



Grousin' Around the Mid-Atlantic

May 2010

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...From your RD



The Oakland, MD chapter of RGS planted over 1,000 spruce, American chestnut and apple trees at Potomac State Forest on April 24. Nearly 50 people turned out to help. Kudos to MD DNR's John Denning and his crew and the Chapter for being incredibly well prepared for the large group of 4th graders and Boy Scouts who did the bulk of the work.

Accomplishing our Mission

This spring chapters in my area are doing much more than ever before to accomplish our mission—putting habitat on the ground. Field days, sometimes more than one, were held by chapters in many states, including inaugural field events by chapters in Richmond, VA (two field days), Staunton, VA, Allentown, PA, and Oakland, MD. The Sussex NJ Chapter holds a work day just about every month. In many cases, it was in addition to a spring banquet and/or a shoot or dog competition of some kind. Reading, PA had over 70 people at their field day once again. This is wonderful to see – keep up the good work!! It is very much appreciated.

...Recent Happenings

February 2010 – May 2010

Getting Youth Involved

RGS Delaware Valley Chapter Presented the 2010 Captain Tom Timmins' Annual Youth Award

In Memory Of Bill Goudy

Each year, the Delaware Valley Chapter Committee located in the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area recognizes a young person who has an interest in and has contributed in some way to conservation efforts. This year the recipient of the Youth Award was Luke Guyer. The winner is announced at the banquet so it is a surprise to the winner and audience. Luke received a Mossberg Model 88 12-Gauge Pump Shotgun. The Committee presents this award in the memory of our dear friend and fellow conservationist, the late Bill Goudy. As we all know the future of hunting lies with our young people, like Luke. **Congratulations Luke!!**



(Left to Right) Delaware Valley Chapter Committee Member George Criswell, Luke Guyer, Committee Member Captain Tom Timmins and Regional Director Dave Hansroth



Bill Goudy

Banquets:

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD

Saturday, February 20 - The thirteenth annual banquet was another roaring success. Over 140 attendees enjoyed an evening of good food, fun and conversation. This successful banquet added over \$3,000 to the Maryland Drummer Habitat Fund.

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle, PA

Saturday, March 13 - The Cumberland Valley chapter held their 27th successful banquet, raising over \$10,000 for habitat work. The committee did an outstanding job gathering local donations and contributions.

Red Brush Chapter, State College, PA

Saturday, March 20 - The 23rd Red Brush banquet was again a big success. Attendees enjoyed good food, drink and company! In addition to corporate funds, revenues were raised for grouse and woodcock habitat. The committee did a wonderful job of securing local donations, adding to the net profits.

Highland Drummer Chapter, Lewisburg, WV

Saturday, April 17 – The fifth annual banquet was a breakout success for this chapter. Net revenues almost doubled from the year before! Donation highlights included a four-day pheasant hunting trip to South Dakota. Congratulations to the volunteers for a job very well done.

Delaware Valley Chapter, Media, PA

Thursday, April 22 – Over 200 attendees enjoyed this 26th annual banquet making it another tremendous success for this great chapter. A long list of local donations was highlighted by a safari to South Africa. Special thanks go to this wonderful committee.

Other Events:

James River Chapter, Richmond, VA

Saturday February 27 – **Grouse Educational Field Day** – Attendees were treated to a very informative seminar on ruffed grouse biology and ecology. Gary Norman and a team of DGIF employees did a superb job of presenting the material. Unfortunately the weather caused a cancellation of the field part of the day. Enthusiastic plans were made to begin habitat work on a local WMA.

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD

Saturday, March 27 - Stephen Rafe, bird-dog man and author, started the **Annual Dog Training Seminar and Fun Trial/Chukar Challenge** with a seminar on how to teach “honoring or backing.” The seminar concluded with some hands-on training for all participants. An outstanding barbecue lunch followed and set the stage for the fun trail. First place in the trial went to Richard Cullerton and his German Shorthair, Lacy. Earl Williams and his German Shorthair, Arko, took second place. Third place went to Brad Minnich and his English Pointer, Snap.

James River Chapter, Richmond, VA

Saturday March 27 – **Woodcock Educational Field Day** - This program did for Woodcock biology and ecology just what the first one did for grouse. In addition, due to good weather, a field portion of the program was enjoyed. Mark Banker, Senior RGS biologist, along with some very knowledgeable DGIF employees led the discussion. As in the first one, enthusiastic plans were made to begin habitat work on a local WMA. Congratulations and commendations go out to the volunteers in this chapter for this emphasis on habitat.

South Mountain Chapter, Lancaster PA

Saturday, March 27 – **Grouse Challenge Sporting Clays Shoot** - This event is rapidly gaining in popularity and notoriety. This year 88 shooters tried their hand at this difficult course, designed by the committee to mimic grouse shots as closely as possible. Top shooter was Robby Von Stuben with a score of 59 out of 75. Second place went to Ed Schoor with a 54 and third went to Larry Johnson with a 52.

Charles E. Bechtel Chapter, Reading, PA

Saturday, April 3 – State Game Lands 110, **Field and Habitat Day** - Over 70 people showed up to witness the unveiling of the new road built with joint funds from the Reading and Media Chapters. This road allowed timber to be harvested that would not have otherwise been economical to harvest. One thousand spruce trees were planted for thermal cover. Habitat was further enhanced by creating brush piles in the work area.

Thunderbird Chapter, Altoona, PA

Sunday, May 2 - Stonycreek Shooting Center in Berlin, PA was the site for the **Sporting Clays Shoot**. Despite the showers and wind, several shooters turned out for this inaugural event. Money was raised for local habitat projects.

...Upcoming Events: Mark Your Calendars

May 2010

Backbone Mountain Chapter, Oakland, MD Chukar Challenge and Sporting Clays Shoot

Saturday and Sunday, May 15 and 16 – Wings of Challenge Preserve. On Saturday, participants will be able to compete in adult and puppy Chukar challenges, both for pointing and flushing dogs. On Sunday, a team event will be held with two dogs and one or two hunters. Sporting Clays will be available both days. For more information contact Rich Skeweris at 301-334-5814 or email at rskeweris@pennswoods.net.

Charles E. Bechtel Chapter, Reading, PA Southeastern PA Sponsor Dinner

Wednesday, May 19 – Fish Pond, West, Swiftwater Lane, Leesport, PA. Raw bar and cocktails at 6:30, Dinner consisting of Maine lobster and steak with all the trimmings at 7:30, silent auction and habitat discussion. High grade shotgun raffled to sponsors. For more information, contact Dan DeLoretta at 610-796-9607 or email at dandelo17@comcast.net.

June 2010

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle, PA Sporting Clays Shoot

Saturday, June 5 - Blue Ridge Sportsman's Club, 1176 North Fairview Avenue, Harrisburg, PA. Registration at 8:30 am, shoot starts at 9:00 am, last shooter out at 11:45 am, lunch from noon -1:00 pm. Cost is \$45 per person or \$165 for a team of four. Adult cost includes 100 sporting clays targets, lunch, door prizes, trophies and awards. Youth category includes 50 wobble trap targets plus lunch and awards for a cost of \$25.00. To register or for more information, contact Tim Wentz at 717-258-1450 or email at twentz@pa.net.

Bonasa Chapter, DuBois, PA Banquet

Friday, June 18 - DuBois Country Club, 10 Lakeside Avenue, DuBois, PA. Cocktails & raffles 6:00 pm; dinner 7:30 pm. Games, raffles, live and silent auctions, great food, drink and conversation. Several wonderful donations have already been received. For more information, contact Tom Noble at 814-590-9431 or bonasa13@yahoo.com.

Ruffed Grouse Society Tenth Annual New Jersey's Sporting Clays Challenge

Sunday, June 27 - The Hudson Farm, 270 Stanhope Road, Andover, NJ. Registration starts at 8:30 am, shooting 9:30 am. Challenge consists of 100 sporting clays targets in the most beautiful, prestigious sporting clays venue in the USA. \$300 fee includes 100 sporting clays targets, four boxes of shells, shell carrier, continental breakfast, lunch, dessert, auctions and raffles. **New this year** – side by side grouse gun category! To register or for more information, contact Dave Hansroth at 412-303-1405 or email at rgshans@comcast.net.

July 2010

First Annual Ruffed Grouse Society Fredericksburg, VA Fun Shoot and Dinner

Thursday, July 29 – Fredericksburg Rod and Gun Club. Join us for this inaugural event! The afternoon will feature skeet and trap shooting. Lunch will be all seafood with crabs and shrimp featured. Leading gun companies will have demo guns available for shooting. Dinner will feature prime filets cooked over charcoal complete with all the trimmings. Live and silent auctions plus raffles. Contact Dave Hansroth at 412-303-1305 or at rgshans@comcast.net for more info.

August 2010

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD Fun Shoot

Saturday, August 7 - Izaak Walton near Poolesville. Registration starts at 12:30pm with last shooter out by 4pm. Dinner is 4-6pm. Awards presented after last shooter finishes. Cost of \$40.00 includes 25 sporting clays targets, 25 skeet targets, and full dinner; optional classes for seniors and side by side shooters, trophies and prizes given in five categories. For more information, contact Terry Oland at 301-874-5269 or email at terry.oland@comcast.net.

Smokey Mountain Chapter, Franklin, NC Banquet

Saturday, August 14 – Details to be announced. Contact Jeff Johnson at 828-342-5393, or email Jeff@jeffjohnsontimberframes.com.

Southern Appalachian Chapter, Asheville, NC Banquet

Saturday, August 21 - The Crest Center and Pavilion, 22 Celebration Place, Asheville, NC. Cocktails & raffles 5:00 pm; dinner 7:00 pm. Games, raffles, live and silent auctions, great food, drink and conversation. Several wonderful donations have already been received. For more information, Contact: Jerry Cody, 828-665-2395 x3825 (w) jcody@carolinafarmcredit.com or Don Mallicoat, 828-279-1763, dmallicoat@outdrs.net

Charles E. Bechtel Chapter, Reading, PA Annual Youth Shoot; Trap, Skeet and Grouse Walk

Saturday, August 21 – Leesport Gun Club. Details to be announced. For more information, contact Dick Shuman at 610-926-4611.

Backbone Mountain Chapter, Oakland Maryland Banquet

Saturday, August 28. Wisp Resort at McHenry Maryland. Cocktails and raffles at 5:30pm, dinner at 7:00pm. Games, live and silent auctions, door prizes and raffles. Contact Rich Skeweris at 301-334-5814 or email at rskeeweris@pennswoods.net.

Note: Details on all upcoming events, except committee meetings, can be found on our website: www.ruffedgrousesociety.org.

National Raffle Draws to a Close

The 2009-2010 RGS national raffle draws to a close on June 30, 2010. Tickets are still available to win a Model 21 Baby Frame 28-gauge shotgun, a gun first made famous by Winchester. This is a one of a kind gun that features 28" barrels choked IC/M with two beads, a straight English stock crafted from AAA fancy feathercrotch walnut to a checkered butt, and a 14 ½" LOP. Retail value is \$32,000. This is truly a unique gun!

To find out more and purchase a ticket, contact Dave Hansroth at 412-303-1405 or email at rgshans@comcast.net.

...Other National News

National Sponsor Raffle Prizes for 2010

The following are the seven prizes being offered for banquet sponsors that choose the national raffle:

1. Connecticut Shotgun's RBL-28 Round Action, Box-Lock 28 Gauge, 26" Barrels, Single Trigger, Side-By-Side Shotgun; 3X Wood Grade
2. AYA 453 – 28 Gauge, 28" Barrels, Side-By-Side; Walnut Stock & Forend.
3. Caesar Guerini Magnus Over/Under 20 Gauge Shotgun
4. Smith & Wesson Elite Gold Side-By-Side 20 Gauge Shotgun
5. SKB Limited Edition RGS Model 785 Over/Under Shotgun in 20 or 28 Gauge, 26" or 28" Barrels
6. Choice of Any Pair of Steiner Binoculars \$1,600 or less
7. \$1,000 Cabela's Gift Certificate

Send IRS Inquiries to Headquarters

Any RGS chapter volunteer who has received chapter-related queries from the IRS should fax the form/letter directly to Ron Burkert at (412) 203-4111 or via email to

RonB@ruffedgrousesociety.org.

Drummer Fund Update

The statewide funding program, which puts a portion of the proceeds from regional events into a fund for local projects, has raised \$49,238 so far this year, from banquets and life sponsorships. The money will be available in 2011 for local habitat projects approved by our regional biologists.

The new approach created considerable excitement as this is the first time RGS had set a specific percentage of the banquet net revenue aside for statewide habitat projects. However, due to the state of the economy the revenue has not grown as anticipated. However, we still have the remainder of the spring banquets and all of the fall banquets to change that.

Membership News

Our *members only* portion of the website is now up and running. We have forums for discussion and a new, modern photo gallery for you to submit your photos.

Join our Facebook Group, here's the link

<http://www.facebook.com/?ref=logo#!/group.php?gid=74704090492>.

We're gearing up for our 50th anniversary and we will be having a lot of new incentives, programs and activities. Make sure your membership is current so you don't miss out.

Our Centurion program is still going strong, so if you're considering becoming a member of this exclusive group, a one-time payment of \$1,000 entitles you to a life membership with the RGS. For every 10 Centurion members we receive, we hold a small raffle for a Kimber Valier Grade II shotgun. That means if you become a Centurion today, you have a 1 in 10 chance to win this shotgun!

CONSOL Pilot Project

RGS expects to be partnering with CONSOL Energy® in Pittsburgh by actively managing about 7,000 acres of their forestlands in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. That will provide a source of revenue for RGS and create an abundance of early successional habitat – both for the wildlife that require that habitat and for the hunters who pursue those species.

Somerset County Timber Harvest

Unprecedented Pennsylvania Partnership Grows Roots

RGS has enjoyed working with many public and private partners over the past 50 years to reach our shared vision of creating young forest habitat. Recently we were able to take one of our biggest strides yet – with an unprecedented partnership that gives RGS the management of 2,300 acres of public forestland in the Laurel Highlands of southwestern Pennsylvania for 15 years.

The Lyme Timber Company sold the forest tract, locally called “The Barron Tract” to the R. K. Mellon Foundation who transferred ownership to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) in 2008. In keeping with the landscape habitat vision, WPC conferred timber rights to RGS for 15 years, while the land itself was conveyed to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry, to become part of the Forbes State Forest. The heavily forested tract in Somerset County, near the village of Scullton, added substantially to a mosaic of public land, effectively connecting Laurel Ridge State Park and State Game Lands 111 – and creating 26,444 acres of contiguous public lands.

RGS is working with Appalachian Forest Consultants of Stoystown, Pennsylvania to manage the habitat. By the fall of 2009, two timber sales creating future habitat blocks of 85 and 65 acres had been completed. Another timber sale of 90 acres had been laid out, and at least one and possibly two more, are planned to take place this year.

Currently the timber sales have netted \$195,000.00 – money which has been placed into the RGS endowment fund for the biologists. In the next year and a half, planned timber sales are expected to raise approximately \$300,000 more for the fund. Read more on the Somerset project in our Summer issue.

In Memoriam

David J. Griskevich

1956-2010

Committed RGS member David J. Griskevich, died unexpectedly March 5 at his home in Newton, New Hampshire. He was 53.

The son of John and the late Paulyna Griskevich, he was a graduate of Tenney High School in Methuen, Massachusetts and the Berkeley School of Music in Boston. The General Manager of the Surf Club in Rye, New Hampshire, David was an active outdoorsman. A passionate upland bird hunter, as well as avid fly fisherman, he loved to hunt in the woods of Vermont.

He enjoyed music, and was a classical guitar musician. David was the co-founder of Rivers Edge Trading Company in Beverly, Massachusetts. Over the years he held 11 sporting clays

tournaments at Rivers Edge to raise money for RGS habitat work, an accomplishment he numbered among the highest of those in his life.

Memorials may be made to the Ruffed Grouse Society in honor of David. Read more on Mr. Griskevich's life and contributions in our Summer issue.

NAWNR Conference

Evidence of the changing attitudes toward the role of forest management in the conservation of forest wildlife was in a special session that was convened at the North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in March, 2010, entitled *Active or Passive Management of Public Lands: Implications to Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Recreation*.

The relevance of the issue of *active vs. passive* management was underscored by the eagerness of Rebecca Humphries, who currently serves as the Director of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources and Environment, to take time from her busy schedule to Co-Chair this important session along with Gary Kania from the Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation.

The session opened with a thought-provoking paper by John Organ (US Fish & Wildlife Service) and Jan Dizard (Amherst College) who provided a historical context to the expansion of the concept of passive management.

Dan Dessecker, Director of Conservation Policy for the Ruffed Grouse Society, then spoke of the need to use active habitat management if we are to conserve the many species of forest and grassland wildlife that are currently experiencing population declines. This is especially true for those species that use habitats that were historically created through wildfires that raced across the landscape – a “natural” habitat management practice that society now drastically limits. Dessecker stated; “Land management practices used today that can to some degree mimic the effects of historic fires on grasslands and forests include prescribed burning and forest management. These practices can establish and sustain wildlife habitats similar to those resulting from historic fires.” If we are to sustain wildlife that need young forests habitats, we must increase our use of active forest management.

Steve Ferrell, Director of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, talked about how regulations and policies that can severely limit active management on federal lands can affect the ability of state agencies to meet population goals for game and nongame wildlife.

In her closing remarks, Director Humphries noted how the trend toward increasing the amount of public land where active management and public access is restricted is driven to some degree by the interests of an increasingly urban society. In 1950, 52% of the United States population lived in metropolitan areas; by 2000 that number had grown to 80%. As society becomes more and more removed from natural environments, its understanding of the dynamic nature thereof is diminished, as is its understanding of the role of active management in wildlife conservation.

Minnesota Grouse Management Position Announced:

A Cooperative Effort of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and RGS

Early in 2010, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced the creation of a new statewide Ruffed Grouse Specialist position. Partial funding for the position will come from RGS. The position is expected to be filled by the end of June, 2010.

“We already have a grouse biologist who tracks populations,” said Laurie Martinson, deputy commissioner for the Minnesota DNR. “The increased emphasis on grouse and grouse hunting is expected to include more hunter walking trails, more designated ruffed grouse management areas, and more information on hunting opportunities.”

For more information on the new position, please read our Summer 2010 issue.

Pamphlets Available

As mentioned previously, there are many RGS publications available for your use at Sport Shows, including *The Other Silent Spring*, *The Impact on Wildlife from Ignoring Ecological Principles*, Trilogy brochures and soon the *Woodcock in Hand* – as it is in the process of being updated and reprinted. Please contact RGS Headquarters to arrange having the brochures you need sent to you by calling (888) 564-6747.

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2011 – RGS 50th Anniversary

In 2011 The Ruffed Grouse Society celebrates its 50th Anniversary, preparations are already underway. Special items commemorating the anniversary will include a collector’s knife, belt buckle, several unique shotguns, a unique lost-wax process cast of a ruffed grouse, carved woodcock and apparel with the 50th Anniversary RGS logo. These items will be at our 2011 banquets and available for purchase through our website.