



JULY 2024

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SELFISH ACT

I have been writing on Widgeon on or off now for about over a year and need to draw his story to a close. I have not been looking forward to this part of his story and have been doing a lot of thinking on how to approach it. Widgeon was not a stellar waterfowl dog but was a wonderful companion, we enjoyed many a hunt together throughout his years, retrieved numerous ducks for me, had lots of laughs together and lots of frustrating times together (never could get him from breaking) and he is the only dog that I ever trained.

Have you ever had to put an animal down? A good friend of mine asked me for advice on this and I basically advised him of a couple of things. One, the decision to put an animal down might be taken out of your hands and the good Lord will take the animal in it's sleep or it will be killed by some tragic incident. In which case, this is what all owners kind of hope for so we do not have to make this gut wrenching decision. Second, the animal will tell you when it is time to let them go. The animal is in pain, cannot walk or any other millions of reasons why it is trying to tell you it is time to let go. It is the one time that you cannot be selfish and to do the right thing, the last loving thing you can do for this member of your family that you have seen grow up, train and live with, is to put it out of its misery.

Widgeon's cysts came back with a vengeance. He was 14 at this time of his life. One on his right hip was the size of a paper plate and was impacting his walking abilities. Other than these cysts all over his body he was a happy, healthy dog. With his age, I knew it would be questionable to have the surgery, so I figured Widgeon would tell me, so I took him to the Vet to get his opinion. He was very cautious or wary about operating on such an old dog and wanted to take some blood work to see how his internal organs were to see if they could handle an operation. Widgeon was very excited, as per the norm, to the point when we went into the examination room he was beginning to hyperventilate. Then all of a sudden he had extreme difficulty in breathing, his lips began to turn blue and I could tell in his loving brown eyes he was screaming at me wondering what was going on and he needed help. I did not hesitate and immediately told the Vet to put him down, which he did. The shock was immense. The Vet later told me that on Labs, or I guess on any dog, when they get old their esophagus hardens and can collapse in their throats creating a blockage and the animal suffocates to death, which is exactly what was happening to Widgeon if the Vet did not put him down.

After his death I had him cremated, he sits on our mantel over our fireplace. It is probably time to let him go. But I am being selfish and don't want to. He was such a good boy and a very important part of my life and family. He will be greatly missed.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SHORT STORY	1
MEMBERS MEETING	2
DOVE HUNT	2
JUNE EVENTS	2
MAY MEETING	3
FUND RAISER	4
COLUMBIA BOTTOM	4
DOGS	4
2024-2025 SEASON	5
UPCOMING EVENTS	5
GENERAL INFO	COV

MEMBERS MEETING

For the July Member's Meeting we will be having a small swap meet along with a discussion given by Jerry Mercurio JR. about decoy placement. So come on out and enjoy some fellowship with your fellow duck hunters!

DOVE HUNT

The application time frame for the managed dove hunt out at Columbia Bottom is now opened till the end of the month. Go to the MDC website and select hunting and trapping link off of the main menu, top navigation. Under the popular species listing on the right hand side select Dove. On the left hand navigation screen of the next page select Managed Hunts. On that page fill out the form and submit.

JUNE EVENTS

We had a busy month full of events this past month, participation was not what we had hoped for but for those who did show up all had a great time!

MDC Shooting event out at Jay Henges



Huge thanks to Terry Bertholomey along with Noah Brocato for keeping us out of trouble since Terry had to

be away for taking care of family matters.



A little eating and enjoying each others company before Noah gave us the safety briefing before the shoot.



Ken Liebel brought out his shotgun flint lock to demo. He missed. :)



MVDHA BOARD

- President:** Ken Liebel
- First V. Pres.:** Scott Thoele
- Fin. Secretary:** Rob Mueller
- Rec. Secretary:** Bill Hilgeman
- Correspondence Secretary:** Bill Hilgeman
- Membership Chairman:** Erik Liebel
- Board of Directors:**
 - Chairman of the Board** Jerry Mercurio
 - Asst Chairman of the Board** Art Wende
 - Directors:** Brad Douglass, Jerry Mercurio Jr., James Edwards, Nick Witte, Gary Hirsch

Jerry giving it a go. If you look close you can barely see a red line, which is the shot string coming out of the gun. Jerry got lucky and hit the clay bird.

Family Fun Day

This event was a fun one with lots of ups and downs!

First off, Jerry SR. ripped a chunk out of his right hand at the base of his thumb while lowering the grill off the truck which required about ten stitches. So his day was basically done for fishing so it would not get infected.

Second, the day started off very nice, no rain, with a slight breeze and the temps were mid 80s then the sun came out and the wind died down. But all in all a nice day.

We ate at about 11:30 or so and enjoyed each others company talking about the fishing, which was not all that great and it was decided that next year we might try a different location to encourage members to come on out and also for the prospect of better fishing.

As stated before, the fishing was not all that great for those who participated, only a few fish were caught and one small bass. After lunch everybody decided to leave, so with the area to myself, I broke out my 4 weight fly rod and fished for about twenty minutes and was basically catching hand size Blue Gill on each cast! Must of caught about ten or twelve in that time span, but it was getting hot, so decided to head on back myself, but it was fun!



Jerry and Art enjoying the shade.



Ken, Eric and James kicking back after lunch contemplating on what to do.



James had a new Three Weight fly rod he was trying out for the first time on this trip and giving a demo/lesson to Eric and Ken. James is an excellent roll caster which I am envious of!

MAY MEMBERS MEETING

If you missed Dr. Brian Reiter very informative talk about taking care of your waterfowl dog you missed a great opportunity to ask a fellow waterfowler what you need to look for in regards to your dog.

Some of the things to bring out that he mentioned if you have a waterfowl dog.

- A Vet needs to know your dog is a waterfowl dog, it will lead the Vet to the correct treatment and shots the dog needs.
- Bordetella vaccine or Kennel Cough vaccine is not just for dogs going into the kennel but for dogs who get around other dogs.
- Is your dog constantly licking their feet or get ear infections? You might want your Vet to look into allergies and the Vet might recommend Apoquel which is an allergy vaccination.
- Hepatitis vaccination. Granted, your dog gets this vaccination when they are about six weeks old but your dog is swimming in some of the most awful water imaginable and might need boosters, your Vet should know this.
- First Aid kit. One thing he brought up to me which was interesting was wound treatment. In the case of lacerations, in your first aid kit you

should have at least two items for lacerations. One, some sort of wound cleaning solution to get all the dirt and bacteria out of the wound and two, a wound stapler to close the laceration, which you can get from Amazon for under \$10.

- One thing he did state was to not put any triple anti bacteria ointment on the wound, just kep it clean and let nature take its course. A dog will lick off the ointment and it could be harmful to the animal.

2024 FUND RAISER

Our coffers are running low and we need to raise money. For a fund raiser this year, Kenny Liebel has created a custom made hunting knife.



- Made out of 496 Staret Tool Steel
- 5 to 7 inch blade length
- The blade will be buffed out to mirror finish
- It will have a Brass Hilt
- Laminated handle made out of wood that is similar to golf driver handles
- Leather Sheath that will is hand stitched
- The value of the knife is about \$600.00

There will only be 200 tickets and the cost is only \$5 a ticket, so your odds of winning this beautiful knife are really great!!

Excellent job Kenny! Very nicely done and thanks!



See Jerry or Kenny for tickets.



COLUMBIA BOTTOMS

MDC recently bought 100 plus acres adjacent to Columbia Bottoms. With the advent of Columbia Bottoms being taken off of the managed waterfowl areas and being turned over to an open waterfowling area we were wondering why this occurred and the costs, after all, this is your tax dollars at work. Tony Wolf put in a freedom of information request to MDC regarding this purchase and after a long time of messages from MDC stating they are working on it finnally got a response which is below, along with the request :

The Missouri Department of Conservation received a public records request from you on March 25, 2024. Your request mentioned:

According to Gateway Greenway, they have said the 100 plus acres adjacent to Columbia Bottom has been purchased by MDC.

Please provide purchase price, fees, and all agreements that are part of the sale such as right of ways for future trails, etc granted to seller.

The Missouri Department of Conservation has reviewed its files and have located the information

you requested. Please see below.

Purchase price - \$695,000.00

Closing fees - \$1,304.12

There were no agreements between the parties regarding future use of the property.

For questions or additional information, please reply to this email.

Sincerely,

Custodian of Records

Missouri Department of Conservation

573-751-4115

Thanks Tony for this and it still begs the question of what is MDC going to do with this land.

DOGS

From the Delta Website

New Regs for Bringing Dogs Into the US Set to Begin August 1, 2024

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has implemented new restrictions on bringing dogs into the United States that will impact hunters traveling with their duck dogs even between Canada and the United States. The new restrictions also prohibit the importation of any dogs younger than six months of age.

For hunters traveling outside of the United States with their dogs, the biggest change is that having an implanted microchip is no longer optional. It is mandatory. The chip must have been implanted prior to any required rabies vaccination, and the matching chip number must be documented on all required forms and veterinary records.

Additional paperwork is also required in completion of a "CDC

Dog Import Form.” It is preferred that this document be completed online 2-10 days prior to crossing the border into the States, but it can even be completed as late as while standing in line at the U.S. Customs station, as long as there is a viable internet connection.

This new form also requires the attachment of a clear photograph of the dog showing its face and body. For dogs less than one year of age, the photo must have been taken within 10 days prior to the border crossing.

So far, the new requirements apply only to bringing dogs into the United States; however, there is a possibility that Canada (or other countries) may create requirements that mirror the CDC’s. The most likely possible snare for any hunters caught unaware of the new regulations this fall is that you could take your dog out of the country without any problem but then run into serious legal issues trying to bring the same dog back into the United States.

The complete list of requirements under the new regulations is posted at: <https://www.cdc.gov/importation/bringing-an-animal-into-the-united-states/dogs-entering-us-after-august-1.html#low-risk>

Especially troubling is that the restrictions entirely prohibit the importation of dogs less than six months of age. This could pose complications for breeders and buyers of retrievers purchased for import from Great Britain and elsewhere in Europe.

Delta Waterfowl’s chief policy officer John Devney said, “We are working with the AKC and other organizations to get our hands around these new regulations. We’re joining together to

determine what might be done to modify the requirements to make them less onerous on dogs crossing the border for hunting, competition, training, and other legitimate purposes. We recognize that the intent of the CDC is justified in trying to manage some bad actors importing dogs into the country, but the unintended consequence ensnares a bunch of healthy working dogs—our duck dogs—in an overburdensome process.”

2024—2025 SEASON

Doves

Season: Sept. 1 through Nov. 29
Limits: 15 daily and 45 in possession combined total for all three species

2024-2025 WATERFOWL HUNTING

Teal

Season: Sept. 7-22
Limits: 6 daily and 18 in possession
Hours: Sunrise to sunset

Ducks

North Zone: Nov. 2 thru Dec. 31
Middle Zone: Nov. 2-10 and Nov. 16 through Jan. 5, 2025
South Zone: Nov. 28 through Dec. 1 and Dec. 7 through Jan. 31, 2025

Bag Limit: 6 ducks daily with species restrictions of:

4 mallards (no more than 2 females), 3 wood ducks, 2 red-heads, 2 hooded mergansers, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 1 pintail, 2 scaup for first 45 days and 1 scaup for last 15 days, 1 mottled duck

Possession Limit: Three times the daily bag or 18 total, varies by species

Snow Geese (White and Blue Phases) and Ross's Geese

Season: Nov. 11 through Feb. 6, 2025
Limits: 20 blue, snow, or Ross's geese daily with no possession limit

White-Fronted Geese

Season: Nov. 11 through Feb. 6, 2025
Limits: 2 daily and 6 in possession

Canada Geese and Brant

Season: Oct. 5-13 and Nov. 11 – Feb. 6, 2025
Limits: 3 Canada geese and Brant in aggregate daily, 9 in possession

Light Goose Conservation Order

Season: Feb. 7 through April 30, 2025
Limits: No daily or possession limits

Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset

YOUTH HUNTING DAYS

North Zone: Oct. 26 and 27
Middle Zone: Oct. 26 and 27
South Zone: Nov. 23 and 24

Limits: Same as during regular waterfowl season

Hours: Same as during regular waterfowl season

Up Coming Events

July 10: DECOY PLACEMENT

Aug 14: NO MEETING

Sept 11: MDC WATERFOWL

Oct 9: SUB GAUGE RELOADING

Nov 13: NO MEETING

General Information

This newsletter is distributed to our active members. For non-active members check the website for the current newsletter. We have our general meeting the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM and our Board of Directors' Meeting every fourth Monday at 7 PM. Members meetings are held at Borgettis Bar & Grill 1667 South Old Hwy 141 Fenton MO. Board Meetings are held at various locations, contact Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548 for this month's location. In case of bad weather call Ken Liebel at 314-822-8030 or Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548.

Visit YOUR web site at <https://mvdha.com> to get the most recent news, events and updates. There you will find this newsletter and other helpful information concerning conservation and the great outdoors that we love. If you would like to be added to the email listing of important news and updates you can do that through the web site through the contact us link, fill out the form and make sure you add your email address.

Any comments or suggestions concerning the newsletter or the website can be sent to mvdha@mvdha.com. I am always looking forwards to suggestions concerning content and what you would like to see or be presented in these publications.

Next members meeting: **JULY 10, 2024**

Next Board Meeting: **JULY 22, 2024**

Members are invited to the Board Meeting

Member's meeting start at 7:30, Board meeting starts at 7:00

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DUCK HUNTERS ASSN. INC.

"A Nonprofit Association of, by, and for the Duck Hunters"

"ST. LOUIS' NONPROFIT ASSOCIATION"

P.O. BOX 6, VALLEY PARK, MO 63088

