



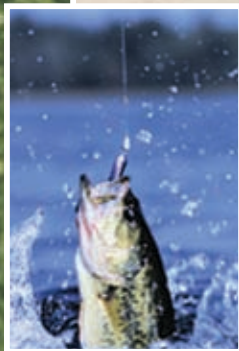
ROD & GUN GAZETTE

VOLUME 9: ISSUE 3

MARCH 2008

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Donald A. Bajger, *The Iceman*



As I sit down to write this column, I can't help but feel that spring is not too far away. Soon the ice will be gone, and the fishing ponds will be stocked with trout and the turkeys will be calling. The hunting lease on the Bass property for the 2008 hunting season has been finalized, and all is well. Activities and functions at the club are on the rise and the people responsible are working very hard to insure that everyone has a good time (Keep up the good work folks). With the warmer weather comes clean up time and there is a lot to be done this year.

Painting and repair work is needed on the clubhouse as well as the skeet houses. The pheasant pens need work as do the club grounds. We also need people to help raise the birds this year. In years past while on the board .I have seen many new prospects come before the board to apply for membership to our club. They would stand up and say what a wonderful club we have and why they would like to join. Then they would express their interest in one area or another and that they would like to participate in certain activities and help out. The board would then vote on accepting them. Unfortunately, many seem to disappear soon thereafter. I don't exactly know where most of them go, but I see the same handful of people over and over doing more than their share of the workload. Where are these members?

Remember it's your club. If we don't take care of it and try to make it better nobody else will. If everyone just does the minimum work requirements nothing will get finished. To all members, please contact me at any time if you have any questions, or need information on what you can do to help out (860-423-6693 or donald.bajger@snet.net. Thank You. I hope to SEE YOU ALL SOON.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 10	Easter Egg Stuffing & Work Party
March 14	Fish Fry
March 15	Annual Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner
March 16	Annual Easter Egg Hunt
March 21	Fish Fry
March 22	Setback Night
March 29	Connecticut Trapper's Fur Auction
April 12	Work Party to Set Out Sporting Clays Course & Steak Dinner
April 21/23/25/26	Hunter Safety Course
May 3	Youth Turkey Hunting Training Day
May 4	Kids Fishing Derby
May 10	Annual Spring Clean-Up
June 6/7/8	Northeast Open
June 14	Ducks Unlimited Sporting Clay Shoot
July 12/13	Registered Skeet Shoot
July 26	Hawaiian Luau
July 27	Registered Trap Shoot
Aug 17	Annual Family Picnic

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BAR SERVICE AND MEMBERSHIP

This is a very important reminder. Members cannot be served at the bar unless they present their membership card to the bartender – this is a state regulation. In the event that a member forgets their card and still wishes to purchase beverages, they must sign their name in the bar book/log. Please abide by these requirements to help our bartenders and to ensure that the Club will not be fined by the state liquor commission.

MEMBER OF THE YEAR

Mr. Dick Palmer was recognized as the Fin, Fur and Feather Club's 2007 Member of the Year at the annual game dinner in January. He was presented with the award by President Donald Bajger.



MEMBERSHIP

Bob Hurskocy, Membership

Thanks to everyone for submitting their dues payments in a timely manner. It is most appreciated. Thus far, 17 members have decided not to renew their membership. The main reason given for non-renewal was that they did not utilize the club as much as they had hoped. There are still 25 people that I need to hear from regarding their membership. Hopefully most of them will renew. As of the writing of this newsletter, the club has 394 Regular members, 57 Associate and 27 Junior members. Our Junior membership is at an all-time high. The club collected over \$14,500 for non-completed work hours in 2007. Although we could use the money, we certainly could use the help as well.

I would like to remind everyone about the dues structure of the club as I receive frequent calls or emails regarding this. All applicants for new membership pay a \$100 application fee. Each applicant (except Junior) MUST provide a background check (cost = \$25) on themselves, regardless of whether or not they hold a Connecticut pistol permit. Regular members pay \$300 annually and this includes regular dues and all 3 assessments. Associate members pay \$150/yr. which includes regular dues and 2 assessments. Junior members pay \$15/yr. until January 1st of the year following their 18th birthday at which time they must apply for Regular or Associate status. In 2004 the membership voted to make the assessments permanent. Hopefully this will clear up any confusion. Any questions, please feel free to contact me.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Tom Hoagland, Treasurer

Here we are again writing another report; time is sure flying by this winter. Lots of rain this February, thank God it's not snow. Most of the membership dues have been received and our treasury is looking quite flush. As indicated last month, the importance of dues collection to our club's financial health cannot be overestimated. If you have friends that are thinking about joining the Fin, please sign them up.

Several functions have been held over the past month and the club has benefited both socially and financially. It's important to note that when events take place, the bar revenues also increase. If anyone has a function they would like to run, please set up and just do it.

If you have any questions pertaining to the budget, please contact me. I would like to thank Jon Guarino and Brenda Liappes for all their assistance in helping me keep the financial records in good standing.

FIN FUR & FEATHER CLUB

APPLICATION TO HUNT TURKEY AND DEER

Use this form to apply for hunting privileges on FFF-owned and leased property for the 2008 season.

- I wish to hunt **TURKEY** on the Bass Property
- I wish to hunt **TURKEY** on the Club-owned property
- I wish to hunt **DEER** on Club-owned property (Archery only)
- I wish to hunt **DEER** on the Bass Property

Method(s) of hunting deer: Archery Shotgun Muzzleloader

- I understand that Tree Stands are not allowed
- I understand that this application must be returned to the clubhouse bar by April 14, 2008 in order to be considered: and that once all applications have been reviewed, permits to hunt will be available at the clubhouse bar by April 28, 2008.
- I have read State law and regulations and club rules and I agree to abide by all hunting laws and regulations.

Name: _____

FFF Membership ID Number _____

Street Address: _____

Town: _____

Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application Deadline: April 14, 2008 (return to the Bar).

NOTICE:

You must purchase a valid 2008 armband to hunt turkey, deer, waterfowl, pheasant, and so forth on club-owned and club-leased land. Members are hereby notified that they must observe all State hunting laws and regulations, in addition to Club Rules. Failure to abide by State law and regulations or Club rules may result in Board action against the offending member, including action subsequent to court rulings against the member.

FFF Board of Directors

REGISTERED SKEET SHOOT 2008, 2009

Frank Mauri.

The Fin will again host three shoots during the 2008 season. The Northeast Open will be held June 6-8, 2008. It is our premier shoot and involves all five events – doubles, 12 Ga., 20 Ga., 28 Ga., and the .410.

Later in the summer on July 13th we will host the Fin Open, a two-gun shoot in 12 and 20 Gauge. Finally on August 24th we will host the No-Name Open with 12 and 20 gauge shoots. This latter event occurs the weekend before the State Shoot and thus will provide a nice warm-up for that competition that will be hosted at the Hartford Gun Club.

The Fin will host the 2009 Zone 1 registered shoot and the 2009 Connecticut State Skeet shoot. Last year, these two events garnered us more than \$10,000 not including income from the bar and field kitchen. We need to prepare now for these 2009 events and some of this preparation should involve a club-wide attempt to increase the participation of members in the shoots this year so they will be prepared to compete in 2009.

SKEET AND TRAP PAYMENTS

In order to monitor the shooting taking place at the skeet and trap ranges, members are now required to provide their name and the amount of rounds shot when reporting in at the bar. The bartender will log this information into the skeet/trap book. This new procedure has been in effect for the past few months. Hopefully it will prevent folks from “forgetting” to pay for their rounds.

OUT IN THE FIELD

SPORTING CLAYS AND 5-STAND

Welcome to the 2008 season of sporting clays at the Fin. A few changes this year. We will still be in the Eastern CT Sporting Clays with E. Glastonbury Fish and Game. This year we will have 4 dates and they will have 5. We are dropping the league and holding all fun shoots. The price will be held at \$20 for the first 50 targets; \$15 for the second 50 targets, or \$45 all day! Breakfast is included in these prices. Lunch will be available for purchase. Registration is from 9am until noon. Come on down and some fun with your guns and don't forget our other club, EGSG. We all win when we support each other. As always we are a great way to get in your work hours and we are happy to have you just drop in.

Five stand will be opening with the better weather. We are looking forward to the coming season – keep an eye out for notices at the bar. Thanks for your support. Jim and Nancy, 456-8782.

The following shoots have been scheduled:

April 6	EGF&G
April 20	EGF&G
May 4	FFF
May 18	EGF&G
June 1	FFF
June 22	EGF&G
July 20	FFF
Sept 14	EGF&G
Sept 28	FFF

TRAP

Bob "Moon" Hruskocy, Trap Chairman

The FFF will hold a registered trap shoot on July 27th 2008. In the past, this shoot was held on Father's Day and this has reduced the total number of participants. Hopefully by switching the date to a later time, participation will increase. Help will be needed with sponsoring this event and it's a great way to gain your work hours. More information will be available in future newsletters.



ICE FISHING TOURNAMENT

Ice fishing tournament was held on Feb 2. Twenty-two participants experienced a rising ice sheet thanks to almost 2" of rain that fell the night before. One fish was caught and it was a big one at 40" long and 16lb 10oz. All of the fishermen thank Don Bajger for ferrying them back from the ice sheet to shore across the 10+ feet of open water that appeared between dawn and 1 pm!



DUCKS UNLIMITED (DU) SPORTING CLAYS SHOOT – SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 2008

The Fin, Fur & Feather club will again host this annual event (rain or shine). Volunteers will be needed to serve as trappers, scorers, runners, set-up crew, and take-down crew for the day of the event. No prior experience is necessary for any of these tasks; we will provide whatever minimal training is needed on the day of the event. Volunteers not only get membership hours, but also will receive lunch, one DU T-Shirt and the opportunity to participate in raffles and auction items.

In order to help us with proper planning (e.g., estimating the number of volunteers, lunch count, and T-Shirt order), all volunteers must put their name on the DU Sign-Up Sheet along with their T-shirt size no later than Saturday, May 31, 2008. The sign-up sheet will be posted at the bar at the beginning of April. If you pre-register as a volunteer and do not show up for the event, you will forfeit your T-shirt.

This is a fun activity and an exciting way for everyone to accomplish work hours and a great BBQ lunch. Don't miss out!! For further information, contact John Pawelec (860) 712-9195.

FISHING NEWS FROM THE FIN

J. Guarino, Fish Chairman

Here we are looking forward to the first stocking of the year! I always look forward to the first stocking because it means that winter is almost over! We had a work party late in the fall and repaired all of the docks at the fly pond; thanks to all those who helped out.

As we have done in the past we will have 4 stockings this year. **The first is scheduled for March 14th (pending ice out) with fishing open at 8am March 22nd.**

Subsequent stockings will occur on March 28th, April 11th and May 2nd. The Kids Derby will be on Sunday, May 4th, rain or shine. We will stock roughly 1000 fish total and these will be divided evenly between the 3 ponds; plenty of fish for everyone!!

There have been some changes to the rules as a result of feedback from the membership. Please note the following:

- **All fishing no matter what method must be done with a single hook, no treble hooks are allowed.**
- **The Fly pond will be “No Kill Fly Fishing Only” until the conclusion of the Kids Derby on Sunday May 4th. Once the Derby has concluded the Fly Pond will be open to the taking of fish by any method, Fly or Spin.**
- **The Skeet field pond and Middle pond are open to all methods of fishing (Fly and Spin) once fishing begins on the 22nd of March.**
- **Signs will be posted at each of the ponds indicating the status of the pond, “open” or “closed” please respect the indication of the sign. If the sign indicates “closed” the pond is closed until the Fish Chairman or designee removes the closed sign.**

We will observe all rules that have been in force in years past with the exceptions noted above. Excluding the first stocking, on the day of a stocking, once the fish are stocked there will be no fishing until 8am the next day. All rules will be posted at each of the ponds at the sign-in box. Please take the time to read and know the rules.

Also, it is important to remember to sign-in, and sign-out the fish that you keep. The board keeps a close eye on the number of fish that are taken every year and compares it against the number stocked. If we cannot substantiate the number of fish that are taken it is likely that they will ask the program to reduce the number of fish that are stocked.

So mark your calendars for these important dates:

First Stocking	March 14th
Corn Beef and Cabbage Dinner	March 15th
Fishing opens at 8am	March 22nd
Second Stocking	March 28th
Third Stocking	April 11th
Last Stocking	May 2nd
Fly Pond Opens to kill fishing	May 4th (immediately following Kids Derby)
Fly Pond Opens to all fishing	May 4th

Please consider coming to the Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner that the fish program sponsors every year. Tickets are available at the bar, only 50 adult tickets will be sold (kids tickets are available as well).

Have a great spring, enjoy the fishing at the Fin, and remember to **“Take a Kid Fishing”!!!**

PHEASANT WORK DATES 2008

Many members enjoy the fine pheasant hunting opportunities offered by our club. Please take note of the following dates to come and help ensure another great fall season. No experience necessary; we will teach you what you need to know.

Chicks Arrive:	Monday April 28th, Tuesday June 2nd
Debeak Round 1:	Thursday May 15th 4:00 pm
Blinders Round 1:	Thursday May 29th 4:00 pm
Debeak Round 2:	Thursday June 19th 4:00 pm
Blinders Round 2:	Thursday July 3rd 4:00 pm
General clean up, power washing etc.:	Saturday March 29th 8:00 am
Prep houses for chicks, water lines etc.:	Saturday April 12th 8:00 am
Repair pens fences etc.:	Saturday April 26th 8:00am

Anyone who would like to help raise these birds, feed, work on this committee, or gain more information contact:
Don Bajger @ (860) 423-6693, (860) 617-3399
Donald.bajger@snet.net



SPRING & FALL FIELD TRIALS

Bird dog field trials will be held this spring, April 27th, and fall, September 7th, at the Mansfield Dam training area. These will include puppy, derby, shooting dog, and gun dog using liberated quail starting at 7:00 am. Dogs must be registered before 8:00 pm on the previous Friday. Anyone wishing to enter a dog or wanting to help with the trial can contact Ralph Fonda @ 203-393-8922.



CHILDREN'S EVENTS

Depending on the publication date of the newsletter, the Annual Easter Egg Hunt may have already been held on March 16th at 11:30 am. If not, be sure to BYOB (Bring Your Own Basket). It includes lunch and is free to all FFF members' children and grandchildren ages 2 to 10. In case you are reading this after March 16th, thanks to all who helped plan for the event and prepared the eggs.



PLAN NOW FOR THE GREAT PUMPKIN CHALLENGE

The 2nd annual FFF Great Pumpkin Challenge will be held again this year. Grow the biggest and/or best and/or most interesting pumpkins for ribbons and bragging rights. Enter in both classes.

Main Class: uses our seeds which are picked up at the bar. No planting before May 26th ; no vine injecting.

Open Class: anything goes! Complete freedom to choose variety and any techniques you want.

Plan now to participate in the judging next fall. Good luck and happy growing season.

JUNIORS ACTIVITIES

Patrick Enright, Juniors Activities

JUNIORS WEEKEND

As we approach spring, many people have been asking me what is happening with the Juniors weekend this year. The truth of the matter is that 'I don't know'. I really don't want to lose the momentum we have built the past two years but I simply do not have the time to devote to this activity this year. If there is anyone who would like to coordinate the weekend please let me know; it has traditionally been held the first weekend of May. At the very least, I would like to see families come and use the club facilities on Saturday, camp overnight, and then take part in the Kids Fishing Derby on Sunday. If there is anyone that has ideas for this nice tradition please contact me ASAP and I will help get the word out.

JUNIORS TURKEY HUNT

The club will participate in the state-sponsored Youth Turkey Hunter Training Day on May 3rd. All State and FFF hunting rules and regulations apply. There will be a sign-up sheet in the bar beginning in April. As of this writing I have one club member who is willing to act as a guide/mentor for any youth in need of mentoring. If there is anyone else willing to act as a guide for a youth hunter please contact me.

JUNIORS TRAP DIVISION

Looking ahead to summer, I would like to have a Junior Trap Division in the Summer Trap League this year. Normally adults shoot 20 rounds of trap to complete the league. Those participating in the Junior Division (12 - 17 years of age) would shoot 10 rounds to complete the league. This would qualify them for awards in their division without requiring them to compete against adults. If you have a Junior Member who would be interested in shooting Trap this year please contact me and I will have an informal meeting of interested individuals at the end of May. At this meeting we will coordinate a time when the kids can shoot together and answer any questions that parents may have. There is no experience necessary to join this league and instruction will be provided. The league will start in June after school is out for the summer.

As always – take some time to take a kid hunting or fishing, I guarantee it will be time well spent! ***"PASS IT ON"***.

CONNECTICUT HUNTING & FISHING EXPO

Bob Hurskocy, Membership

For the third consecutive year, the Fin, Fur and Feather Club sponsored a booth at the Connecticut Hunting and Fishing Expo. This provided us with the opportunity to feature our Club and recruit potential new members. To date, at least one new member has already applied from this contact. I would like to thank the following people for volunteering their time on behalf of the Club, Dick Palmer, Bill Spears, Matt Halloran, Dave Rorrio, Hank Kay, Tom Asaro, Pat Enright, Tom Blatchley, Steve Pentsak, Steve Davis and Fred Vernic.

GAME DINNER

The annual Game Dinner was held January 20th and was a tremendous success. Thanks to everyone that contributed to it happening and to those who attended as well!

CHECK THE CLUBHOUSE BULLETIN BOARD & POSTINGS

Dick Palmer

Everyone is reminded that monthly events are posted on the Cub's web site, so those that can visit the web site to check on what's happening. Activities are updated on a regular basis so be sure to check in.

FIREWOOD FOR THE CLUB

Please Do Not bring scrap wood to the Club unless it's decent. We do need wood to burn but we don't need junk. Wood should be cut to stove length and not contain any nails. Please do not leave sheetrock pieces; we can't burn these and they make a mess of the club grounds. Please use common sense.

ARMBANDS 2008

Armbands will again be mandatory for all members hunting club-owned and club-leased property. This will include Deer, Turkey, Waterfowl, Pheasant and Upland Small Game.

Written consent forms will only be issued to members in good standing who have purchased an armband for the 2008 calendar year. Armbands and consent forms will be available for pick-up at the same time. When you purchase your 2008 armband at the clubhouse, just tell the bartender which pheasant group you wish to hunt with (Group A, B, or Wed.) and he/she will issue the armband and assign you to the specific group. The cost for a 2008 armband is \$10 and may only be purchased at the bar during regular bar hours from April through December 2008.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Please note that the deadlines for material to be submitted for the next newsletters will be June 10th and September 10th. Thank you very much for any and all written submissions and photographs.



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Bob Hruskocy,
Vice-President 860-569-1592
Dick Palmer, Secretary 860-487-0388
Tom Hoagland, Treasurer 860-455-0641

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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(past-president) 860-558-1890
David Fromerth 860-742-6749
Jim Gifford 860-455-2034
Keith Morehouse 860-647-1333
Tom O'Neill
John Postemski 860-423-9396
Mike Sobol Jr. (alternate) 860-918-0415
Bill Spears 860-822-6567

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BY-LAWS REVIEW

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Bob Theriault 860-456-3431

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John & Laura Pawelec 860-429-7033

FAMILY PICNIC

Bob Theriault 860-456-3431

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Ralph Fonda 203-393-8922

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Ken Shane 860-456-8315

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Jon Guarino 860-428-2873

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HUNTING

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Kevin Segar 860-429-4925
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