

TRAP-LINES

*New York State
Trapper's Association
Summer Edition 2010
www.nystrappers.org*



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Greetings Fellow Trappers,

I'm writing this on the very last day for public comment on the proposed trapping regulations changes as published in the NYS Register on March 24, 2010. Most of these proposed changes have been viewed as favorable towards trappers and those have been endorsed (with some changes) by NYSTA. I sincerely hope many of you took the time to write or email Gordon Batcheller with your comments of support, concerns, or whatever you felt necessary. The process of getting these proposed changes from just ideas in a few heads to potential implementation has taken nearly three years of joint effort and meetings between NYSTA's JTI Committee and the NYSDEC's Furbearer Management Team (FMT).

Let me point out that even after the JTI and the FMT were in general agreement of the language and context of these proposals there were changes made by DEC lawyers, that NYSTA views as too restrictive, unnecessary, and/or impractical for trappers. Our official responses have addressed those areas of concern as have many of our personal responses. This was supposed to be an overall package of positive changes to our trapping regulations. If the minor changes we have asked for are made, it will be just that. By the time you read this we may know the outcome but right now we are waiting to hear the final results.

NYSTA owes a huge **"Thank You"** to all of you who donated both fur and cash in lieu of fur to NYSTA through the **Joe VanHouten Fur Donation Program**. This program will ultimately help provide funding for many NYSTA efforts. In hindsight, I wish we had kept a record of those who donated so they could be listed here in the **"TRAP-LINES"** as additional recognition of their support. With Angie's help, shortly after the first donations were received and sold and again in afterthought, we designed and printed appreciation certificates for those who so generously donated to this program. We gave these out to everyone that donated at subsequent fur sales and tried to make sure we caught up with most of those who had previously donated as well. However, if we missed someone, please accept our apologies and let me know who you are so that I can get one of these certificates to you. Without mentioning any names as I'd surely forget someone by accident, I would also like to express my gratitude to all who helped get this project off the ground. Those who solicited and collected furs at the sales and at their homes, those who fleshed and stretched some



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of the donations that came in green, and all the various affiliated clubs that collected and sold these donations at their sales and even donated all of the commissions back to NYSTA, the buyers who generously bid on the skins, and everyone else involved were instrumental in the success of this project. **Thank you !**

NYSTA's second annual Spring Membership Conference was again a well attended success. Our Executive Director, Dave Miller, provided an exceptional line up of guest speakers.

We enjoyed presentations from **NYS Senator David Valesky**; **Director of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources Patty Riexinger**; **Nathan Roberts** who is graduating from Cornell with a PHD and who has been doing extensive furbearer research in cooperation with the NYSDEC; **Russ Carmen** well known and respected trapper, author, lure maker, and trappers advocate; and **Kurt Beauregard**, trapper and innovative manufacturer of the KB line of traps, stabilizers, etc. After Kurt's presentation Treasurer Dale Gamba reported on NYSTA's finances. Dave Miller spoke about legislative issues, and we then opened the floor for any discussions the attendees wished to address.

We concluded the program with some movies from back in the 1960's presented and narrated (there was no sound in these old movies) by Catskill Mountain trapper Joey VanHouten. These old movies had been converted to VHS so they could be shown and Joe did a great job of telling us who everyone was in these movies.

There was trap line footage from Johnny Thorpe and from Alice and O.L. Butcher as well as footage from old NYSTA Conventions held at Piseco Lake, NY depicting the likes of E.J. Dailey, Johnny Thorpe, Pat Sedlak, and many others.

One of these films contained what Joe believes is the only known film in existence of one of NY's premier old time great fox trappers, Art Crane. These movies contained a lot of trapping history and we thank Joe for his excellent presentation.

I'd like to take this opportunity to make everyone aware that two very deserving NYSTA trappers have been inducted into the New York Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame. On April 24, 2010 at the annual NYOHF banquet Al West and Bob Hughes were recognized for their lifetime commitment and dedication to NY's sportsmen and women. The unparalleled honesty and integrity, unquestionable ethics and morals, outstanding values of family and friends, as well as their devotion in promoting and preserving our trapping and hunting heritage made these two men excellent choices for this prestigious award. Congratulations Al and Bob on this well deserved honor.

NYSTA has received several donations from our affiliates and other sportsmen's groups. Treasurer Dale Gamba has received very generous donations from the **Rockland County Trappers Association.**, **the NYS Houndsmen Association.**, **Grape Country Coon Hunters**, **Gorham Coon Hunters**, and **the NYS Wildlife Managers Association.**

NYSTA Past President Bill Smith took the initiative to attend several sportsmen's groups and federation meetings in his region. Bill represented and promoted NYSTA at these meetings and his efforts resulted in very generous contributions dedicated to our efforts in Albany where NYSTA's Executive Director Dave Miller works for the benefit of all sportsmen and women.

It is good to see that other sportsmen, as well as trappers, recognize the importance of maintaining our efforts and presence in Albany. NYSTA greatly appreciates these contributions and this support.

Also a very special note of appreciation goes out to Bill Smith for his help and dedication in getting those contributions. Leading by example, Bill has reminded us that often times it is that personnel effort of one individual that can make such a difference.

Thank you Bill !

Regional Director's positions for Region 5,6 and 7 are up for election this year.

NYSTA's next Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for July 17, 2010 at the Herkimer County Fairgrounds Office in Frankfort, NY. I hope to see all of the voting members there as well as any County Reps or members who wish to attend.

I would like to remind all the voting members of the Board of the importance of attending the Board meetings. If you cannot attend and in the interest of saving time and expense please extend the rest of the Board and myself the courtesy of letting me know as is required by the By-laws.

This will be our last meeting before our Annual Convention. I'm sure there will be much to discuss. Have a safe summer !

John Rockwood, President
315-415-4946 Loggerjohnr@aol.com

Other important NYSTA News

Regional Director's Elections:

As decided in 2009 and according to the By-Laws, there will be an election for the Region 5S Director in 2010.

I have formed a committee that will oversee the election process.

That committee consists of: myself, Mike Vickerson (518(835-8014) and Al West agwthird@hotmail.com.

If anyone is interested in running for the Director's position, please consult the By-Laws or contact any of the committee members for information and submit the necessary materials.

Deadline for nominations to be accepted is June 30th.

We are also still looking for a County Rep for Hamilton County, please contact me if you are interested.

I hope everyone had a good trapping season. Thank you.

Brandon Hemmerich
10 W State St
Dolgeville, NY 13329
(518)774-7242 atgs4you@hotmail.com

The St Lawrence County Trappers Association, will be holding their Trappers Rendezvous July 24-25, 2010.

For more information please feel free to contact Jim Aubrey at 315-389-5096.

Applications Now available for the 2010 Youth Trapping Camp

NYSTA will be hosting a youth trapping camp October 8-11, 2010.

The Youth Trapping Camp will be at NYSDEC Camp Rushford, Allegheny, New York. The cost for this camp will be around \$40.00.

Youth aged from 12-15 are welcome to attend. Enrollment is limited to 25 students.

Applications are now available please contact Pat Arnold, 12374 Arnoldville Rd., Natural Bridge, NY 13665 or at patriciaarno@gmail.com

In Memory:

Michael S. LaFond, 55, of Bainbridge, passed away unexpectedly Monday, April 19, 2010, at Wilson Memorial Regional Medical Center in Johnson City.

Michael was an avid trapper, angler and hunter. He devoted his life to his favorite hobby of trapping in Delaware, Otsego, and Chenango counties. He was a member of Cortland County Trappers Association (lifetime), a member of the New York State Trappers Association, and the National Trappers Association. Michael also in the past worked as a nuisance trappers.

Michael was known as "Mick" to the people who loved him. He loved the outdoors, sitting by a fire, working in his garden and his home. Most of all, he treasured his family and friends, and his beloved dogs. Mick will be greatly missed by his family and everyone who knew him.

Expressions of sympathy may be sent to the family online at www.landrsfh.com.

He will be greatly missed by his friends in the Cortland County Trappers Association.

Rattlesnakes!

In New York only two rattlesnake species occur. The Massauga is only located in two swampy locations, in central and western New York. They are much smaller in size than the timber rattlers which inhabit the southern tier, south east New York, and the counties of Warren, Washington, and Essex in northeast New York. Those three counties and Rutland County in Vermont make up the northern most extent of their range in the United States.

Having previously worked on Lake George and having had to relocate these critters as part of my job has sparked a keen interest on my part in these animals. Let me start by stating that the rattlesnakes in New York are ***considered threatened and are completely protected.***

Previously many of these counties had bounties on rattlesnakes along with other animals. My county of Warren paid \$25 for a coyote or bobcat, \$ 5 for a fox or rattlenake and 50 cents for a porcupine tail. Because of these bounties hundreds, perhaps thousands of snakes were killed or captured for live snake sales. The affect was enormous and today Timber Rattlesnake populations are only a smidgeon of what they once were. Fortunately in 1971 the state ended all bounties. They have slow reproductive rates, and Man and the loss of habitat are their greatest threats. But they are very slowly coming back. The bounty system was heavily abused and served no good purpose. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. William Brown of Skidmore and others these snakes are now completely protected.

Usually these snakes emerge from their dens in late April or early May. The dens are usually located in some of the most difficult terrain, frequently in the boulder strewn debris at the base of cliffs and facing in a southerly direction. Besides being located in these rock fields the ground usually is of a steep degree of pitch. A bad fall is always a good possibility.

I frequently wear hip boots when I'm trapping, even for canines, and wearing them when looking for these snakes is a good idea both for added protection as well as preventing them from detecting your body heat. I don't want to

harm the snakes, only to photograph them.

There are two color phases; yellow and black. I can not state enough how much these snakes blend in with their background and how hard they are to see. Rarely will these snakes range more than a mile or two from their dens which they re-enter for the winter by mid October. Large groups will den together. These snakes are stocky creatures that average 3 and a half to 4 and a half feet in length. Young are live born and follow the scent trail of their mother back to the den.

On Lake George the rattlers readily swim out to the islands and are found on both sides of the lake. In the campgrounds are where they are most likely to be encountered by man. It has been my experience repeatedly that timber rattlers, like black bears, are shy retiring creatures that prefer to be left alone. Give them a chance and they will go the other way. On the other hand other New York snakes like the non-venomous Hognose Snake, commonly called "puff adder" or "spotted adder" will rise up, flatten out it's head, and hiss at you, usually doing a good job of frightening people into thinking they've just seen a cobra! Also in New York the common northern water snake, also referred to by many as a moccasin, are of a very nasty temperament and aggressive nature and I've had them come after me on a number of occasions. Both Hognose and water snakes are non poisonous.

Timber Rattlers usually, but not always, will rattle if you get too close as a warning. Last year my son had to warn me that a snake was rattling within a couple of feet of me at a den in Pennsylvania. My high frequency deafness coupled with the background noise of a nearby highway prevented me from hearing that snake. Usually in the quite places I can hear them from as far as 100 feet away. There were four rattlers that we were aware of at that den that day.

Rattlers feed primarily upon small mammals, primarily white footed deer mice, chipmunks, and other similar size critters. They have a highly developed sense of smell and heat detection. Frequently they will lay in wait using the scent of these mammals' trails. Often they will be found coiled at the base of

oak trees. The reason is that the acorns attract chipmunks and squirrels.

Also during the heat of the summer they often hunt at night, depending on their senses to detect their pray. I remember a call at midnight one hot summer night. A woman camper had reported a rattlesnake in the northern most camp-site on Turtle island. When I asked her how she knew the snake was there she told me they had all been sitting at the fireplace, she got up and went to the picnic table which had a Coleman lantern burning upon it, and a snake rattled at her in warning. Apparently the snake had been attracted to the light while out hunting.

At one location on Lake George there is a high point that sticks out into a bay behind Half Way island. A nice small camp sits on top of it, surrounded by thousands of acres of wild state land. Early on I noticed a wire mess fence extending from water line to water line across the peninsula. It did not take much to realize this was a "snake fence" and although the snakes readily can and do swim, it probably helped reduce the amount of snakes getting near the camp. I do know that I had a snake get my attention on that island one day. I could hear the snake, but could not locate it. Finally I realized the snake was in a fissure in the rocks beneath my feet. Talk about doing the green apple two step!!

Unfortunately people are deathly afraid of snakes, especially poisonous ones. I agree that they will startle you, but there really is no reason to kill any native New York snake.

My personal fear is spiders, those great big dock spiders, or those huge tarantulas that came on the bananas in the supermarket where I worked as a kid. Nothing upsets me more than to get a spider web across the face while still hunting. However, we should not kill them either. They all have a place in nature.

If you are upset with a snake's presence have a nuisance person that deals with snakes relocate it. I'll do it free if you are not too far away and if you will let me trap and hunt your land.

Al West
agwthird@hotmail.com



Editors Note:

This newsletter contains no current Executive Directors report this time. Things are in such disarray and changing constantly in Albany, that a report at this time might not be very accurate, helpful, or useful.

For any immediate information please check with NYSTA's website at w.nystrappers.org

The next newsletter will contain a full up to date summary report.
Thank you.

Next Newsletter Deadline....July 10th:

Do you have Meetings, Fur Auctions, Dinners and other events to announce? Please send the information to:

***Angie Berchielli
3861 SR 85
Westerlo, NY 12193***

AngieBerchielli@MSN.com

Deadline for information to me is ***July 10th*** for the next newsletter that will reach our readers in mid to late August.

***NYSTA Board of Director's Meeting
January 16, 2010***
Herkimer county Fairgrounds

Call to Order

President Rockwood called the meeting to order at 9:00Am with the Pledge of Allegiance. Minutes from the previous meeting were not available for review and approval due to computer problems.

Fundraising

2009 Calendar sales paid out \$12,560. NYSTA netted \$10,250. Pages for the 2011 calendar need to be ready by the June director's meeting.

Miscellaneous Items

Next B.O.D. meeting will be held in Canastota on 4/25.

Sportsman's Hall of Fame Dinner & Induction will be held 4/24/10 in Canastota at the Rusty Nail

Spring meeting will be held 4/24/10 at SUNY Morrisville.

Fur handler's award has been set for next year's competition. We need to encourage more youths to enter as we only had one enter last year.

Youth Trapper Training Camp is being planned but one site has not been firmly established. It will be limited to 25 kids under 15 years. The cost will be \$40, (\$10/day for food). Mentors will be hand picked. The dates are 10/8-10/11/10. The western NY camp will be held at Camp Rushford. There was discussion on how many kids will be needed to sign up before the class is cancelled.

NTA Report

The Maine lynx issue has been resolved very well in favor of the trappers. Montana is facing a ballot issue on trapping.

Pennsylvania has the most NTA members, NY is second.

Furbearers Unlimited is holding 2 fundraising dinners to raise money for grants. NY has applied for one to publish a pamphlet on the dangers of dogs running free.

The NE Regional Convention will be 5/21- 5/23 at the Washington County Fairgrounds. Help is needed in several areas.

DEC Report

Andy McDuff reviewed the proposed regulation changes the JTI & DEC had developed. They include:

- Limiting the use of exposed carcasses as bait to protect eagles
- Northern Zone trap check will be 48 hours for body gripping traps
- small traps can be used within 15' of beaver dams
- Proposed extending land trapping in the

Northern Zone until 2/15 for fox, coyotes, raccoons, weasels but only foothold traps can be used.

- Expand pine marten trapping areas
- Allow the possession of road killed furbearers if in season and the driver has a hunting/trapping license
- Eliminate the 5' foot for trapping near muskrat houses
- Added some definitions-public highway, suspension, encapsulating traps and box traps

Fisher harvest in Region 6 was given, state wide about 1200-1400 animals. Feels the low harvest was due to reduced effort because of weather and prices.

The DEC is starting to look into why the muskrat population is declining. They went to auctions and looked at pelts. In one auction they looked at 851 rats and found 96 adult females, 106 adult males and 649 juveniles. They saw a ratio of 6.8 juveniles to 1 adult female. Last season one trapper had a ratio of 7.8-1 and this year 12-1. They are questioning the effect of a lot of rain on the muskrat population.

The DEC has written a memo of understanding with SUNY ESF to begin looking at otter populations in areas that have no open season. DNA will be collected from feces to check on the number of different animals using a toilet.

JTI

The JTI committee met after Christmas and discussed the eagle incident. JTI had already written a white paper on the subject. They plan on being very involved with crafting any proposed regulations dealing with exposed carcasses.

Executive Director's Report

There is really no new legislation. All of last year's bills are still active. The home rule bill is still the biggest concern as it has proposals in both houses. The FTA will hold it's national convention the last week of June, 2011 at the Chautauqua County Fairgrounds.

Tickets for the next gun raffle are ready. We would like new ideas for fundraising. NYSTA has received donations to help pay the executive director's salary from:

NYS Houndsmen Assoc. - \$1,000

Grape Country Coon Hunters Assoc. - \$100

Gorham Coon Hunters Association - \$100

Special Guest

Howie Cushing from the Conservation Council addressed the B.O.Ds. He noted sportsman must stay united, that individual groups and legislators are splitting sportsman apart. He made a pitch for forming a new sportsman coalition. He wanted NYSTA to support the idea and send a representative.

MOTION: *Send Dave Miller as NYSTA's representative to the first meeting of any coalition Mr Cushing might form*

Made by: *Bill Smith*
Seconded by: *Dave Liebig*

Disposition: *The motion carried – yeas 8, nays 3, abstentions 1*

Old Business

There was discussion about charging for the spring meeting. It was decided not to charge this year.

The printer that was printing the NYSTA newsletter was bought out. If we go with non profit postage, we could save about ½ of our current costs. This would require more accounting and securing 501-3c status.

The recent survey in the news letter drew 141 responses. Findings were:

- Members felt legislation issues were #1 priority
- President's report ranked 2nd
- Good stories ranked third
- Most wanted to keep printed version and not go electronic only
- Liked advertisements
- There seems to be some delivery problems

Our membership in the NYS Houndsman Association has expired and they sent a renewal notice.

Elections for regional directors in region 5, 6, & 7 are due this year.

Work is being done on the proposed dog pamphlet and revising Trapping in the 21st Century as new regulations may require changes.

Treasurer's Report

Dale presented the treasurer's report under a separate cover as well as a proposed budget for 2010. The treasurer's report was accepted as written.

MOTION: *Accept the proposed 2010 budget.*

Made by: *Dave Liebig*
Seconded by: *Jim Greeley*

Disposition: *The motion was carried yeas 12, nays 2*

New Business

NYSTA needs to buy more plaques for the convention auction. We looked for a good bulk price. A price of \$22.50/chromed trap plus shipping was obtained from one vendor. We auction off 12-13 traps/year and they sell for between \$35-\$145. Charlie Lamb will check on the cost of powder coated traps.

Last year NYSTA voted to supply a scholarship for a biology field course in Vermont but our money was not used. They are going to try and have the course this year. Does NYSTA want to provide a scholarship.

MOTION: *Provide a \$400 scholarship to the NE Natural History Field Course.*

Made by: *Charlie Lamb*
Seconded by: *Brandon Hemmerick*

Disposition: *Carried unanimously*

Angie noted that the Wildlife Society is going to have a speaker from Nova Scotia talk about the doctrine of Public Trust at their meeting in Alex Bay in March. Cost to attend is \$115 for both days or \$80 for one day and dinner.

Correspondence

NTA wants New York to host the national convention in 2012 in the western part of the state. There was a lot of discussion as to whether we should do this. President Rockwood will get more information from the NTA and see what kind of monetary arrangements might be possible.

There was discussion regarding the problems with the Trapper & Predator Caller magazine. Many people renewed and are not getting the magazine. Seems to be problems with who does paper work for the magazine. Should we switch magazines?

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4PM. The next meeting will be 4/25/2010 in Canastota at a place to be announced.

Respectfully submitted by

Ed Hogan
NYSTA Secretary



**NEW YORK STATE
TRAPPER'S
Association**

12320 Pople Road
Cato, New York 13033



Membership Application

New

Renewal

Name (please print) _____

*Why Not Give,
a membership
to a friend or
youngster, in
time for them to
get ready for this
Fall's Trapping
Season?*

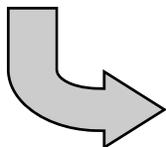
Street-RFD-Box _____

Town or City _____ State _____

County _____ Region _____ Zip _____

Ph. No. _____ E-Mail _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ (Required)



- Junior membership \$15.00/yr _____ Under 16 years of age, magazine included
- Basic membership \$15.00/yr _____ Over 16 years of age; **NO** magazine
- General membership \$25.00/yr _____ Over 16 years of age; Magazine included
- Family membership \$30.00/yr _____ two family members; one magazine included
- Lifetime membership \$750.00 _____

Your Extra Donation will Help preserve trapping in New York:

Total _____

Mail To:

NYS Trappers Association
12320 Pople Road.
Cato, New York 13033

Make checks payable to: *NYS Trappers Association*
Credit Cards can now be accepted.