

LTAHA News

September 2010

Things are moving forward this year with many changes in store. I made note in the last issues of the new web site and message board that we have up and running for our members and others to use as a tool for sharing information. Over the past few months membership and visitor totals have grown by leaps and bounds. If you have not checked it out, do so today and see what the LTAHA is doing.

On July 25, 2010 the LTAHA Board of Directors met in a called session to discuss the annual budget for the fiscal year of 2010-2011. Once the annual financial statement was approved the meeting moved forward with many items being brought to the floor and discussed. One such item, which has hung around for over a year, is what to give out at the National Hunting and Fish day in September 2010. With financial short falls and budget freezes in Baton Rouge, we were unable to receive any items from the Fur Advisory Council. Feeling the need to offer something, a move was made to find an item which would represent our association well and put our name out there. Many items were discussed such as refrigerator magnets, coloring books, pencils and cups. With all the pricing gathered, we felt that the price per unit would work better with stadium cups. Secretary/Treasury Tony Howard struck a deal with Global Print for 5,000 cups for \$1500. We took delivery of the cups on September 7th. Below you can see the design which will be on the cup. We felt that a traditional trap would remind people of our heritage of trapping in Louisiana and the alligator acknowledges that our association also included the alligator hunting. The design was taken from our new window decals design which can be purchased through the web site or by mail from the Secretary. We are also offering embroidered logo hats with a design similar to the one shown.

We set the location for next year's annual convention to be held at the LWDF complex in Wood Worth, La. The site offers easy access and plenty of room. Curtis Cruse brought to the boards attention that there were 1600 resident trapping licenses, 50 out of state licenses and 126 youth licenses sold in the state in 2009-2010 season. This number represents a vast number of trappers we are not reaching with our message. If you know someone that is not a member, encourage them to join and help support the future of trapping in the state.

I would also like to bring to everyone's attention that there is a new law in effect concerning boating and life jackets in Louisiana. The following was taken from <http://www.boat-ed.com/la/handbook/pfds.htm>.

Each person on board must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, III, or V PFD while underway on a motorboat less than 16 feet long using an outboard motor that is steered by a hand tiller or steering arm attached to the motor. This requirement does not apply to electronic trolling motors. Please make sure you are safe on the water. We lost a good trapper and friend last season to a boating accident.

As this news letter is being put together, we have two youth education camps coming up. I am excited about the opportunity to reach the younger generation of trappers and try to help cut their learning curve by years with just a little knowledge that was not available when I was a child. Our association is reaching out every chance we can to give young people across the state the tools needed to become successful in their pursuit of wild fur. I would like to request that anyone who could or would like to help with these camps please contact me. We are having a tough time finding instructors who have the time to help out with our youth. They are the future of our heritage and if we don't teach them the ethics, rules and sportsmanship now, where will we be when the market comes roaring back and every young person out there is looking for the \$\$ and no knowledge of how to do it right.

Also, I would like to bring to everyone's attention that we are now offering two different magazines. You can either get the Trapper & Predator Caller or The Trappers Post with your membership or both for \$11 more. See the web site for more information or contact me. This is an offer for some good reading and information from industry leaders.



Did you know? There were two patents filed for traps in Louisiana.

2-in-1 traps - Walter Richard Smith of New Orleans. Pat # 1,448,467, March 13, 1923.

Triple S Automatic - Blanchard D Smith of New Orleans, July 21, 1925. Patent # unknown.

The Modern Fur Market

Since it's beginning, the fur industry has seen many changes, but the struggle between trappers and fur buyers is the same today as it was 400 years ago. Trappers have sought the highest price available for their product. Though trappers no longer have to pack their fur by horse, boat or even on foot in search of a buyer, we still want top dollar for our pelts. The past century brought many changes to the fur industry, with advances made in transportation, while the present century has brought us the "internet" so we can track shipment or sales in real time.

When I entered the fur trade some years ago, local fur buyers were on every corner, ready to pay good money for green fur. As the market slowed and then disappeared, so did the local fur buyers and the ability to unload green fur during the season. For me, the answer became more freezers and higher electric bills. During the last few years of the otter boom, good friend and fellow trapper, Eric Cottrell, expressed the need to learn the art of finishing fur for marketing. Although I was not very excited, I decided to learn how to put up fur. In the beginning the task was daunting and very time consuming, but with more practice it became second nature. With the aid of the internet, I was able to learn tips instantly on Paul Dobbins web site "Trapperman". I also learned a great deal from one of our local state fur buyers, Danny Perry of Oak Dale.

After two years of selling my finished fur to a local state buyer, I braved the market and shipped my fur to auction seeking a better price. I chose NAFA as the auction for my product, due to the sheer volume and their large marketing plan. Learning the ins and outs of shipping fur was just another part of the process, the simple life of piling the fur on the tail gate and hearing the price to be paid was a thing of the past at this point.

The following is a brief run down of my first year shipping fur to give you an idea of the process. First I had to open an account with NAFA. This was made simple at the NAFA booth during the 2008 NTA convention in Iowa. I simply signed up and later that same year I received a package in the mail with my account number, shipping information and shipping bags. Once I had my fur stretched and dried, I simply packed the bag and dropped it off at NAFA pick up point in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Simple enough so far, I just watched my account on line until my "receipt" showed up. Once the receipt showed up, I verified the numbers with what I had shipped. A few days before the scheduled auction my "Lotting Letter" was posted to my on line account. The lotting letter states the lot each pelt is going to be sold in, the size, grade, color, clarity and number of pelts in each lot for each different lot your pelts are in. The lotting letters are broken down by species also. Next was the auction. I could follow the auction lot by lot online, keeping track of what my pelts were being sold for. I will come back to this part of the process later. A few weeks later, I could view my detailed sales results on line, seeing my profit and cost (shipping, drumming, dues, commissions and CITIES processing). The detailed sales result can also be broken down by lots, but shows up as sales averages for my pelts. Finally the "Financial Statement" showed up. This let me know a check was on the way and how much it would be.

Although the process is time consuming, somewhat stressful and a real logistic pain at times, the profits can sometimes out weight the headache. Right? Remember, I said I would come back to the part about tacking my pelts as they sold. Well, not all my pelts sold. In fact I had a large number (70%) of them "bought back", meaning the bid was not high enough or no one bid on the lot at all. It is the same thing as "POed" or "Pulled Off" at the Mena, Arkansas auction. After all the work I had put into my fur, not all of them sold. This meant the unsold fur would be put back in storage and sold at the next auction. Before commissions my average on grey fox at the first sale was \$17.92. Eight months later my average was \$20.17 for 18 more grey fox. Just two months after that I sold 45 more grey fox for \$14.92 average.

What does all this mean? It took a total of 12 months from the time I shipped my fur till I had sold it all and received payment. I had to open an account, use state shipping tags, pay the severance tax, bag, tag and pay shipping on my fur, pay drumming cost at \$1.50 a hide for "fur out" pelts and pay commission. With the shipping process came deadlines for shipment and then long waits for payment. Although it sounds bleak the

pay off can be great some years. Just one year earlier a friend of mine shipped his grey fox to NAFA and averaged \$54 each at one sale, then \$40 some odd at the next sale. With the fur auction it is like playing the stock market, you have to predict what will be hot and what is moving. Coons will always move, just maybe not for the price we want to see, as there is always a trim market for coons. Fox, cat, coyote, otter and beaver on the other hand, will move some years better than others. What NAFA and other auctions offers is a world wide market of buyers at one place and one time wanting to purchase wild fur. NAFA's goal is to sale your fur for as much as possible, due to the fact that they sale on commission or a percentage of the sale price. Therefore it is to their benefit to make as much on each pelt as possible.

Local fur buyers have been hammered for years about the prices they pay for wild fur. Many times, we, as trappers, have called them names, talked bad about them and even thumbed our noses at them. Our state is not overly blessed with fur buyers on every street corner now days, in fact we are down to just a few in the state. If it were not for the few who made it through the crash of the late 80's, would we even have trappers left in the state? Trappers want the highest price for their efforts that the market will allow, yet I have seen many times that we, as trappers, don't put the effort into our fur to make it demand top dollar. Local fur buyers have had to shift through the wet, dog bit, muddy, matted hair, half rotten, cut up, frozen, freezer burned and plain trash fur to find the good quality fur that they can make a profit on. Without the local fur buyers doing what they do, we as trappers would have few, if any, options. After talking with a NAFA rep about put up fur, he explained at NAFA trappers send in substandard pelting. Coons put up on 1x4's, cats put up on 2x4's and otter just hung to dry with no stretcher at all. We, as trappers, have to keep in mind that the marketing of a pelt starts at the set and continues till it leaves our hands, understand that every person that touches that pelt will make money on it, until the final sales person offers it to a consumer, who purchases the finished product whether a hat, gloves, coat or ear muffs. Local fur buyers are in the business to make money, no different than a car salesman, Wal-Mart or the corner gas station. They play the market just like a stock broker on Wall Street or a Day Trader on the internet. They gamble every time they purchase fur, hoping that they can move the product for a profit.

Whether you chose to market your fur through NAFA, Fur Harvesters or a local buyer, the more care you take with your fur the better the price. It is up to each trapper to market his or her fur as though they were selling a used car. Clean it up, keep it dry and try to give the pelt the appearance of full fluffy fur still on the animal. Stretching and drying your fur for shipment offers many more options. One option would be to offer your product to multiple local fur buyers and see who is offering the most. If you don't like price offered, you can always take your fur back to be sold another day. If you don't like the price offered locally, you can then ship to an auction house. Be prepared though, because once you ship, your fur is gone for good. Once your fur is graded at an auction house, the fur is stored in huge lots in coolers till the lot sales and all you can do is wait. For those of us with 401K retirement plans, we know about waiting. For others, the local fur buyer offers cash money on the spot and they assume the headache of putting up, storage, paper work and shipping, just to wait for the return on their money.

No matter how you choose to sale your fur, the choice is ultimately yours. I will close with this note. At our LTAHA Spring Convention, I had the opportunity to sell my put up grey fox to local buyer, Jimmy Gallaspy, who offered me \$14 a pelt and count tails. Gambling like a Day Trader, I shipped my fur to an auction house and I am still awaiting the sale of my grey fox. Most of my other products sold at the May sale for a fair price.

Written by Tony Howard. LTAHA Sec/Tres

These are grading sizes for raccoon at NAFA. The coon is measured from the tip of the nose to the shortest point on the back on the tail end. When putting case skinned animals up it is important to have them straight across the bottom.

5XL	Over 38"
4XL	Over 35"
3XL	32"-35"
2XL	29"-32"
XL	27"-29"
LGE	24"-27"
LM	22"-24"
MED	20"-22"
SML	Under 20"

Fox are graded different. Their sizes are in numeric order as follows. Fox are put up fur out and the fur itself is graded for the overall quality and color of the fur.

over 49"	0000
45-49"	000
42-45"	00
38-42"	0
35-38"	1
31-35	2
28-31	3

NAFA Report on May Wild Fur Sale

Wild Fur met with selective demand and prices declined from March levels on the opening day of the NAFA Wild Fur sale.

The sale began Wednesday with a large offering of Beaver, of which, 80% of the sundry owner sold at generally lower levels than March. Otters sold 92%, while Muskrat and Wild Mink sold 100%, again at lower levels than March. China and Hong Kong dominated the sale.

Sables and Fishers were disappointing in both percentage of sale and price levels. Sables sold 62% with better qualities, large sizes withdrawn, while Fishers sold 35%.

Raccoons sold 75%, primarily to Hong Kong/China. Brown colors were mostly withdrawn, while better colors sold 100%, at easier levels than March.

Day two of the sale had a more positive result with Lynx Cats selling 85% of the sundry owners under very strong competition, with Greece the major buyer. Lynx sold 100% at newly established levels to Russia and Greece.

Coyotes sold 70% with heavy Coyotes for trimming selling 95% under strong competition. Flatter commercial goods were mostly withdrawn.

Red Fox sold 75% with good interest in the heavier types.

Opossum	63,779 offered	100% sold	\$1.72avg.	\$5.00 top.	
Skunk	11,314 offered	100% sold	\$1.56avg.	\$8.00 top.	
Lynx Cat	13,443 offered	76% sold Canadian East	\$85.25avg.	\$180.00 top.	
		85% sold Canadian West	\$228.79avg.	\$420.00 top.	
		75% sold Western	\$273.95avg.	\$800.00 top.	
		100% sold North Central	\$71.77avg.	\$175.00 top.	
		100% sold Northern	\$51.36avg.	\$132.00 top.	
		90% sold Central (Flat)	\$27.00 avg.	\$56.00 top.	
Coyote	67,780 offered	92% sold Western Heavy	\$32.43avg.	\$115.00 top.	
		95% sold Eastern	\$24.92avg.	\$42.00 top.	
		60% sold Semi-Heavy	\$16.36avg.	\$28.00 top.	
		40% sold Section III	\$4.84avg.		
Red Fox	35,863 offered	75% sold	\$17.18avg.	\$72.00 top.	
Grey Fox	17,578 offered	Limited Interest			
Raccoon	411,410 offered	55% sold Canadian	\$13.22avg	\$35.00 top.	
		75% sold Western Northern	\$15.70avg	\$50.00 top.	
		75% sold Western Northern Central	\$13.95avg.	\$32.00 top.	
		72% sold Eastern Northern Central	\$9.48avg	\$32.00 top.	
		41% sold Western Semi	\$10.85avg	\$24.00 top.	
		Larger sizes, better qualities mostly unsold.			
		Selective Demand Eastern Semi			
Selective Demand Central					
Wild Mink	18,139 offered	100% sold Section III	\$3.41avg.		
		100% sold North Central I	\$13.52avg.	\$24.00 top.	
		100% sold Central I	\$13.03avg.	\$23.00 top.	
Beaver	97,262 offered	78% sold Eastern	\$15.33avg	\$130.00 top.	
		78% sold Western	\$12.45avg	\$42.00 top.	
		Larger sizes, better qualities mostly unsold.			
Otter	6,353 offered	100% Section III	\$7.27avg.		
		92% Section I	\$45.05avg.	\$84.00 top.	
		100% Section III	\$19.71avg.		

The above report came for the NAFA web site and can be viewed in it's entirety at

http://www.nafa.ca/page.asp?auction/results/results_nafa.asp. The results shown above are for Louisiana species fur.

This report has been reproduced with the permission of NAFA admin for the purpose of the LTAHA news letter. This report allows each member to draw their own conclusion as to the market strength. I do see a renewed interest in the pale otter and lynx cat, as they held their value in the May sale.

Louisiana Alligator Program

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (Department) manages the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) as a commercial, renewable natural resource. The goals of the Department's alligator program are to manage and conserve Louisiana's alligators as part of the state's wetland ecosystem, provide benefits to the species, its habitat and the other species of fish and wildlife associated with alligators. The basic philosophy was to develop a sustained use management program which, through regulated harvest, would provide long term benefits to the survival of the species, maintain its habitats, and provide significant economic benefits to landowners, alligator farmers and alligator hunters. Since Louisiana's coastal alligator habitats are primarily privately owned (approximately 81%), our sustained use management program provides direct economic benefit and incentive to private landowners, and alligator hunters/farmers who lease land, to protect the alligator and to protect, maintain, and enhance the alligator's wetland habitats.

The Department's sustained use program is one of the world's most recognizable examples of a wildlife conservation success story. Louisiana's program has been used as a model for managing various crocodylian species throughout the world. Since the inception of the Department's program in 1972, over 810,000 wild alligators have been harvested, over 6.5 million alligator eggs have been collected, and over 3.5 million farm raised alligators have been sold bringing in millions of dollars of revenue to landowners, trappers and farmers. Conservative estimates have valued these resources at over \$704,000,000, providing significant, direct economic benefit to Louisiana.

Commercial trade in alligators is regulated through the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). While the alligator is not endangered or threatened anywhere in the U.S., it is listed on Appendix II of CITES due to its similarity of appearance to other endangered crocodylian species. CITES requirements are implemented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). On an annual basis the Department must provide to the USFWS a "finding of no detriment" stating that Louisiana's harvest and export of alligators are not detrimental to the survival of the species.

The Department's alligator program can be separated into three categories: wild alligator management, alligator farming/ranching program and nuisance alligator program.

Louisiana's wild alligator management program involves:

- annual coastal nest surveys to index populations
- calculate 50+ wild alligator harvest quotas
- execute the annual wild alligator harvest
- collect, analyze, and interpret necessary data,
- provide technical assistance to landowners and hunters
- ensure compliance with CITES and USFWS requirements
- conduct necessary research activities

Louisiana's alligator farming/ranching program involves:

- monitor compliance with farm facility requirements
- facilitate alligator egg collections; set egg harvest quotas and issue permits
- verify/account for farm inventories and harvest tags
- process farm-raised alligators for release into wild
- inspect live alligator and alligator hide shipments
- collect, analyze and interpret necessary data
- provide technical assistance to landowners and farmers
- ensure compliance with CITES and USFWS requirements

Louisiana's nuisance alligator program involves:

- minimize/alleviate alligator/human conflicts
- manage a statewide network of nuisance alligator hunters
- receive and process nuisance alligator complaints
- assign complaints to nuisance hunters
- ensure hunter compliance with nuisance alligator policy

review and analyze nuisance alligator complaints and harvest data annually

Facts about alligator myths.

Myth: Alligators can grow to enormous proportions, over 20 feet in length and weighing a ton or more.

Fact: The longest recorded length for an alligator is 19' 2". This animal was trapped in the early 1900's in the State of Louisiana. Most wild alligators do not get above 13 feet in length, and may weigh 600 pounds or more.

Myth: Crocodiles and alligators open their jaws differently. The jaws of the crocodile are hinged to open the top jaw, while alligators open their bottom.

Fact: Alligators and crocodiles jaws are hinged the same. Both animals hinge their jaws on the bottom, the top jaw is simply an extension of the skull.

Myth: Only the tail of the alligator is edible.

Fact: Although the tail of the alligator is considered the prime cut, all the meat of the alligator is edible.

Myth: Alligators are slow moving animals when they are out of the water.

Fact: Alligators can run at speeds of up to 20 miles per hour. However, that speed can only be maintained for a very short distance.

Making a Louisiana Water Line Profitable

By: Eric Cottrell

With a low fur market right now, being able to make a profit on a water line is not an easy task to accomplish, especially in Louisiana with our quality of fur. Yet it can be done with proper planning and a lot of old fashion hard work. I want to share a few of the lessons I've learned over the years that have made me a more productive water trapper.

Scouting your trapping grounds and acquiring permission for private lands are one of the first steps in planning your trap line. Keep in mind that your trapping lands need to be reasonably close together for each line. The longer you spend traveling through "dead" zones, the higher your expenses will be, and the less actual trapping time you will have. Before season rolls around, you will have a pretty good idea of how much time you'll be able to devote to trapping. Make sure you have plenty of land secured and/or scouted so you don't waste time during the season looking for a new place to go. After trapping season begins is not the time to decide where you are going to start trapping. Every year, I know beforehand, exactly where my lines will start. I also have a backup plan for high water. There is not much worse than having a small creek line planned, and then having a big rain flood your trapping area. High water is the time to hit the ponds, lakes, and rivers. Just make sure you keep up with the weather forecasts to stay ahead of rising waters.

Making sure your gear is top notch is another very important part of your planning stage. Inferior traps and equipment will cost you time and animals. Proper modifications of traps are essential in making the most out of your line. Books, videos, internet websites, trapper workshops, and fellow trappers can teach you how to make your traps function to their full potential. Very few traps come straight out of the box trap line ready. This time investment will pay big dividends on your line.

Beaver, raccoon, otter, nutria, and bobcats make up my target species. Other parts of the state may be able to add muskrats and mink. I have never had muskrats in my area, and very few mink, so I've never had a chance to target them. Most folks ask why I say cats and water line in the same sentence. That's an easy answer. If you have beaver, most likely you have bobcats hunting them.

One mistake a lot of trappers make is trying to make too many different types of sets. Keep it simple. Speed and simplicity is what you're looking for when picking out your set of choice. Body grips and snares, set in crossovers and channels make up 95% of my beaver, otter, and nutria sets. These sets are easy to find, quick to set up, and deadly. Since I started using the Lil Griz two years ago for coon, I have almost eliminated footholds from my line. Learning to use the Lil Griz has totally transformed the way I coon trap. Nothing can compare to the speed and versatility that this trap offers. If you're serious about putting up big numbers of coon, this type of trap is a wise investment to your trapping arsenal. My cat set consists of nothing more than a little castor based lure smeared on a stick or tree with a trap bedded in front of it. Around beaver huts and beaver dams are great places for this set. It's fast to set and will catch cats hunting these areas.

I use a "hit em' hard and move" approach to all my water lines. 2 to 4 days max, and it's time to move. This will cost you some otter, but in that amount of time, you will have taken the bulk of the other furbearers in the area. I accomplish this by utilizing gang setting. If a spot has a lot of furbearers coming through, I may have 6 to 8 traps in a 20 or 30 foot area. Hot crossovers and channels always get 2 or more traps if at all possible. There is nothing worse than having a nutria or beaver in a 330 with otter tracks going over or around it. That 2nd or 3rd trap would have probably taken it.

By bringing all these tips into play during trapping season, a Louisiana water trapper can bring home a nice check at the end of season. Just remember; scout hard, get your traps up to speed, keep your sets quick and effective, and your knives sharp! Good luck on the upcoming season! Hope you have as much fun as I do!

Eric Cottrell is a successful Louisiana trapper who lives in Minden, La.



Did you know? Old timers say if an owl hoots before noon there is a weather change coming.

Extra! Extra! Read more about the events the LTAHA have to offer.

I was able to get a report in on the youth education camps and the National Hunt and Fish day. Although volunteers are harder and harder to come by these days with all the modern conveniences to make our lives simple, we had some great people come out to help for all three events.

We split forces this time and held a central and north youth education camp. The over all numbers were down due to the season and splitting of the camp, but we had a total of thirteen students between the two camps. President and youth education coordinator, Curtis Cruse, held a camp at the Woodworth WMA south of Alexandria on September 10-12. With six students and three instructors the event offered personal instruction. With temps soaring near the century mark, Curtis reported they cut the day short on Saturday, spending more time in the classroom studying trap modifications and tools. The camp closed out on Sunday morning with all the students receiving a packet from the LTAHA of catalogs, magazines, flyers and books from a number of vendors around the state and country. Three of the six students joined the assoc. and plan to use the skills learned this season. Curtis reported he felt the camp was a great success. Reported by Tony Howard, phoned in by Curtis Cruse.

The Region 1 LTAHA membership held a camp at Bodcau Dam near Haughton, La in the Bodcau WMA. There were seven students attending the camp with five instructors. The camp began at 6 pm on Friday, Sept 17 with a wonderful pulled pork dinner trimmed with wild pork sausage and potato salad prepared by Eric and Carmen Cottrell (the pork was smoked by Timmie McEachern). At 7 pm we had LWDF biologist, Jarred Hughes, and LWDF enforcement officer, Joey Melton, spoke to the group about the roll of trappers in the modern times. Afterward the class spent time learning the evolution of trapping equipment from the beginning to the present day. Saturday morning as we gathered outside we saw two armadillo in the field by the camp house. The young trappers lined up and the race was on. The final outcome was armadillo 2, trappers 0. We broke into groups and had personal instruction till noon, when we broke for lunch. The lunch was prepared for us by Buddy and Roxie Rice, Larry and Ronda Johnson and Carmen Cottrell. That evening, we changed students and instructors and went back out on the line, giving personal instruction again. At 5 pm we met at the camp for hands on trap modification class, where we cut night latches and set pans and pan tension. We enjoyed a great meal again, prepared by the Rice's, Johnson's and Carmen Cottrell. That evening we sat around talking and enjoying stories and tales from the past. Sunday morning we got up and ran the traps, removing them as we went. The line was successful with 7 coons and two beaver being taken. The land line side left a little to be desired with a big fat goose egg but a lot learned. Each and every one of us had a great time, making new friends and learning new tactics. I would like to personally thank each of the instructors. Clint Johnson drove up from Calcasieu, Louisiana to help with the camp. Clint was such an asset to the camp and I look forward to working with him again. Travis King, Eric Cottrell and Robert Smith also instructed at the camp. If you have never helped with a youth education camp you are missing out. Reported by Tony Howard

Louisiana in the Spot Light.

With all the Hollywood hype over gator hunting in Louisiana these days, our state is overrun with casting crews looking for the next big TV hit. With the NWCO side of trapping taking off, every word and every catch seem to be on film. Our Goal at the LTAHA is to educate the general public about the use of the renewable resource that we have with fur and gators and to ensure that our industry and heritage is not lost or hindered due to lack of knowledge of the trade. The most common case of misinformation I have come into contact with in the past two years of speaking at camps, festival's, and local schools is the use of teeth on traps. I have found that the general public still believes that we use teeth on traps and have no knowledge that it has been illegal for years to use such traps. It should be each member's goal to show the public that our industry has moved forward with equipment such as dog proof traps, off set jaws, and cage traps. No matter the personal opinion, the overall goal is to leave a lasting image in the general public's mind of the modern industry and equipment used. We want to make sure that our association and membership is portrayed as using the most modern and humane tools in our efforts to control overpopulation of animals. We also want the general public to understand that we are a tool used by biologist on a seasonal basis at no cost to the tax payers. Through the use of the renewable resource the industry is a commodity with a market all its own, like the lumber industry or farming. Our overall goal is to promote the use fur and trapping. There are many people out there that are not against trapping, they just don't want to know how we do it and for those that do, we need to leave a lasting impression of a humane techniques that we use today.

National Hunt and Fish Day reports.

Woodworth

We had a successful day with our LTAHA booth at the National Hunting and Fishing Day. From 9:00 a.m. through early afternoon, a constant flow of people passed by our displays of furs and traps and stopped by our table to get free cups and enter to win alligator tail meat. A large crowd gathered to watch Clint Perkins and I skin the gator at 11:00 a.m.

Thanks go to John Linzay for help setting up and working the booth, to Kirk Hammett and Clint Johnson for their help with the fur and trap displays, to Terri Guy for her help at the table, and to Clint Perkins for helping skin the gator. Clint Johnson, John Linzay, Clint Perkins, Mitch Guy, and Jordan Morris all helped take everything down at the end of the day, and I'm very grateful for their help because by that time I was pretty worn out. I'd like to offer a special thanks to Clint Johnson who participated in NHFD for the first time this year and did a terrific job. He stepped up to the plate and made everything a lot easier for all of us. Though we had less help than in previous years, everyone there went the extra mile and made the day go smoothly. Thanks to all for your tireless efforts! Reported by Ronnie Guy.

Monroe

Curtis and Brenda Cruse, Robert, Jenny, Katy and Emily Smith and Steven Voyer and his daughter, Emily, set up the LTAHA booth for the NHFD at the Monroe site this year. Curtis reported attendance was down from last year but the event still had around two thousand people attend. One of the main attractions was the #15 Duke Bear trap. A lot of people thought these traps were still being using for trapping bear, but Curtis had on hand two culvert traps and bear foot snares to show the modern techniques used to legally take bears. Curtis also reports that an alligator head taken from a ten foot gator drew a lot of attention. We also had a new member join at the Monroe event. The booth also drew a great deal of attention from the youth interested in the camps being planed for March of 2011. Reported by Eric Cottrell called in by Curtis Cruse.

Bodcau Dam

For our first ever booth set up on NHFD at Bodcau Dam we felt it was a success. The numbers were down from years past but we had a steady flow of people checking out the booth. There was lots of interest in the up coming youth education camps we are planning for March of next year and we had four parents sign up to receive more information about the camps. People gathered to watch skinning demos I put on and asked plenty of questions. We passed out cups, catalogs and information about the association. The local chapter of the National Turkey Federation loaned us their tent and the tables were borrowed from a local town. With our new banner made available by a donation to the NHFD by Mr. Jimmy Gallaspy of R&P Out Doors, we looked first class. One of the main attractions at the booth, were the stuffed animals Eric Cottrell brought. The display of a bobcat, red fox, otter and an alligator hide drew children as soon as they saw them. Eric and Carmen Cottrell, Dewayne Lee, my son Michael Howard and I worked the booth all day. We had a great time and plan to do it again next year. Report by Tony Howard.

Baton Rouge

Paul and Carson Rhodes, Wesley and Wes Blanchard manned the LTAHA booth at Baton Rouge NHFD this year. Paul reported that his personal skull collection was a big hit along with the tanned fur he carried. The numbers were down in the Baton Rouge area also this year with only 1800 people out for the day. The cups were passed out and people came by asking questions and enjoying the day out. Wesley reported that the falcon show was the biggest hit of the day and that everyone watched that show. Reported by Eric Cottrell and Tony Howard, called in by Paul Rhodes and Wesley Blanchard.

Over all, we reached out to around five thousand people on the National Hunt and Fish Day. Numbers have been better in years past. The economy has played a key roll in the over all attendance along with the forecast for rain which never came. All and all, we made good contacts, presented people with the fur and alligator industries in a manner they could understand. I think each and everyone of us look forward to next year, where we plan to get bigger and better as time goes on. We need to be proud of the young people who are stepping up to answer the call such as Clint Johnson, Wes Blanchard, Cason Rhodes and Michael Howard. They are the future of trapping and I feel they are doing a good job and make great ambassadors for our association. Again, if you have not helped with one these events, you are missing out on so much. This is a great chance to show the general public that trappers are every day citizens, next door neighbors and good people. Please help support our association and help us grow.



Beaver Test

The longest beaver dam on record (which is found in Three Forks, Montana) is how long? A) 1,270 feet B) 2,140 feet C) 3,120 feet

What is the minimum water level required to keep the lodge entrance free from the ice during the winter? A) 3-4 feet B) 2-3 feet C) 6-7 feet

What factors determine the size of each litter? A) The amount of rain fall B) the amount of predators in the area C) the amount of food and general health of the female.

Which predator do beaver sometimes face in Louisiana? A) Alligator B) bobcat C) Coyote D) all of the above

How many minutes can a beaver hold his breath under water? A) 6-7 B) 15-20 C) 10-15

What does "plantigrade" mean? A) to not move very fast B) to like plants C) to walk with the sole of the foot entirely on the ground

Answers on the Louisiana web site at www.louisianatrappers.com

A Note from the Editor:

We want to hear from you! We began this news letter for the sole purpose of reaching out to our member to keep you informed about event, people and places in the state. Our goal is to keep this news letter coming to your door three or four times a year depending on the response we receive from the membership. Keep in mind I have never edited any type of paper in my life and have little experience at the job. What I do have is a desire to see our association grow to new levels with membership input being one of the main concerns. Louisiana is very diverse state with a great heritage. We have a great state in which to participate in the out doors with few restrictions levied on us. Our goal is to keep it that way. Your support and voice count, let us hear from you, the reader and member.

Season opens November 20th and I am looking forward to it. Remember this is an election year for many offices in our state and local government, research each candidate and please exercise your right and vote on "Election Day". No matter your choice be informed and be part.

As always I am looking for material to put in the news letter. Please send your article, thoughts or idea to:
Editor LTAHA, 170 Thomas St., Sarepta, La. 71071