MANUAL CHAIR ☐ PROSTHETIC  
LEG ☐ PROSTHETIC  
ARM

### INDIVIDUAL INTERESTS or DIRECTED CONTRIBUTIONS

☐ FISHING (Summer) (check all that apply)

☐ FISHING (Winter) ☐ DUCK/GOOSE

☐ ARCHERY DEER ☐ PHEASANT

☐ SHOTGUN DEER ☐ TURKEY

☐ RIFLE DEER ☐ ATV RIDE

☐ MUZZLELOADER ☐ VETERAN

**NOTE: To be eligible to be a physically  
challenged deer hunter, you must have proof of  
a Hunt from a Standing Motor Vehicle Permit.**

HSMVP Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contributions are Welcome! All contributions and donations may qualify as tax deductible. Capable Partners is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. A contribution can be designated for a specific outing, purchasing fishing or hunting gear or underwriting other activities such as the newsletter, annual picnic, annual banquet, or general fund.

☐ I have enclosed a \$25.00 fee for membership

☐ I am requesting a scholarship for membership

☐ I have enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ as a contribution

☐ Specific outing contribution \_\_\_\_\_

☐ If you have a boat or land for Capable Partner's  
use, please check this box.



# 2021 Calendar of Events

For updated calendar go to  
[www.capablepartners.org](http://www.capablepartners.org)



| March 2021  |  |                                 |                              |
|---|--|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| March Cancelled   | Banquets of Minnesota in the Grand Olympian Ballroom Fridley, MN<br>Lots of great items! Happy hour 4-6 p.m. Salads will be served at 5:30<br>Reservations must be received by Feb 20, 2021 No meals purchased at door | Violet Foster                   | 763-444-4427                 |
| March 27  | Pheasant Shoot at Major Ave Glencoe, MN, able-bodied can shoot<br>Must wear orange and safety glasses. Hearing protection is suggested   | Greg Hance                      | 763-258-4293                 |
| April   |  |                                 |                              |
| April Cancelled   | Pheasant Field Hunt at Whispering Emerald Ridge Menomonie, WI<br>Must wear orange and safety glasses Hearing protection is suggested   | Ken Johnson                     | 651-792-2079                 |
| MN<br>Spring<br>Turkey<br>Season  | Turkey Hunting at Sherburne NWR Zimmerman, MN  | Dean Clapp                      | 763-856-2946                 |
|   | Turkey Hunting at Sand Prairie Wildlife Management Area St Cloud, MN   | Gregg Runyon                    | 763-267-7271                 |
|   | Turkey Hunting at Carlos Avery State WMA Blinds Available Columbus, MN   | Call Refuge                     | 651-296-5290                 |
|   | Turkey Hunting at Becklin Homestead County Park / WMA Cambridge, MN  | Pat Moore                       | 612-790-3737                 |
|   | Turkey Hunting at Maple Grove by Archery Only for pre-qualified members  | Lee Zeman                       | 763-913-2778                 |
|   | Turkey Hunting at Chaska by Archery Only MN Valley NWR Chaska, MN  | Evan Newton                     | 952-831-6758                 |
| May   |  |                                 |                              |
| May 2   | Mark Ryan Turkey Shoot at LeBlanc's Rice Creek Hunting Little Falls, MN<br>No Phone Calls Until April 1, able-bodied can shoot. \$35 per shooter   | Gregg Runyon                    | 763-267-7271                 |
| June  |  |                                 |                              |
| June 5  | Fishing at Knotty Oar on pontoons Prior Lake, MN<br>With the Prior Lake Sportmen's Club providing poles, and bait.   | Brigitte Kurkowski              | 651-734-8961                 |
| June 11   | Trout Fishing at Sylvan Park pond (starts at 9 a.m.) Lanesboro, MN<br>Equipment and bait available, no trout stamp needed, lunch provided  | Evan Newton                     | 952-831-6758                 |
| June 12   | Lake Mille Lacs Fishing 4pm - 10pm 6 hours Nitti's Hunters Point Isle, MN  | Violet Foster                   | 763-444-4427                 |
| June 13   | Fishing with Muskies, Inc. on Lake Minnetonka at Surfside Park Mound, MN<br>Variety of boats, trolling available, lunch provided   | Rod Guthier                     | 952-888-6494                 |
| July  |  |                                 |                              |
| July 17   | Lake Mille Lacs Fishing 8am - 12pm 4 hours Nitti's Hunters Point Isle, MN  | Violet Foster                   | 763-444-4427                 |
| July TBA  | Picnic at TBA<br>There will be free shotgun shells Trap, Archery, Rifle and Pistol ranges open   | Nate Sjolín                     | 763-286-9086                 |
| August  |  |                                 |                              |
| August 4  | Lake Pulaski Fishing at Griffing Park Buffalo, MN  | Jim Zumbusch                    | 612-718-1715                 |
| August 7  | ATV Ride at Isle, MN Bring your own machine or rides available<br>Sponsored by Leo's South   | Ken Johnson                     | 651-792-2079                 |
| August 11   | Lake Minnetonka Fishing at Rockvram Boat Yard Spring Park, MN  | Dave Heidtke                    | 763-535-2718                 |
| August 13 - 15<br>& 20 - 22   | Booth Game Fair Ramsey, MN A great opportunity to help Capable Partners and attend for free  | Darren Dorn                     | 763-301-0538                 |
| August 14   | Lake Mille Lacs Fishing 4pm - 10pm 6 hours Nitti's Hunters Point Isle, MN  | Violet Foster                   | 763-444-4427                 |
| August 24   | Sight - in all weapons at Monticello Rod and Gun Club Monticello, MN<br>Qualify for big game hunts (Rifle, Slug gun, Muzzel loader & Archery) 3 to 7   | Jim Vorderbruggen<br>Dean Clapp | 763-497-3330<br>763-856-2946 |
| August 31   | Sight - in all weapons at Monticello Rod and Gun Club Monticello, MN<br>Qualify for big game hunts (Rifle, Slug gun, Muzzel loader & Archery) 3 to 7   | Jim Vorderbruggen<br>Dean Clapp | 763-497-3330<br>763-856-2946 |
| Please contact the listed coordinators at least six weeks ahead. New member preference cut-off is one month in advance. |  |                                 |                              |

Updated Calendar: [www.CapablePartners.org](http://www.CapablePartners.org)  
If a phone number has changed, email: [info@capablepartners.org](mailto:info@capablepartners.org)  
Main phone #: 612-299-1329



# 2021 Calendar of Events

For updated calendar go to  
[www.capablepartners.org](http://www.capablepartners.org)



| September   |  |                                 |  |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--|
| September 11  | Lake Mille Lacs Fishing 8am - 12pm 4 hours Nitti's Hunters Point Isle, MN<br>Sponsored by Anoka County Chapter Pheasant Forever                        | Violet Foster                   | 763-444-4427   |
| September 11  | Pheasant Shoot at Major Ave Glencoe, MN able-bodied can shoot,<br>Must wear orange and safety glasses Hearing protection is suggested                  | Greg Hance                      | 763-258-4293   |
| September 18  | Duck Shoot at Marsh Lake Hunting Preserve Victoria, MN   | Steve Scheunemann<br>Andy Akins | 612-597-4487<br>612-868-4587                         |
| Sept 18 - Oct 17  | Archery Deer Hunt at Becklin Cambridge, MN (closed during gun season)  | Pat Moore                       | 612-790-3737   |
| Archery Deer Season<br>Sept 18 - Dec 31   | MN Valley NWR (must pre qualify) Bloomington and Chaska  | Evan Newton                     | 952-831-6758   |
|   | Maple Grove (must pre qualify and attend city meeting every other year)  | Lee Zeman                       | 763-913-2778   |
| Sept 18 - Dec 31  | Sherburne NWR Zimmerman, MN (closed during gun season)   | Steve Rein                      | 320-293-6366   |
| Sept 18 - 19  | Vermillion Dakota County Deer Hunt Morning & Evening Rosemount, MN   | Gregg Runyon                    | 763-267-7271   |
| September 19  | Pheasant Shoot at LeBlanc's Rice Creek Little Falls, MN<br>Able-bodied can shoot. Must wear orange and safety glasses.<br>Hearing protection suggested | Jeff Jacobson                   | 612-412-2957   |
| Sept - TBA  | MNRV Waterfowl Hunting   | Chad Fix 763-229-1719           | Steve Scheunemann 952-597-4487                       |
|   |  | Greg Hance 763-258-4293         | Darren Dorn 763-301-0538<br>Nate Sjolín 763-286-9086 |
| Sept - TBA  | Waterfowl Hunting at Carlos Avery WMA Columbus, MN   | Darren Dorn                     | 763-301-0538   |
| Sept - TBA  | Waterfowl Hunting at Sherburne NWR Zimmerman, MN   | Dean Clapp                      | 763-856-2946   |
| September 29  | Sight - in all weapons at Monticello Rod and Gun Club Monticello, MN<br>Qualify for big game hunts (Rifle, Slug gun, Muzzleloader & Archery) 3 to 7    | Gregg Runyon                    | 763-267-7271   |
| October   |  |                                 |  |
| October 2 - 10  | Lac qui Parle Deer Hunt at Lac qui Parle WMA Watson, MN<br>Contact Lance by July 15, 2021 to get into blind drawing for first weekend                  | Lance Tebben<br>Dean Petersen   | 320-226-8052<br>612-388-0156                         |
| October 4   | Carlos Avery Hunt Meeting at Carlos Avery Machine Shed Columbus, MN<br>Required for those who intend to participate in Carlos Avery deer hunt          | Gregg Runyon                    | 763-267-7271   |
| October 7   | Becklin Homestead Hunt Meeting 6:00pm location TBA<br>Attending meeting and showing sight - in target mandatory to hunt                                | Jeff Jacobson                   | 612-412-2957   |
| October 9 - 17  | Deer Hunt EVENING ONLY at Carlos Avery State WMA Columbus, MN  | Gregg Runyon                    | 763-267-7271   |
| October 23- 24  | Deer Hunt at Vermillion Dakota Co. Morning & Evening Rosemount, MN   | Gregg Runyon                    | 763-267-7271   |
| Oct 23 - 31   | Deer Hunt (rifle) at Becklin Homestead Co Park Cambridge, MN   | Jeff Jacobson                   | 612-412-2957   |
| November  |  |                                 |  |
| Nov 1 - Dec 31  | Late Season Archery Deer Hunt at Becklin Homestead Co Cambridge, MN  | Pat Moore                       | 612-790-3737   |
| Nov 6 - Nov 14  | Deer Hunt (gun) at Sherburne NWR Zimmerman, MN   | Steve Rein                      | 320-293-6366   |
| Nov 15 - Dec 31   | Late Season Archery Deer Hunt at Sherburne NWR Zimmerman, MN   | Steve Rein                      | 320-293-6366   |
| Nov 27 - Dec 12   | Muzzleloader Deer Hunt at Becklin Homestead Co Park Cambridge, MN  | Pat Moore                       | 612-790-3737   |
| 2022  |  |                                 |  |
| January - March   |  |                                 |  |
| Jan - Mar 2022  | Ice Fishing Fish House # 1 Ice Castle 24' sleeper on Lake Lac qui Parle  | Dean Petersen                   | 612-388-0156   |
| Jan - Mar 2022  | Ice Fishing Fish House # 2 8 x 16 on variety of lakes in Minnesota   | Nate Sjolín                     | 763-286-9086   |
| Jan - Mar 2022  | Ice Fishing Fish House # 3 New 8 x 16 on variety of lakes in Minnesota   | Jeff Jacobson                   | 612-412-2957   |
| TBA 2022  | Ice Fishing Extravaganza Sponsored by Clam Outdoors  | Darren Dorn                     | 763-301-0538   |
| March   |  |                                 |  |
| March 12 2022   | Banquets of Minnesota in the Grand Olympian Ballroom Fridley, MN<br>Social hour, prizes, silent auction, awards  |                                 |  |
| Please contact the listed coordinators at least six weeks ahead. New member preference cut-off is one month in advance. |  |                                 |  |

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