



Grousin' Around the Mid-Atlantic

December 2009

Inside this Issue:

- 1** *From your RD*
- 1-2** *Recent Happenings*
Just Completed Events
- 2-4** *Upcoming Events*
Local Chapter Meetings and Events
- 4-6** *Other Local News*
- 6-8** *National News*
- 8** *Finally*

Dave Hansroth
Regional Director, Mid Atlantic
Office: 240-912-9294
Cell: 412-303-1405

From your RD

This past October I had the pleasure of hunting grouse and woodcock in Minnesota. Last week I returned from several days of chasing pheasants and quail in Kansas. The last afternoon in Kansas was particularly satisfying. There were plenty of birds and the dog work had been stellar. As I watched the sun go down, I reflected on how lucky we hunters are to have this resource to enjoy. Further reflection reminded me of all the volunteers who give their time, money and effort to make sure we can enjoy these things far into the future. I have met many of these people in my work with RGS. I just wanted to take a moment to say a sincere THANK YOU to all those volunteers who have worked to ensure the future of bird hunting!

...Recent Happenings August - November, 2009

Banquets

Charles E. Bechtel Chapter, Reading, PA Annual Sportsmen's and Conservation Banquet

The oldest continuous running RGS Chapter held its 32nd annual banquet on September 16th. Thirty two years is a long time! As usual, the event raised substantial funds for the RGS mission.

Backbone Mountain Chapter, Oakland Maryland Banquet

This brand new Chapter held its first ever banquet on Saturday, September 19 at the Wisp Resort in Oakland, MD. For a first banquet this one was a resounding success! Over 120 people attended and made this event a big financial winner.

Thunderbird Chapter, Altoona, PA 28th Annual Sportsmen's and Conservation Banquet

The Altoona Chapter continues to excel at its annual banquet. This year they had 39 sponsors and over 140 attendees overall. Needless to say, this was a very successful banquet!

Shoots

Glenn Bowers Chapter, York PA - Sporting Clays Shoot, August 29

This Chapter held a very success shoot at Central Penn Sporting Clays. Over 40 shooters participated and over \$1000 was raised for local habitat work. After the shoot the Chapter provided a wonderful lunch. Congratulations to the York Chapter for their first very successful fund raiser.

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD

Their annual Fun Shoot consisted of 25 skeet targets and 25 very challenging sporting clay targets. Over thirty shooters participated and over \$500 was raised for local habitat projects. Top Gun went to Jack Macgregor with a score of 48. The side by side category was won by Jon Swindle with a score of 45. Top lady shooter was Trish Dunn. After the shoot a delicious barbecue meal was enjoyed by all.

Goochland, VA

This brand new chapter enjoyed a Fun shoot and committee meeting on Thursday, September 10 at Orapax Plantation. After the shoot a wonderful meal was prepared by Crystal and her helpers at Orapax. Several future events are under discussion. Watch your mail box for more!

Bonasa Chapter, Dubois PA Sporting Clays Shoot

The Bonasa Chapter held their first ever sporting clays championship on September 27th at Firebird Wingshooting, Brookville, PA. The shoot consisted of 100 sporting clay targets. The overall top shooter was Dr. Joseph P. Zeitler, Jr. with a 95 out of 100. The top Lady shooter was Janell Zalno with 60 out of 100. The top Junior Shooter was John McMahon with 81 out of 100 and the side by side class winner was Eric McCoy with 73 out of 100. The Lewis Class winners were Bob Long with an 88, Paul Bobby with a 79 and Denny Anders with a 69. An excellent meal was provided by Firebird. Despite the cool and rainy weather everyone had a good time. Funds raised will go toward local habitat work.

...Upcoming Events: Mark Your Calendar

December, 2009

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD Committee Meeting

Tuesday, December 1, 7pm at the home of Bill Cartwright, 3815 Bush Creek Drive, Frederick, MD 21704, 301-346-7191 (this is actually in the village of Urbana). Everyone is welcome. Discussion will center on the upcoming banquet, NRA booth and dog day. For more information, contact Terry Oland at 301-874-5269 or email at terry.oland@comcast.net.

Pine Barrens Chapter, Jackson/Lakehurst, NJ Committee Meeting

Thursday, December 3, 7pm at the Clarksburg Inn, 465 Stagecoach Road, Clarksburg NJ. Everyone is welcome. Discussion will center on the upcoming banquet. For more information, contact Mark Dreyfus at 732-364-3809 or email at markd@netlabs.net.

Kanawha Valley Chapter, Charleston, WV Meet and Greet

Thursday, December 10, from 6:00 - 8:00 PM At The Lodge at Gander Mountain, Corridor G, Southridge Plaza, Charleston, WV (Next To Walmart & Sam's Club). Mark Banker, RGS Senior Biologist, will discuss habitat issues in WV. Other discussion items will include the upcoming sportsman's expo, the annual spring banquet and securing additional committee members. For more information, contact Dave Rossi, 304-757-6279 or rossidl@verizon.net.

South Mountain Chapter, Lancaster, PA Committee Meeting

Wednesday, December 16, 7 pm at the office of Land Grant Surveyors, 3904 Abel Drive, Columbia, PA 17512. Agenda items will include banquet plans finalized, tickets distributed, etc. All are welcome. For more information, contact Doug Royer at 717-823-1253 or email at droyer@normandeau.com.

Skylands Chapter, Sussex County, NJ Committee Meeting

Monday, December 14, 7 pm at the Lafayette House, Old Lafayette Village, Building U, Box 100, Lafayette, NJ 07848. Phone 973-579-8100. All are welcome. Agenda will focus on the upcoming banquet. Contact Jim Desaye at 973-702-8380 or email at jjdesaye@yahoo.com.

Glenn Bowers Chapter, York, PA Committee Meeting

Thursday, December 17, 6:30 pm, Gander Mountain Store, 1800 Loucks Road, York PA. Plans will be finalized for the upcoming habitat project and preliminary discussions will be held for a spring fun event. All are welcome! For more information contact Mark Mummert at 717-795-9460 or email at mummenv@pa.net.

January, 2010

Late Maryland Woodcock Season

January 15 – 23, 2010. Don't miss this fantastic late season bird hunting opportunity

Skylands Chapter, Sussex County, NJ Banquet

Saturday, January 30, 2010 at the Lafayette House, Old Lafayette Village, Building U, Box 100 Lafayette, NJ 07848, 973-579-8100. Doors open at 6pm. Games, raffles, live and silent auctions, wonderful food, drink and camaraderie. Contact Jim Desaye at 973-702-8380 or email at jjdesaye@yahoo.com or John Crowley at 862-266-7949 or email at cantho68@hotmail.com.

February, 2010

South Mountain Chapter, Lancaster, PA Banquet

Saturday, February 6, 2010 at Millersville-Manor VFW, 219 Walnut Hill Road, Millersville, PA, 717-872-6223 or 717-872-9483. Cocktails and raffles start at 5pm with dinner at 7pm. Games, raffles and live and silent auctions. Enjoy good food, drink and company! For more information, contact George Criswell at 717-432-4062 or Doug Royer at 717-823-1253 or email at droyer@normandeau.com.

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD Chapter Banquet

Saturday, February 20, 2010. Urbana Volunteer Fire Dept. Cocktails, raffles and hors d'oeuvres at 6:00 pm, dinner at 7:30, games, raffles, live and silent auctions, great food, drink and

conversation. For more information, contact Terry Oland at 301-874-5269 or email at terry.oland@comcast.net or Bob Lindgren at 301-253-4202 or email at bbjlin@aol.com.

Fredericksburg, VA Major Fund Raising Banquet

Wednesday, February 24, 2010. The Inn at Fredericksburg Square. Details to be announced.

March, 2010

Pine Barrens Chapter, Jackson/Lakehurst, NJ Banquet

Saturday, March 6, 2010. Clarksburg Inn, 465 Stagecoach Road, Clarksburg NJ. Cocktails and raffles at 6:00 pm, dinner at 7:30 pm. Raffles, games, silent and live auctions, great food, drink and camaraderie. For more information, contact Mark Dreyfus at 732-364-3809 or email at markd@netlabs.net.

Cumberland Valley Chapter, Carlisle, PA Banquet

Saturday, March 13, 2010. Carlisle Hotel and Convention Center, 1700 Harrisburg Pike, Carlisle PA. Cocktails and raffles at 6:00 pm with dinner at 7:30 pm. Raffles, games silent and live auctions. Great food, drink and atmosphere. For more information, contact Rodney Heininger at 717-921-2810 or email at reheininger@pa.net.

Red Brush Chapter, State College, PA Banquet

Saturday, March 20, 2010. Details to be announced.

Potomac Valley Chapter, Frederick, MD Annual Dog Training Seminar and Fun Trial/Chukar Challenge

Saturday, March 27, 2010. McKee Beshears WMA near Poolesville, MD. Morning seminars on various aspects of bird dog training followed by lunch and an afternoon fun trial/chukar challenge. For more information contact John Thereault at 301-365-3038 or email at jcthereault@hotmail.com.

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

...Other Local News

“Upland Bird Hunt” was a Major Success

The Allegheny and Allegheny Northwoods chapters of RGS recently sponsored the inaugural Upland Bird Hunt in the “PA Wilds” of northwestern and north central Pennsylvania in St. Mary’s. About 26, two-person groups led by local “huntsmen” went afield for grouse and woodcock on November 6 and 7. Breakfast and dinner was served at the impressive Red Fern Banquet and Conference Center and a full-scale banquet was held at the facility on Saturday night. Hunters from NC, VA, MD, NY, and OH joined the PA contingent. The local chapter volunteers did a fantastic job with this inaugural event.

Equally impressive was the hunting. The weather was nearly perfect, if a bit warm, for the two days of hunting. Huntsmen reported flush counts of 35, 34, 29, 28, 21 and many in the teens. More than 600 grouse flushes were reported in the two days. Most of the hunting was on public lands, Allegheny National Forest, state forests and state game lands - but some very good hunting was also found on commercial timberlands open to public hunting. Only 4 woodcock were flushed during the event and one harvested, suggesting the woodcock had moved on. Several pheasants also gave their lives to the cause.

Al Geis Memorial Project Taking Shape in MD

Al Geis was a woodcock enthusiast, to say the least. He was deeply committed to woodcock research and management until the end of his life. Although needing assistance to walk in recent years, Al still attended major national meetings to express his support for all things woodcock. His passion was unquestionable. RGS is working with Al's family and friends, the Maryland DNR, and the Wildlife Management Institute to develop a memorial project in his name at Mt. Nebo Wildlife Management Area in western MD. We'll keep you updated on the progress.

Cooperative Forest Management Project with CONSOL Energy Shaping Up

RGS has been working for about 6 months to work out a cooperative agreement to manage part of CONSOL Energy's considerable forest land holdings in southwestern PA. RGS would be responsible for timber management on selected lands, sharing the revenue from timber sales with CONSOL. The relationship will likely start off with a pilot project in Washington and Greene Counties. Once the considerable logistics are worked out via the pilot project, the agreement may be expanded to include CONSOL lands in WV and Ohio. RGS will use consulting foresters to guide the sale of timber in conjunction with biological staff. This agreement would represent an unprecedented opportunity for RGS to impact habitat for grouse, woodcock and other wildlife on a landscape basis.

Wildlife Leadership Academy Announces PA Drummers Program

The Wildlife Leadership Academy (WLA) facilitated by the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education (PICE) is offering the Pennsylvania Drummers program June 22-26, 2010 for youth ages 14-17. This unique program begins with an intensive residential field school including comprehensive instruction on all things ruffed grouse, and continues as students complete service and leadership projects within their communities throughout the year. PA Drummers will be held at the Powdermill Nature Reserve near Ligonier, Westmoreland County, PA.

Tuition for the residential field school is \$400.00. Applications are now available for the 2010 field schools! Interested students can download an application by going to www.PICEweb.org and clicking on the youth programs link. Tuition scholarships are also available! This year's application deadline is **April 1, 2010**.

Interested teens and parents can also contact program coordinator Michele Kittell at mkittell@picweb.org or 570-245-8518 or RGS Senior Biologist Mark Banker at rgsbank@comcast.net or 814-867-7946.

Charles E. Bechtel Chapter Road Project

The Charles E Bechtel Chapter, Reading, PA along with help from the Delaware Valley Chapter, Media, PA, recently provided over \$9000 raised from local projects to build a road on SGL 110. The road was needed to harvest some poor quality timber. The timber was not worth the money to build the road but the resultant clearcuts will be invaluable to grouse and other early successional species. The road was completed this summer. This is a wonderful example of chapters working together to improve habitat and really make a difference. Way to go!

Charles E. Bechtel New Life Sponsor

Shane Mengel grew up in the Reading, PA area. Charley Bechtel took him under his wing and took him grouse hunting with his setters. That kindness made a lasting impression on Shane and he recently decided to give something back to the resource and especially to the Chapter that bears the name of his mentor. Shane moved to California but never forgot Charley. Shane has become a Life Sponsor in honor of Charley Bechtel and the Charles E. Bechtel Chapter in Reading. We offer much appreciation to Shane and his commitment to our mission and to the memory of Charley Bechtel.

National News

RGS Institutes New Business Model to Provide more Funds for Local Projects

A Major change we will be instituting in 2010 is a major emphasis on membership and attendance numbers. An increase in membership will ensure our success, assist us in securing grants, increase advertising rates and give us a bigger pool of potential volunteers, donors, and future leaders. To accomplish this we will now require that all banquet attendees become RGS members. We will be offering a new family membership where each family member becomes a member with one magazine going out to the family. Instead of raising individual membership prices, we now offer this family membership for \$40. This will cover the membership for all family members. Those attending will also need to pay for their dinner. Hopefully this will lead to an increase in attendance as well as membership numbers. We need to emphasize the cost savings and benefits to the family membership as we solicit attendees to our events.

RGS will be budgeting money for projects and that chapters with successful events will be able to keep a percentage of what they raise in a "Drummer Fund" for statewide projects. This should result in bigger, more meaningful state projects. Chapters will still be able to keep money from local fund raising events for their own local projects.

All of these new ideas will dovetail with our current banquet fundraisers and allow us to fund more projects nationally and locally through our chapters working to raise the funds. Stay tuned for more news and please share any new ideas you may have as we meet to start the planning for our 2010 banquet season.

Have you seen us lately?

Brand New Website Generates Growing Interest

RGS recently launched a complete revision of our website, www.ruffedgrousesociety.org. News updates, regional sporting events, exciting raffles and detailed information about habitat work are now in a format that is easier to read, navigate and explore. Great RGS merchandise, along with special deals on high-end shotguns, are available by clicking the “Shop RGS” tab on the homepage. Check us out today – and take your grouse hunting to the next level.

Centurion Member Wins Kimber

Charles Hulbert of Tewksbury, Massachusetts recently became a Centurion member and won a Kimber Valier Grade II shotgun.

For every 10 new Centurions that join the Ruffed Grouse Society a raffle is held and a Kimber – or comparable shotgun – is awarded to the winner. To learn about becoming a Centurion, which begins at the \$1,000 donation level, call our membership department at 412-262-4044.

2010 National Raffle

Win a Model 21 “Baby Frame” 28-Gauge Shotgun

This one of a kind gun 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. The approximate retail value is \$32,000.

If you’re interested in a chance to win this gun, tickets are \$100.00 and can be purchased through me at 412-303-1405 or rgshans@comcast.net. Up to 1,500 tickets will be sold.

Last year’s National Raffle winner, James Farrell of Altoona, PA, won the upland bird dream hunt, which included attending the National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt in Grand Rapids, Minnesota this past October.

New England Wildlife Biologist Joins RGS Team

Andrew P. Weik joined the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) as New England regional wildlife biologist, and will begin his work in the new year. Weik will be responsible for implementing on-the-ground forest management, landowner and land manager education programs throughout New England.

Weik’s extensive experience includes five years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Northeast Region at Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge. Moosehorn is the only national wildlife refuge dedicated to woodcock management. His work at Moosehorn, along with his lengthy work history in various wildlife programs, makes Weik a superior fit for the RGS position.

One specific project that Weik hopes to see through to conclusion this year is the revision of the RGS publication, "A Woodcock in the Hand" (Sepik, 1994). The booklet is unique in that it details tips on examining, aging, and sexing American woodcock as well as information on population monitoring and conservation. Though this pamphlet is currently out of print, the need and interest in the booklet have not waned.

Finally...

My sincere wishes that everyone will experience a Happy, Healthy and Joyous Holiday season.

Dave

