

FULLDRAW

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF NEW YORK BOWHUNTERS, INC.

New York State's Largest Bowhunting Organization Since 1991
www.newyorkbowhunters.org

**Curt Carney, Rockland
County rep, shot this
buck while on stand
with his son**

SPRING 2025

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NEW YORK BOWHUNTERS



34TH ANNUAL 3D SHOOT & RENDEZVOUS

Saturday, June 21, 2025

Hosted by: Flashing Feathers Bowhunters Club

Registration opens at 8:00 a.m.

4 Classes: Youth, Unlimited, Hunter, Traditional

Flashing Feathers Bowhunters Club
18 Peter Road*
Willseyville, NY 13864
*off South Danby Road

- *A Chicken BBQ lunch will be available
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED*
- *Annual Members Meeting followed
by Can Raffles and a Silent Auction*
- ***REGISTER by June 14th**
(585) 229-7468*

Bring the whole family!
Archery novelty shoots
(bows provided) and more.

**Cost per person for
3D Shoot & BBQ \$ 50**

**Cost per person for
BBQ only \$ 20
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2 ways to pay;

*Don't forget to bring a gift box for our
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**by Credit card at
www.NewYorkBowhunters.com**

**or by Check
Make checks payable to:
NEW YORK BOWHUNTERS,
INC**

**5937 County Road 33
Canandaigua, NY 14424**

nyboffice@newyorkbowhunters.com

Suggested Hotel/Camping Options

**Quality Inn (607) 272-0100
Meadow Court Inn (607) 273-3885
Taughannock Falls State Park - newyorkstateparks.reserveamerica.com
Buttermilk Falls State Park - newyorkstateparks.reserveamerica.com**

CONTACTING NYB

For inquiries or questions, please contact your closest Region Representative, Board of Director (BOD) or Committee of Interest as shown below.

NYB's Administrative Secretary has many tasks, which include processing e-mails, bookkeeping, data entry, bank deposits, mail handling and many other functions. Much of her time is spent receiving phone calls as well. The most efficient way for our members to have questions or concerns answered would be for you to contact either your own Region Representative (or one close to you), a Board of Director (BOD) or Officer, or the person who is affiliated with a committee related to your question or concern.

Very often the phone calls received at the office are then forwarded to the various members as listed below.

REGION REPRESENTATIVES, BODS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Region 1 Rep. and BOD

Mike Farrugia
(516) 615-3029
Mfarrugia47@gmail.com

Region 2 Rep., BOD and Legislative Chair

Al Bottari
(646) 294-4062
ajbottari@gmail.com

Region 3 Rep., BOD and Membership Chair

Richard Kirschner
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bowrichny@aol.com

Region 3 Rep. and Region 3 Youth Days

Harry Walker
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bowbender@hvc.rr.com

Region 4 Rep., BOD and Camo to Camo Chair

Ed Gorch
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Oldbowman48@gmail.com

**Region 5 Rep.
Dave McMahon**
(518) 359-9715
Davemcmahon97@gmail.com

Region 6 Rep., BOD and Communications Chair

Bill Snyder
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Bill4nyb@gmail.com

Region 8 Rep., BOD, Merchandise and FLLT Chair

Bob Brown
(585) 202-1306
bbrown@ur.com

Region 9 Rep.

Vinny Dagostino
Vinnydagostino1@gmail.com

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Cindy Philips
nybfulldraw@gmail.com

Banquet inquiries (VP)

Greg Masaitis
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gregmasaitisnyb@gmail.com

Banquet donations (BOD)

Kathy Savage
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katalena54@gmail.com

Pope & Young Liaison (BOD)

Merritt Compton
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Aaron Barton
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For those wishing to join, renew memberships or matters concerning payment, it is still recommended that Anne Jacobs be contacted:
nyboffice@newyorkbowhunters.com
Office phone: (585) 229-7468

New York Bowhunters

New York State's largest bowhunting organization since 1991
a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization
 5937 County Rd. 33, Canandaigua, NY 14424
 (585) 229-7468
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Cindy Phillips, Editor
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FullDraw: Published quarterly by New York Bowhunters, Inc. Contributions are very welcome and are requested to be submitted to the editor strictly via email or on disk. Please include telephone number with all submissions. Photos may be mailed for scanning or digital. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if photos are to be returned.

THE EDITORS of *FullDraw* reserve the right to edit or reject any and all materials which may be deemed undesirable to New York Bowhunters, Inc. or to the sport of bowhunting.

Electronic files may be sent to:
 NYBFULLDRAW@GMAIL.COM

Advertising inquiries:
 Cindy Phillips, Advertising Editor
 NYBFULLDRAW@GMAIL.COM

Deadlines for future issues:
 Spring: February 1st • Summer: May 1st
 Fall: August 1st • Winter: November 1st

NYB DOES NOT GUARANTEE SATISFACTION OF ANY ITEMS, HUNTS, OR PRODUCTS PURCHASED FROM OUR PAID ADVERTISEMENTS OR FROM OUR CLASSIFIED ADS IN *FULLDRAW*. PLEASE RESEARCH ITEMS, HUNTS, ETC. BEFORE YOU BUY.

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From the President's Desk

Greetings NYB Members,

I hope you had an exciting and fulfilling hunting season and your freezers are filled to the max with nutritious wild game. After three years of bowhunting Montana, I successfully harvested my first elk with my bow which turned out to be a nice 6x6 bull. It was also the very first elk I ever had within bow range. I was definitely in the right place at the right time. It also helped that he came in to about 5 yards which allowed me to make a confident and clean broadside shot. In addition to myself, my dad Gary and our friend Tom also harvested beautiful bulls with another family friend missing his first shot opportunity.

NYB's leaders are preparing for our 34th annual gathering this year and have decided to make a change from our usual Sunny Hill location. The 2025 NYB Rendezvous & 3D Archery Event will be at the Flashing Feathers Bowhunters located in Ithaca, NY. There are various reasons we decided to go in a different direction this year but we felt that it was in the best interests of New York Bowhunters and our members to change it up a bit. This is our largest fundraising event of the year. All funds generated sustain our organization throughout the entire year.

Legislatively, we are preparing for another year in Albany to meet and educate our elected officials. This year we are focused on bill S00218, related to crossbow hunting. This bill proposes the changes noted below to name a few:

- Allows people 14 and older to hunt with a crossbow during all of archery season.
- Changes the requirement to hunt with a crossbow from the muzzleloader privilege to the archery privilege.
- Removes the minimum width and maximum draw weight restrictions.
- Establishes a minimum overall length of crossbow to be 24 inches.
- Changes discharge setback restrictions from 250' to 150'.
- Allows Jr archery hunters aged 12-13 to hunt with a crossbow during archery season accompanied by an adult.

NYB has already had a flurry of activity and correspondence related to this bill with our Albany insiders and will be sending out future alerts via email and social media on its status. The two Chairs of the NYS Environmental Conservation Committees remain from 2024. On the Assembly side we have Deborah Glick representing Lower Manhattan. On the Senate side, Pete Harckham represents District 40 which includes Westchester and the Hudson Valley.



CONTINUED on page 6

Did you know?

On the back of your *FullDraw* magazine, below your name and mailing address, is your membership expiration date. You can use this as proof of your NYB membership. Renewing your membership before it expires saves NYB the cost of mailing you reminder letters.

WINNER

Congratulations to **JASON LATASSA**, winner of the Fall Raffle! Jason won a two day fishing trip for Salmon and Lake Trout on Lake Ontario with Gone Coastal Fishing Charters out of Point Breeze, NY for four people in the spring or summer of 2025.

Rendezvous Schedule of Events

8:00am

Registration begins, coffee, donuts, 3D course open (3D Registration between 8:00am and 10:00am)

12:00-1:00pm

BBQ Lunch

1:00-2:00pm

Membership Meeting

2:00pm

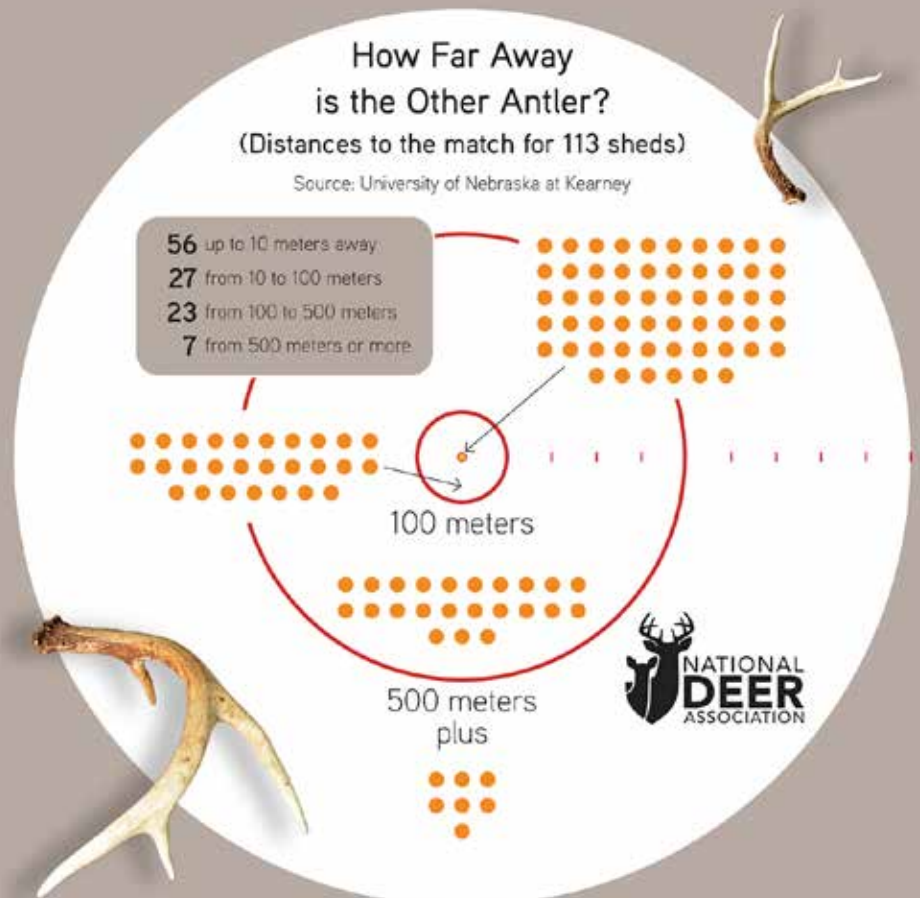
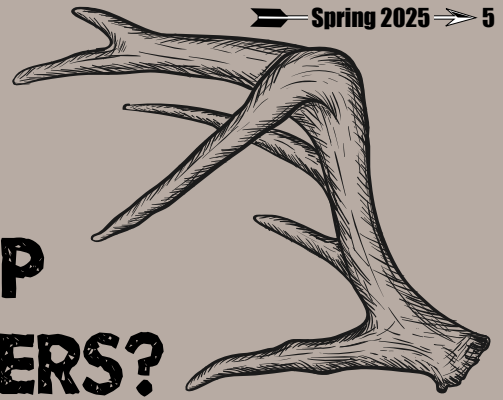
Can Raffle Drawing, Silent Auction (must be present to run), presentation of awards to top shooters



HOW FAR APART DO BUCKS DROP THEIR ANTLERS?

SHED HUNTING TIPS FROM NEW SCIENCE

by Lindsay Thomas Jr.



Used with permission. See the published article here <https://deerassociation.com/how-far-apart-do-bucks-drop-their-antlers/>



When you find a nice shed antler you will want to find the other one. But how far away is the matching side and how likely are you to find it? A new study led by Brian Peterson from the University of Nebraska at Kearney studied these questions and the results provided tips to increase your odds of finding matched sets of shed antlers. The findings were published by the National Deer Association on February 5, 2025.

Half of all matched sets in the study were found within 10 paces of each other. This suggests that every time you find a shed, you should stop walking and scan the immediate area carefully. Make increasingly larger circles, searching the ground within a 10- to 15-step radius of the shed before moving on. If you can't find the other one within 15 steps, increase your search area to about 100 yards from the first find. One fourth of sheds in this study were found within 100 yards from the first. If you have onX Hunt app you can track your coverage as you continue your search. The study found the chances of finding the matching antler beyond 100 yards dropped sharply.

CONTINUED from page 4

Lastly, this will be my last report as President of New York Bowhunters. I'm extremely grateful that Greg Masaitis is on the Election Ballot to take over as President to ensure the NYB mission is carried on for another four years. For those that didn't know, I actually earned my bow hunting certificate at NYB Youth Camp in Region 8 when I was 14. I attended the very first NYB Youth Hunt when I turned 16. When I turned 18 I became Ontario County Rep. In the years that followed,

I served as Advertising Editor, Editor of *FullDraw* Magazine, Secretary, 2nd VP, VP, and then President. When my term ends this year, I hope to be elected as a Board of Director so I can continue serving NYB members and the bowhunters of NYS. I'm so thankful to our members, and especially the Board of Directors, many of which have been serving in multiple capacities for years or decades, like myself. We have a passion for bowhunting and for helping each other and that's why we do it! If you

want a complete listing of what NYB has done for you lately, go to our website and check out our Accomplishments section. It spans 34 years and is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and commitment of NYB's past and current leaders.

Please stay connected to NYB for more news and alerts via *FullDraw*, our website, Instagram and Facebook.

Sincerely,

Andrew Cotraccia, President, New York Bowhunters Inc.



Consulting by Mad Dog and Matt Jr.

Please see our website at: tinyurl.com/3jb52epk



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3D SHOOTS

This schedule is posted as a convenience to the subscribers of *FullDraw* magazine. These events are hosted by the individual clubs as shown and not New York Bowhunters. Individual clubs' websites (or social media) pages should be checked for details, changes, cancellations, directions. Those clubs whom support NYB have their contact information on our Booster Page elsewhere in the issue.

REGION #3

- March** 9-Highwoods Sportsmen's Club
16-Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club
30-Ti Yogi Bowmen
- April** 5-Southern Dutchess & Putman Sports Club
13-Highwoods Sportsmen's Club
27-Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club
- May** 4-Ti Yogi Bowmen
10 & 11-Neighbors Gun Club
18-Wittenberg Sportsmen's Club
25-Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club
- June** 1-Highwoods Sportsmen's Club
8-Ti Yogi Bowmen
14-Southern Dutchess & Putman Sports Club
15-Wittenberg Sportsmen's Club
29-Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club
- July** 13-Wittenberg Sportsmen's Club
19-Southern Dutchess & Putman Sports Club
20-Ti Yogi Bowmen
29-Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club
- Aug** 3-Highwoods Sportsmen's Club
10-Ti Yogi Bowmen
17-Wittenberg Sportsmen's Club
24-Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club
- Sept** 7-Highwoods Sportsmen's Club
13-Southern Dutchess & Putman Sports Club
14-Northern Dutchess Rod & Gun Club
14-Wittenberg Sportsmen's Club
21-Neighbors Gun Club
28-Ti Yogi Bowmen
- Oct** 5-Highwoods Sportsmen's Club
12-Ti Yogi Bowmen
- Dec** 7-Highwoods Sportsmen's Club

REGION #5

- April 27**..... South Colton
- May 4**..... Peru
- June 8**..... South Colton
- July 5** Norfolk
- July 13** Tupper Lake Achers
- July 19-20**..... Mad River
- July 20** South Colton
- July 26-27**..... Bear Pac
- August 17** Peru
- August 20-31** Tupper Lake Mt. Challenge
- September 7** Norfolk
- September 22** Bear Pac

TRI-COUNTY ARCHERS

Adults - \$15.00
Juniors (12-17) - \$5.00
Youth (under 12) - Free

Check individual Club's website, Facebook and Tri-County Archers' website (www.tricountyarchers.com) for details, changes, directions, cancellations & reschedules. Open dates may be used for reschedules.

- April** 6-Black Rock Fish & Game Club
13-Bethlehem Rod & Gun Club (BRaG Archery)
- May** 4-Silverbirch
25-Monroe Chester Sportsmen Club
- June** 1-Black Rock Fish & Game Club
8-Walden Sportsmen's Club
22-Bethlehem Rod & Gun Club (BRaG Archery)
29-Monroe Chester Sportsmen Club
- July** 20-Black Rock Fish & Game Club
27-Bethlehem Rod & Gun Club (BRaG Archery)
- August** 3-Monroe Chester Sportsmen Club
10-Walden Sportsmen's Club
24-Bethlehem Rod & Gun Club (BRaG Archery)
- Sept** 6-Silver Birch & Behind the Arrow
7-Black Rock Fish & Game Club
21-Walden Sportsmen's Club

Hawkeye Bowmen Archery Club Events 2025

13300 Clinton Street, Alden, NY 14004

April 19th

WILD ANIMAL SHOOT

Open to the public. All equipment welcome. Registration 7AM-12PM
Courses close at 2PM
Cost is \$15

April 25th - 27th

SPRING THAW PRIMITIVE SHOOT

Self Bows & Self-Nocked arrows

May 17th

RIBBONS + BOWS CHARITY SHOOT

To Benefit Pink Ribbon Good. Open to the Public. Registration 8AM-12PM. Courses close at 2pm. Basket Raffle too!
Cost \$20

August 14th-17th

32ND ANNUAL TRADITIONAL SHOOT

"The Big One"

Basket Raffle & Events Every Day
Camping Available
See website for details

September 2nd

LABOR DAY SHOOT

Open to the public
All equipment welcome.
Registration 7AM-12PM
Courses close at 2PM
Cost is \$15

BOWHUNTER LEAGUE

May 5th June 2nd
May 12th June 19th
May 19th June 26th

Cash Prizes

Details on website

WOMEN'S LEARN TO SHOOT ARCHERY CLINIC

May 22nd June 12th
May 29th June 19th
June 5th June 26th

Details on website

YOUTH ARCHERY CLINIC

June 30th July 14th
July 7th July 21st

July 28th

Details on website

For more information see: www.hawkeyebowmen.com

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Cut Here

WE NEED YOUR VOTE!!

The nominations for the 2025 positions are shown below. Please vote to fill the positions with the candidates you think would be an asset to our organization. You may use this form.

★ Officers' Positions ★

President - Greg Masaitis

(2 year term)

☐

Board of Director Positions ★ Vote for 3 candidates

Andrew Cotraccia

(3 year term)

☐

Mike Farrugia

(3 year term)

☐

Ed Gorch

(3 year term)

☐

**Return ballot no later than June 6, 2025 to:
5937 County Rd. 33, Canandaigua, NY 14424**

Cut Here



NAME: Greg Masaitis

POSITION SEEKING: President

YEARS BOWHUNTING: 36

Brief description of my bowhunting career to date:

I started bowhunting at age 15, mostly for whitetail deer. I harvested a bear with my bow in 1993 and shot my first Pope and Young buck in 2001. Since then I have harvested four more Pope and Young class deer and have a bunch that just miss the minimum.

Why do you feel you would be an asset as an officer or director of NYB?

Being guided into the hunting world by my grandfather and uncle I was taught the values of hunting and how great of a sport it is. I enjoy passing my knowledge and experience onto others to get them involved in our sport. I have introduced my children, relatives and friends to bowhunting and involve them every chance I get. Increasing membership is power. I feel that my passion for bowhunting can help increase membership and help with taking New York Bowhunters to new levels.



NAME: Andrew Cotraccia

POSITION SEEKING: Board of Directors

My name is Andrew Cotraccia and I am seeking a term as a Board of Director. I've had the privilege of serving NYB in the past as Ontario County Representative, Advertising Editor and Editor for *FullDraw* Magazine, Secretary, Vice President and President.

Brief description of my bowhunting career to date:

I've been a passionate bowhunter since I was 14 years old and have been fortunate enough to bow hunt in many places throughout North America and South Africa. I've had many great experiences and have enjoyed every second out in the woods with my family and friends!

Why do you feel you would be an asset as an officer or director of NYB?

I would like to see younger people getting more involved in leadership positions in NYB. This will be vital to the continued success of our great organization. We can better accomplish this by utilizing more technology like the internet, social networking and media, communicating to mobile devices, etc.

I have taken a lot from the sport of bowhunting, it's only right that I give back and help others enjoy what I have. NYB is the perfect outlet for me to accomplish this!



NAME: Mike Farrugia
POSITION SEEKING: Board of Directors
YEARS BOWHUNTING: 15

My name is Mike Farrugia and I am seeking a position on the Board of Directors. I have been a member of NYB for five years and currently serve as the Region 1 Representative. As a member of the Membership Committee, I have worked at the NYB booth at the Suffern Outdoor Show held annually in Rockland County NY, assisting in the recruitment of new members. I have also volunteered my time helping out the NYB crew at our Annual Banquet/Rendezvous.

Please provide a brief description of your bowhunting career to date:

I grew up around bow hunting and the outdoors, lucky to have a father that exposed me to it. At 19, I picked up a bow and never put it down! In addition to hunting in Suffolk County here on Long Island, I have been fortunate enough to go on some great trips. These include elk hunting in Colorado and New Mexico, bear hunting in Canada and whitetail hunting in Oklahoma over the past few years. I am a dedicated shooter on and off season, not only because I enjoy slinging arrows, but for the sake of the animals I hunt. I have great respect for the outdoors and the wildlife that inhabit it.

Why do you feel you will be an asset as an officer or director of NYB?

As a hunter in my thirties, I would like to see other hunters around my age or younger become more involved as guardians of the sport we all love. This is where the future of bowhunting, and NYB, is. I hope to inspire younger generations to support NYB and promote bowhunting ethics. I am dedicated and self-driven. Bowhunting is something that I have had a passion for since a young age. I am honored to be able to give back to the sport.



NAME: Ed Gorch
POSITION SEEKING: Board of Directors
YEARS BOWHUNTING: 50

Are you currently a member in good standing of NYB:

Yes

Please provide a brief description of your bowhunting career to date:

I have hunted all over the U.S, Canada, and Africa. I have been very lucky.

Why do you feel you would be an asset as an officer or director of NYB?

This will be my sixth term as Director. I feel I've contributed to the Board over the years with a few good ideas and am willing to serve another term!



Return ballot no later than
 June 6, 2025, to:

**5937 County Rd. 33,
 Canandaigua, NY 14424**

New York Bowhunter's BOOSTERS

Tell 'em NYB Inc. sent you!

The Bowhunter Booster Program was started in 1993. We are proud to list the clubs, businesses and individuals who have become NYB Boosters to date. You can become listed as a Booster for a minimum of \$30 per year by marking the membership application as "Booster" or by calling 585-229-7468.



Kristie Leigh Farm
182 Maple Avenue
Goshen, NY 10924
845-294-8041

Joel M. Riotto
Demarest, NJ 07627
Andes, NY 13731
201-768-4447

Tupper Lake Archers
PO Box 752
Tupper Lake, NY 12986
Dave McHanon
518-359-9715

Michael Ventre
8345 Creekend Rd.
Colden, NY 14033
716-941-6339

**West Falls Conservation
Society, Inc.**
Mike Ventre
PO Box 490
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716-652-4650
www.westfallscsny.org

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hawkeyebowmen.com
FaceBook:
hawkeye bowmen inc.



Region 1:

**Mad Dog Plumbing, Steam
and Radiant Heat**
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Floral Park, NY 11001
Matt Sweeney
Serving NY, Connecticut,
NJ, Vermont
plumbing3c@gmail.com
516-322-2881

Suffolk Archers, Inc.
86 Pigeon Hill Rd.
Huntington Station, NY 11746

Region 2:

John Jasilli, Esq.
708 3rd Avenue, 6th Floor
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john@jajasilliesq.com

Pro Line Archery
95-11 101st Avenue
Ozone Park, NY 11416
718-845-9280
Neil Kucich
info@prolinearchery.com

Drago Suster
40 Tehama St., 2F
Brooklyn, NY 11218
mikeysuster@yahoo.com

Region 3:

All Things Accuracy
25 Sullivan Ave.
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845-650-1354
allthingsaccuracy@gmail.com

**Backwoods Bass Guide
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Paul Romanych
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**Sullivan County
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Ti Yogi Bowmen
57 Mill Rd.
Hyde Park, NY 12538
Sean Royster
854-418-0465
tiyoginbowmenny@gmail.com

Wittenberg Sportsmen Club, Inc.
PO Box 930
Woodstock, NY 12498
545-594-5056
billheinitz@gmail.com

Region 4:

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Les Armstrong
518-965-4868
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Green Island Rod & Gun Club
PO Box 25
Melrose, NY 12121
girodandgunclub@wildblue.net

Norton Hill Wildlife Club
PO Box 652
Greenville, NY 12083

Region 6:

Bear Pac Archery Club
18893 Game Farm Road
Dexter, NY 13634
315-771-1182

Ride'er Dirty
37206 Route 3
Carthage, NY 13619
520-234-0242
www.rideer-dirty.com

Region 7:

Ronald Bush
5908 South Hill Rd.
Truxton, NY 13158

Legends of Fall Outfitter

7205 US Route 11
Tully, NY 13159
Jeff Bordwell
315-696-6766
jeff@legendsofall.com

Flashing Feathers Bowhunters

258 Jersey Hill Rd.
Ithaca, NY 14850
Steve Barber
607-277-1543

Region 8:

Buckskin Bowmen
2613 Durling Road
Seneca Falls, NY 13148-9713
315-568-5422

Bill Fox & Son Construction & Remodeling

9346 South Street Road
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bfsonllc@gmail.com

Dave Peck

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Livonia, NY 14487
585-519-2360

Ronald Scardetta, DDS

632 Ridge Road
Webster, NY 14580
585-671-4420

Out of State:

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205 Bible St
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jeffcoscobarchers@gmail.com

John Rozas

216 Sky Hawk Trail
East Stroudsburg, PA 18302
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FULL DRAW

REGION REPORTS

REGION 1 REPORT

Hello to our fellow members!

As our archery season comes to an end, I hope you all had a safe and successful hunt. I'm sure many of you had a season to remember! Personally, I was fortunate enough to fill the freezer for the year.

With winter settling in, we're already looking ahead to the next opening day. In the meantime, there are plenty of ways to stay active—shed hunting, fishing, scouting, and more. While things tend to slow down here on Long Island during these months, one exciting event to check out is the 12th Annual Fishing Club Fundraiser at Ward Melville High School held on March 1st. This event always features a great lineup of vendors, informative seminars, and raffles for trips, gear, rods, reels, and more.

I also want to take a moment to congratulate Master Bow Mechanic Kevin Mckin from Smith Point Archery for securing a spot in the Top 16 at the 2025 Lancaster Classic—an incredible achievement! Best of luck to you,

Kevin!

Before wrapping up, I encourage you to spread the word about New York

Bowhunters. If you know a fellow bowhunter who isn't yet member, send them to our website to join: www.newyorkbowhunters.com.

Stay warm, and I look forward to hearing your success stories from this past season!

Best regards,

Mike Farrugia
(516) 615-3029
Mfarrugia47@gmail.com



REGION 2 REPORT

Greetings fellow bowhunters and archery enthusiasts,

I am starting off with something a bit controversial. A farm raised, high fence whitetail deer was killed by an individual. The "hunt," or shopping, took place on a trophy ranch in Pennsylvania. The buck was scored by Safari Club International (SCI) at 1,011 inches. This deer was most definitely genetically altered, and by the pictures released, must have had a miserable life. The sheer size and mass of the antlers had to have given him much discomfort and he must have struggled to live a normal life. I, as a hunter with a conscience, cannot fathom why anyone would want to hunt this animal. I have a huge aversion and disdain for high fence hunting to begin with, but this takes it to another level.

There are several crossbow bills floating around Albany. I will keep you informed if any require action. But, it is always good to maintain a relationship with your Senate and Assembly member. It can be very helpful when trying to make an appointment or to educate them on an issue that can affect our Archery Seasons.

In October 2024, at a deer facility in Region 6, CWD was detected. According to the NYS-DEC, this was an isolated incident, detected during a routine check at the facility by NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM). It was confirmed by the USDA National Veterinary Services Laboratories. There was CWD detected in wild deer

within the area.

NYS-DEC will continue to monitor the situation.

NYS has led the Nation on curtailing the spread of CWD.

With Spring arriving, that means more outdoor activities, which means more opportunities for ticks. Please be cautious and take precautions before venturing out. They host a plethora of bad bugaboos.

Remember to spread the NYB word to your fellow bowhunters. We are only as good as our membership, and we rely on you to get the word out. Mentor a new bowhunter, bring them to an NYB event, sign up a relative or coworker.

Until then, pick a spot and enjoy the flight of the arrow.

May God Bless America and all who protect us both home and abroad.

All the best,

Al.
ajbottari@gmail.com
646-294-4062



REGION 3 REPORT

I heard from several of you regarding the recent deer season. My good friend Mitch Amerbach, although from Long Island, hunts his Sullivan County property as much as anyone I know, always has a few good success stories and this year was no exception.

When Alex Bugnon brings his longbow out in the Hudson Valley, the deer try to avoid him, however a local eight point didn't get the memo this year (although I hear your wife deserves some credit for chasing you out of the house that day!). Mr. longevity, Joel Riotto, always a threat to the Catskill herd, put another notch on his traditional quiver. Orange rep, Chris Smith, always has big bucks fighting over which one of them has the honor of getting killed by him. Great job, pal. Bob Harring, also a perennial threat to local bucks, reduced the herd once again. And thank you, Bob, for another great winter indoor tournament season at TY.

And finally, this old writer is lucky to have some venison in the freezer thanks to my son, Andrew, whose arrows do more flying in the hunting woods than mine do these days!

You may have noticed by now that this year we will not be having the Banquet, Rendezvous, & 3D Shoot at Sunny Hill in Greenville, NY. This annual event has been held in several locations around the state for over 30 years. Those of us in Region 3 (as well as those in Regions 1, 2 & 4) were very lucky to have it held at Sunny Hill for the last 10 years (the longest it has been held in any one location). Rising prices of the venue, as well as some other issues, caused this departure from Sunny Hill. Many members across the state expressed strong feedback that an annual gathering of some sort is of vital importance for the sake of friendship and our common passion of our bowhunting brother/sisterhood. Several members began researching other options and, thankfully, one of our BODs came up with what looks to be a viable location. Although plans are still underway as of this writing, it looks like we will be having a one-day Rendezvous which will include 3D shooting in the morning, a BBQ lunch, annual meeting and hopefully a few raffle and auction items. The location is near Ithaca. Details can be found elsewhere in this magazine.

You will find in this issue a listings of 3D shoots which will run pretty much every weekend from March right up to and into the start of hunting season. Many of the hosts of these fun shoots are local NYB booster clubs. Another fantastic club, Cos Cob Archers, although located in CT, is not far from many of us in the lower Hudson Valley or NYC. Although a long-time member, I have not promoted it too often over the last few years as their membership level has been capped. However, each year they do draw people off their "wait list" to replace those who do not renew. If you love outdoor 3D and are looking for a 24/7/365 place you can shoot outdoors, contact me for more information.

Speaking of NYB supporters, I finally stopped in at "All Things Accuracy" in Sullivan County. It is a great shop which has indoor 30 yard range, full-service pro shop and knowledgeable, friendly experts to take care of your shooting needs. Say hello to Mike, the owner, and let him know you heard about it through NYB and appreciate them supporting us.

Check out the local 3D schedule posted in this edition of *FullDraw*. If you'd like to get together at one, drop me an email or call and we'll try and not lose arrows together!

Richard Kirschner – Region 3 Rep / Board of Director
bowrichny@aol.com
 914 330 1419

SULLIVAN COUNTY

There is a major archery activity planned for the Summer of this year in Sullivan County. All Things Accuracy, our local archery shop in Liberty, has planned a three-day 3D event to be held at the Holiday Mountain Ski Area in Rock Hill. The tentative dates are July 11th, 12th, and 13th, to be confirmed with ski hill management shortly. Be on the lookout for advertisements in May and June.

Sullivan County Archers has decided to downscale our youth archery program to a one-day event and call it an "Archery Clinic." Our response to our usual two-day camp has been poor the last two years so we are hoping we can get some involvement this way. If we get more interest, we can always increase it to a two-day event and include our usual instruction on the bowhunting end.

I hope everyone had a good hunting season and got involved in at least one winter league or two. The next hunting challenge is Spring Turkey season, a tough one considering our poor turkey population. Then comes the 3D season. I hope to see you on the local courses!

Harry Walker – Region 3 Rep / Sullivan County Rep.
bowbender@hvc.rr.com
 845-794-6752



REGION 3 REPORT - continued from previous page

DUTCHESS COUNTY

Greetings all! I hope you have been enjoying the winter weather. There should be no complaints about the absence of snow this year. Great news for the skiers and snowmobile lovers out there. I prefer the higher temps of Florida and the fishing opportunities during the coldest months!

On the local news front, Bob Harring, NYB member and Ti Yogi Bowmen indoor tournament director, conducted two very successful shoots this year. The Past President's Memorial Tournament and the Mid-Hudson Open were well attended and filled several shooting lines in the morning and afternoons. Congratulations to Bob and all the other members who helped to make these outstanding events. Honorable mention to NYB member Mary Safford who, along with her rotating volunteer staff, keeps all of us at Ti Yogi Bowmen well fed year-round at all our shoots.

Besides the upcoming Turkey Season, there is plenty to do between now and the fall. Ti Yogi will soon be beginning their Spring indoor archery league (Wed or Thurs eve). Outdoor Sunday 3D shoots in several local clubs will be starting up just about the time you receive this edition of *FullDraw*. You will find the Region Three 3D schedule in this issue of *FullDraw*. Last summer Ti Yogi ran a successful weekly outdoor fun shoot. Several of us tried our skills at an Olympic size, 4-foot target placed at various long distances. This is not hunting practice, but rather a great way to fine tune your bows and certainly your form and a lot of fun. Shooting 30, 40, 50 and 60 yards works wonders on making 20-yard shots! Although last year we were getting together one evening a week, we've decided to change to a Saturday morning weekly get together. It will probably begin in June and run into August. If this sounds like something you would be interested in, please contact myself or Rich Kirschner ASAP. Depending on participants, we may need to order more targets and stands. Compounds or recurves are both welcome.

That's all for now. As always, please reach out with any info or questions!

Keep "em" Sharp.

Bob Ledrich - Dutchess County Rep / Treasurer
ledrich@optonline.net
 914-475-4190

WESTCHESTER COUNTY

Greetings New York Bowhunters! I hope everyone had a productive and enjoyable season. I am told the 2024-2025 DEC Harvest report won't be out until March, but according to several Westchester Hunter's field reports, it was a good season with good action on both public and private properties.

Because of a long illness and the passing of my older brother, Bart (accomplished duck, goose, & upland game hunter as well as an Orvis-endorsed wild game chef), work, and a late season case of shingles, I was not able to get out much. When the bowhunting fever is running through ya, we like to think

hunting takes priority over work! Then ... reality sets in!

The highlight of my short season was breaking in a first time bowhunter in Westchester. He's hooked and NYB will soon have another member!

Matt "Mad Dog" Sweeney - Westchester County Rep
plumbing3c@gmail.com
 516-322-2881 (call anytime)

PUTNAM COUNTY

Hello again New York Bowhunters. Here's to hoping you all had a successful hunting season. Now, that's not to say that you had to harvest an animal to have it be successful. Although I wasn't successful in harvesting my target buck with my bow I was able to get him with my rifle. My grandson, AJ, my son-in-law, Dom, and my buddy Tom were right there to help me get him out of the woods, to the butcher and on to my dinner table.

Any time spent in the woods is time well spent, especially when it's spent with family and friends. Also, you never know what you will see next. This year, just before I took the aforementioned buck, I got to see something I have never seen in my more than 50 years of hunting. As I was sitting in my blind, I heard a deer coming from behind me. It was my target buck. Out of the corner of my eye I spotted an even bigger buck, one I had never seen. The 2 bucks approached each other. They went at it only 15 yards from where I was sitting. This is stuff I have only seen on TV or videos. AJ, who was sitting approximately 100 yards away, texted me saying "Grandpa... you hearing this?... It's crazy". After about 2 minutes they broke apart with one of them coming back. The rest is history. So, get out in the woods. You never know what you might see.

Back here at Fahnestock, it was quite an uneventful season. There was not much going on with only some small does and an 8 pointer that continually showed up on my camera after dark. Now is the time when you should be out scouting for next year (it's only a short 9 months away). And the best way to do that is be out on the trails looking for sheds. This is the time of year when they start dropping their antlers. Deer are pretty habitual and follow the same trails throughout the year.

Until next time, keep on shooting and go to some of those great 3D shoots that are coming up to help keep you on point. Don't forget to send in those pics of your harvest or just some photos of the season, in general.

John Sarlo - Putnam County Rep.
Archer2312@aol.com

ROCKLAND COUNTY

Hello fellow Rockland bowhunters. I hope your season was a successful one. I saw a lot of good bucks were taken in Rockland and Westchester. I definitely saw way more deer during archery season in Rockland than during regular season on my property upstate.

This was my last season being the only one holding a bow

Region reports continue on page 20



Spring 2025

ATTENTION ALL SPIKES!

WIN FREE NYB MERCHANDISE AND OTHER
COOL STUFF!

Send in your hunting memories, drawings, recipes, stories and photos for consideration for the next Spikes newsletter.

Photos should be in "Good Taste" with little or no blood showing, tongues tucked inside mouths, no tailgate shots, etc. Photos taken in a natural outdoor setting are best, otherwise try and position game so that homes, roads, etc. are not showing in the background. All submissions will be entered in our random drawing for the "Submission of the Quarter" prize.

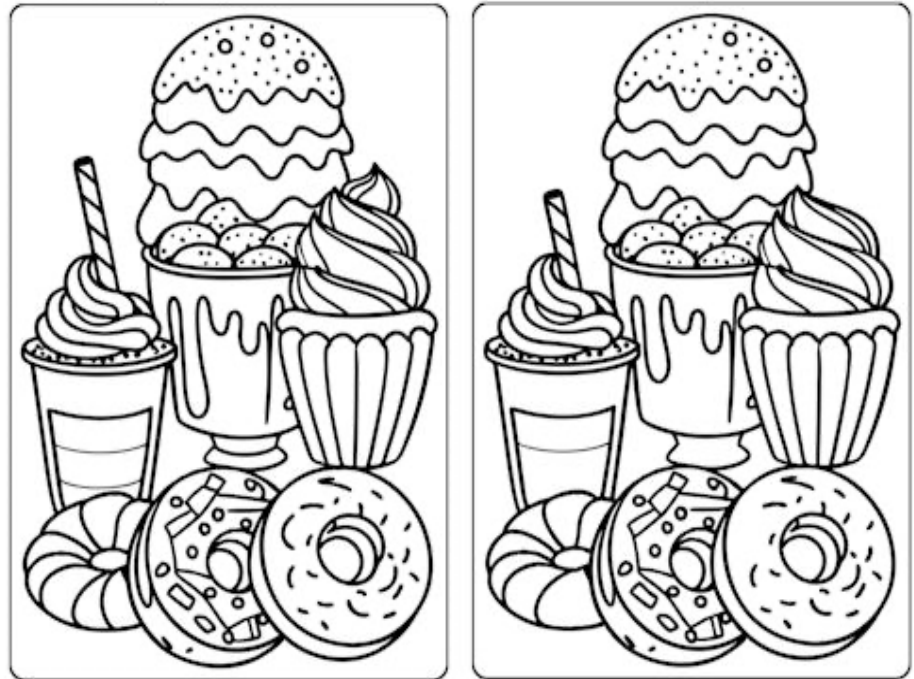
Winners will be notified by mail and announced in the next newsletter.

NY Bowhunters Spikes
5937 County Road 33
Canandaigua, NY 14424
Or email: NYBSpikesEditor@gmail.com

KIDS KORNER

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot the 9 differences between these two pictures?



FIND 10 HIDDEN OBJECTS IN THE PICTURE



First Flowers of Spring



YOUTH ARCHERY TEAM

“The Bethlehem Archers”

PARTICIPANTS

AGES 8 - 20

Boys & Girls

all skill levels

**Do not need to be
affiliated with a club**



EVENTS

Indoor Single Spot (winter)

3D Archery (spring)

Outdoor Target (summer)



BOW CLASSES

Bare Bow / Olympic Recurve

Compound, Pins & Open



CONTACTS

Edward Malle 845-541-6775

archerybrgc@gmail.com

Sam Cerone 845-800-8665

Philip Malle 845-549-8980

facebook @ BRaG Archery

s3da.net

s3da.sport80.com to register online





New York Bowhunters
Youth Membership

"Spikes"

NYB's "Youth Membership" includes all youth ages 17 and under. Those between the ages of 12 to 17 will be considered "Senior Spikes." Those under 12 join as "Junior Spikes."

Membership Includes NYB's Quarterly Magazine

Prizes:

Members who send in pictures, drawings, stories, etc. will be eligible for prizes.

As the driving force behind preserving bowhunting in New York, it's our responsibility as NYB members to let our children and all young hunters involved in preserving and protecting our hunting heritage for future generations.

Spikes membership is only \$10 per year.



Mail Application to
NYB Spikes
5937 County Road 33
Canandaigua, NY 14424

SPIKES NAME: _____ PARENT/SPONSOR NAME _____

DOB: _____ COUNTY/REGION: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

_____ MAILING ADDRESS: _____

_____ CITY _____

_____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

SPONSOR ADDRESS (if different): _____

REGION 3 REPORT - continued from page 15

in my stand. My son (11 years old) just got his 1st bow for Christmas and is beyond excited for next season. Thanks to Tom, Nick, & Joe from Extreme Archery in Mamaroneck, NY for helping set up and tune his new bow. They are beyond knowledgeable, helpful, and not pushy at all. If you need anything archery related, I recommend them highly.

It looks like the Empire State outdoor show is happening again this year at RCCC. I hope this new group of people can get it back to the show's former glory. I am planning to stop by at some point to check things out again this year. Hopefully in the future we will be able to staff a booth at the show. The old show was NYB's best way to gain new members. Please reach out to your friends and family that are archers and make sure they have renewed their membership or become a member.

I was informed that NYB won't be having our annual banquet this year. This event was something my family and friends looked forward to every year. From what I understand NYB is looking to have a one-day event sometime in the spring. Hopefully by the time this is printed we will have a better idea.

I haven't been able to see the 2024 harvest report, but I am sure it will be very close to the last few years. One thing is for sure when it comes to Rockland, we don't shoot enough antlerless deer. I am guilty of this myself. All we focus on is getting those pictures of a few good bucks. We should all do our best to fill our freezers with does as well as bucks.

As I always say, if you can take a youth into the outdoors, please do so. In today's world of computers, iPad and social media our children are missing the amazing and beautiful world just outside the door. Watching the excitement in my son's eyes when he folded his first turkey is something I will never forget. It added fuel to the hunting fire burning in my soul. Having the knowledge and ability to harvest fish and game is not something we are born with and was taught to most of us by someone else. You can be that person for someone.

Please feel free to reach out to me with anything Rockland hunting related, or anything I can bring to OUR organization's attention.

"Nock 'em dead"

>>>----->

Curt Carney - Rockland County Rep
Ccarney8799@gmail.com

ORANGE COUNTY

Hello Orange County,

As I sit here writing this on the 12th of February snow is falling again as we are in the midst of another winter storm. My resident 3 point buck, aka "Bucky," is still holding his antlers, however his buddy sheds half of his rack. It is time to get out and look for sheds, I guess! This is a great time of the year to scout post season and look for fresh sign and get some exercise.

During the 2024 season, NYS harvested 112,224 antlered deer with 97,557 antlerless deer. This is a 3.6% decrease in antlered deer and a 15.6% decrease in antlerless deer. Orange County harvested 1,692 antlered and 1,092 antlerless deer. This resulted in a 1.0:0.6 male to female ratio. On a good note, this year's harvest produced a 70% increase in the bucks taken being 2 years or older.

For the first time in a while we've had some solid ice on the lakes. I've had some successful trips bringing home some tasty perch and crappie in Harriman. Stay warm and safe and remember turkey season is right around the corner! As always, please reach out to me with any concerns or upcoming events in Orange County.

Till next time ----->

Chris Smith - Orange County Rep.
Bigblue9654@gmail.com

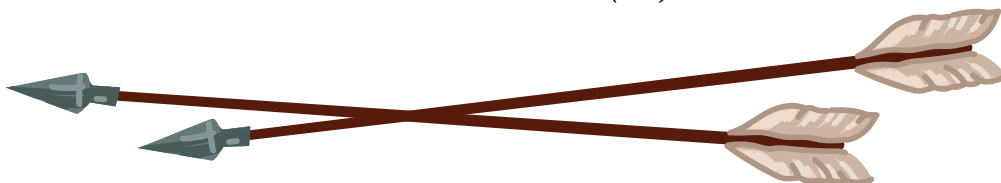
ULSTER COUNTY

Hello Ulster County NYB Bowhunters. I hope all of you had a safe, healthy and successful hunting season! With the winter and spring upon us and our hunting bows dormant for now, there is a lot of Archery happening in and around Ulster County. Ti Yogi hosted two of their annual indoor tournaments. The first one held in January had over 90 shooters from far and wide. Many local NYB members took home trophies in both compound and recurve divisions. The 40th annual Mid-Hudson Open was held the first weekend in March, but is still two weeks away as I write this column.

The 3D season will be starting up in March with several Ulster County clubs hosting shoots (see the full schedule elsewhere in this issue).

Is anyone interested in having an NYB sponsored 3D shoot? If we could get 15 members interested, it's something we could work on putting together. Contact me if you are interested.

Mike Ciavolino - Ulster County Rep
Mciavolino24@gmail.com
Cell Ph (516) 388-4627



REGION 4 REPORT

Well, it looks like my report is going in late again. I tried to explain to our editor, Cindy, that I was very busy and up late guarding my chicken coop from egg thieves. I don't think she went for that story. I still have a hundred rolls of toilet paper saved from the last ridiculous panic. Who knew people were going to go crazy about getting eggs?

Anyway, I hope everyone had a good season and managed to fill the freezer. As many of you already know, our Banquet at Sunny Hill Resort has been cancelled this year due to increased cost in just about everything. Over the last few years the NYB Board of Directors have been dealing with the skyrocketing economy and trying to see if we could make it more affordable for members to attend. Our plan is still in the works, but it looks like a few single day events across the state instead of the three-day rendezvous at Sunny Hill. We will keep you posted.

I recently received an email with last year's hunting safety statistics, summarizing 11 shootings incidents (1 fatal) and 11 treestand incidents with 2 fatalities. I'm surprised it's not more considering NYS introduced the online hunting safety program a couple of years ago. Think about it, a

person takes the online course and heads into the woods with a loaded gun with no hands-on training. Pretty scary, isn't it? It's easier than getting a driving license. It sure seems like no one in the state leadership has any common sense.

I am looking forward to this year to see how everything turns out at our get-togethers. I am hoping for a good turnout. Don't forget to send in your raffle tickets.

Take Care,
Ed Gorch,
Region 4 Representative
Oldbowman48@gmail.com
(518) 755 6263



REGION 5 REPORT

Well, hunting season is now over and some really nice deer were taken this year. Lee Jenkins was the winner of our big deer contest with Sherm LaLonde winning the lucky deer award. All in all, it was a pretty good season.

From here we moved right into our Northern Challenge Fishing derby, drawing in 975 fisher men and women. This was a lot different than last year due to the fact there was no fishing because of having only 3 inches of ice.

Our league night has started off strong with 15 people gathering on Wednesday evenings to shoot some indoor 3D. This year we have opened our indoor league to youth 16 years and older to try encourage more young people into our sport.

One of our other successful programs is our youth archery program where kids in grades 3 to 6 can come and learn the basics of archery. We supply everything, from bows and arrows to the more than qualified instructors. At the end of the 7-week course, the pizza and wing party

is sponsored by Rick Reandeau and Adirondack Energy.

Our shoot cards have arrived with the dates of the shoots in our area, so if you come around here during the summer, try to attend one. The first shoot was here in Tupper Lake on March 16th and it was our NYB Camo to Camo benefit shoot. All proceeds go to NYB's Camo to Camo program. We have supported this program for many years and if you are unaware of what Ed and NYB does for our military, skip on over to their webpage and take a look.

Dave McMahon
Region 5 Representative
davemcmahon97@gmail.com



REGION 6 REPORT

This is prime Sports Show season for Region 6 Bowhunters. It's a great time to learn what's new and upcoming in our field. Take some time to sit in on an interesting hunting presentation.

Around the Region: the CNY Sportsmen Show was again held at the Verona FD Event Hall on March 1st, 2025. The Big East Camping & Outdoor Sports Show, traditionally held at the Turning Stone, will again be at the Sports Complex on Judd Road in Whitesboro (Utica), on March 22nd & 23rd, 2025. The NYS Woodsmen's Field Days in Boonville, will be held August 15th, 16th, & 17th, 2025. NYB will not be exhibiting in any of these shows. If you go, drop me a line on what you think could help our fellow bowhunters.

We don't have all of the 2025 updates to the scheduled 3D shoots in our area, so send them over if you get any. Bear Pac Archery still has a good one for those of you in the

Watertown area.

Social media may be the best way to stay in touch with fellow NY Bowhunters.

Our Facebook group is still going strong, and we now have over 2,000 followers on Instagram. If you know of any good bowhunting activities in the Region 6 area, post it!

Now get out there and enjoy your summer!

Bill Snyder

Region #6 Rep.

bill4nyb@gmail.com



REPRESENTATIVES NEEDED

for the Region below.

REGION 7 REPORT



Please contact
the Main Office at
NYBOffice@NewYorkBowhunters.com



3D TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISER

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SATURDAY, MAY 17TH 2025

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First relay starts at 9 AM, Awards to follow.

For more information :
+516-241-4109 | Greg Masaitis

REGION 8 REPORT

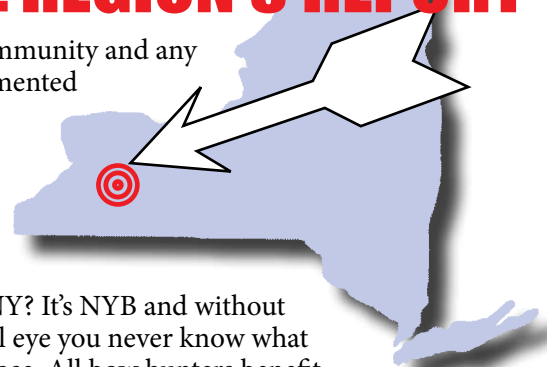
In hope this finds everyone well! We are having a real winter in western NY for a change and it be over anytime now. Last fall was a successful one in Region 8 with many deer harvested, including some real bruisers. Please send your pictures in so we can all share in your success.

Sooner or later this snow will melt and shed hunting will start. Sometimes it's like finding a needle in a haystack but it's a great time to get out and explore. It is also a great time to see last year's sign and maybe even a little scouting for spring turkey.

Maybe it's because the weather has kept me inside and on the computer more, but I'm seeing a disturbing trend regarding sportsmen's rights lately. There are bills to restrict firearms and ammunition, stricter laws to purchase firearms, eliminate pheasant stocking in NY and in the west eliminate mountain lion hunting. As I look at these battles, I ask myself who is watching out for the sportsmen and sportswomen to make sure these bills get stopped? In most cases it seems like a last minute awareness panics the

sporting community and any fight is fragmented and bound to be lost. Guess who is always watching out for bow hunters in NY? It's NYB and without our watchful eye you never know what we might loose. All bow hunters benefit from NYB's past hard work, but what about the future? We can never take our eye off the ball or we all will loose. If you truly love bow hunting, sign up a friend. It's strength in numbers that will prevail.

Bob Brown
Region 8 Representative
 Waptichasr@aol.com



REGION 9 REPORT

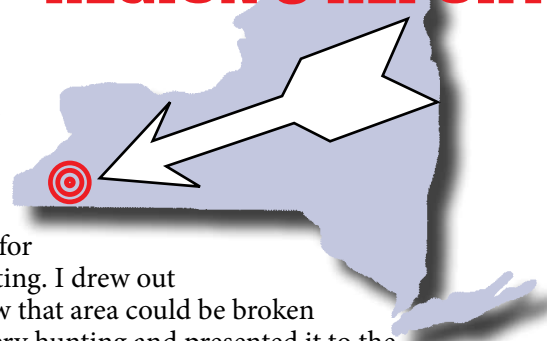
Hello again everyone. I know it's been a little while since the last issue and I hope everyone is doing great. I hope you were able to get out in the woods this year and enjoy every second, successful or not. Thankfully I was able to harvest a nice buck with my bow which made it a very successful season for me. This year was a roller-coaster with the weather, which made it very tough to see much movement. When I talked to fellow hunters, it was almost 50/50, where some people were seeing deer and others just weren't. Even through the rut it wasn't like previous years. It was almost like it would pick up then die off as fast as any activity was seen. However, I did see a lot of nice bucks and bear taken in our area and, as always, the ones who persevered made it happen and I couldn't be happier for everyone who was able to be successful. I also made it a point to visit different public land areas in our Region and spoke to a ton of people. To my surprise, there were more first-timers using traditional equipment than I expected. That gives me hope that not only are people continuing to bow hunt, but they are taking it a step further and diving into the rich history that is traditional archery hunting.

In other news, I had a member reach out to me about the possibility of an archery-only hunting area for WMU 9c. I know it's very hard because that area contains the city

of Buffalo. However, there are surrounding areas that could definitely make a case for archery hunting. I drew out a map of how that area could be broken out for archery hunting and presented it to the DEC. I have yet to get a response, but if you are interested and want to help the cause for this, please email the DEC or send a letter at least telling them to look into it. I would greatly appreciate it and it could only help us as New York bow hunters.

As always, thank you for reading this report. I hope everyone has a great rest of the winter and gets out there to start shooting as soon as they can. I hope to talk to everyone soon. Have a great start to the new year!

Vinny D'Agostino
Region 9 Representative
 Vinnydagostino1@gmail.com
 (716) 930-4009





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A LONG JOURNEY ON AN OLD ROAD

By Arthur J Pellerin (AJ)

You are probably wondering why I chose this title to my story. My son, who has told me numerous times that I'm growing old, gets all the credit. What he didn't know is how many adventures I had left in me.

My elk hunt started with a conversation with my wife and one of her friends at our cabin on a chilly winter night. On this night, my wife's friend's husband happened to be there as we were talking about his elk hunt and I started to pick his brain about the whos, the whats, the wheres and the hows. The next thing I knew, he got off his phone and said, "You're all set, the outfitter will be calling you in the next couple of days to make arrangements with you."

"MMMMM OK?!!!" I replied.

To be clear, I am not a high end trophy hunter who can just go on a hunt at the drop of a hat. I have to save. I have to plan. I have to weigh all my options. I have to get a plan of attack. I have to go without (scrimp and scratch for every [extra] dime and dollar) in order to go on a hunt like this.

I am the kind of guy that thinks. I talk to people. I ask their opinion. I talk to my wife, I talk to my son and try to figure out what I can and cannot do or afford. That's when my son said to me, "Dad, you're not getting any younger. You might as well do it now while you can."

Thanks, son (I think). So I did it. I bit the bullet and started down this long old road.

I contacted the outfitter and told him that I wanted to do the elk hunt, but I wanted to do it with my bow. The only way I can afford to do it was to set up some type of payment plan. We came to an agreement, so I was sent a contract to sign and a detailed payment schedule to execute (painful).

I had so many questions and now was the time to seek the answers. I did a lot of research; YouTube and podcasts became my main source of information. The first thing I learned was I need to be in shape for this adventure. Off to the gym I went, 2 to 3 times a week, with a program set for upper body workouts as well as a minimum of 35 minutes of cardio. An added benefit was I dropped 35 pounds in the process.

Since the trip was a year and a half away, I had time to think about the logistics of taking this trip. Would I drive or fly? Should I take 1 or 2 bows? What kind of hunting gear would I need? What can I expect of the weather? All in all, I became obsessed with the details. I decided that the best course of action was to drive. This would allow me to bring everything with me,

including my 4 giant coolers, road snacks (it is a 27 hour drive), 2 bows, 2 foot lockers and a portable target. I ended up renting a 15 passenger van. Yes, I had that much stuff.

My trip started on the 29th of August and I arrived on

the 31st. Check in was at 1500 (3 pm). Perfect, I made it! Let the adventure begin! I get the lay of the land and settled in. My plan was to shoot the bow, get my clothes together, set my rucksack up and get my things in order. 0345 comes quickly!!

3:45 a.m. I am up and ready. 4:30 a.m. I've got the truck loaded up, and we were off. Since this was a 1 on 1 hunt, it was just me and my guide. The sun wasn't even up yet! We get to our location and the guide gave me instructions. He first told me there are 4 rules to remember. Of course I only remembered the first and the last; **Rule 1:** It's your tag. **Rule 4:** Keep your S*!% together. Rules 1 and 4 were the most important so I promptly forgot Rules 2 & 3. I gathered my wits, my ruck and my bow, and down we went, down to the dark timber, down where the Elk roam.

As the sun came up on **DAY 1**, things looked and sounded promising. I saw a lot of mule deer bouncing around, walking and grazing as they moved. While we were watching and listening to the dark timber wake up, my guide would let out a couple of calls – waiting (and wanting) that bull elk to wake up and announce his presence with authority. That didn't happen. My guide called and called. Finally, off in the distance, we heard a reply. We established an ambush. My guide was behind me and I was maybe a few yards in front. Waiting and watching, watching and waiting. My mind started playing tricks on me - What was that sound? Did you hear that? Where did it come from? Do you have a shooting lane? Is there a clear line of sight? Yes and yea except the elk did not get the memo. He decided he didn't want to play this morning and now it's close to lunchtime. We hiked backed out and returned to the house. The afternoon hunt went pretty much the same way, except I saw 2 black bears 30 yards away! Wow, now this is great! Day 1 came and went with no elk.

DAY 2 started the same as day 1. Rinse and Repeat, except this time, the bull decided he wanted to play. We set up with me in front and the guide 20 yards behind me. I got settled, up against a fallen log, facing up hill, with 4 clear lanes for shooting going from my right to my left. I was ready for elk and did not expect Muley bucks to visit. To make a long and painful story short, I missed a nice 4 by 4 Muley buck. Naturally, I nicked the only tree that was in my shooting lane. I felt terrible but I paid big bucks for an Elk, not a Muley (even thought it would have been a nice bonus). The afternoon went about the same way; walk and stalk, listen and watch. All in all, we hiked an average of 12 miles each day. I saw a lot of mule deer and 5 different black bears. Even with no elk it was still an awesome adventure.

DAY 3 found us in a different location. Here we had open prairies with draws full of thick vegetation, scrub oaks and SHADE (keynote, it was well over 80 degrees and dry; this is key for later). As we spot and stalked the area, we concluded nothing was moving or talking. Since it was too hot for man and beast to do anything productive, we backtracked and left the area, but not before stopping at the ONLY watering holes in the area. Man am I glad we did because there were signs everywhere. With the heat and dry conditions, it was a major gathering place for the thirsty.





**"DAD, YOU'RE
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YOU MIGHT AS
WELL DO IT NOW
WHILE YOU CAN."**

We came up with a game plan for the afternoon. I was to hike solo (around a mile or so), get set up on a side of the hill that has Oak trees acting like a barrier providing cover and concealment, and sit. I got into my oak cage early enough to make improvements, cut some limbs down, move some rocks and clear some lanes. I used the rangefinder on significant land features, the closest being 25 yards to the front of the watering tank, and the farthest being 55 yards to the back side of the watering hole. Now the waiting game began.

The afternoon sit was long and hot but at least I was in the shade. Minutes turned into hours, which felt like a complete lifetime. Suddenly things started to happen. Sunset was 1924 (7:24pm) and legal shooting hours ended 30 minutes after sunset. At 1900 I saw movement. Three mule does came out of the draw to my left, and made their way to the watering hole. They were a bit skittish, but still came in. Now I would know if we made the correct choice about this set up. If those does did not see me or get spooked for any reason, we were in business.

As I watched the first set of does walk off into the distance, a second group of 3 does came in and did the same thing. Up to the watering hole they came, looked around, drank and then headed out – perfect! I couldn't ask for anything better. Around the same time as the second set of does walked away, I heard something in the distance. My brain knew this sound, but it just didn't register at first. A split second later, my eyes confirmed what my ears heard; bulls coming down the hill sparring as they walked down towards the water. I was in luck! I still had shooting light (1920ish). The 3 bulls took

turns sparring and walking. They edged closer and closer to my position. One finally broke free and started to walk to the dried up watering hole. He came over the berm that separated the two areas. I watched, eyeing the bull as he started heading to the water. I positioned myself to take the shot, but as my luck would have it, the bull stopped in front of one of the trees that was blocking my shooting lane. I had no clear shot! And I was at full draw! I carefully lowered my bow, guiding my arrow forward, trying to not make a sound. I repositioned myself about 2 inches to my right and come to full draw again. The whole time, the bull was drinking, watching, drinking, lifting his head each time. He took a couple of steps forward and gave me a slightly quartering-to shot, exposing his chest. I released my arrow. SWISH – TWANG – THUMP! The glow of my orange nock lit up the darkening sky and buried itself just above his shoulder angling down! A direct hit! Seconds later I watched my bull double back and run around a mound of trash trees and dirt to his final resting place, right by his fellow bulls. To add insult to injury, those other bulls started sparring with my downed bull! The pressure was off. I stood up and watched, binoculars pressed into my face, struggling to see. The time was now 1945 – lights out. Off in the distance I could see more figures emerge from the shadows. Three more bull elk come out to investigate and one of them was a GAIN!!

I have no regrets. I will take what I got. I beat the odds and came out victorious. I'm now part of that less than 10% of hunters who actually fill their archery elk tag! My bull dressed out at 258 on the hoof. Not too bad if you ask me.



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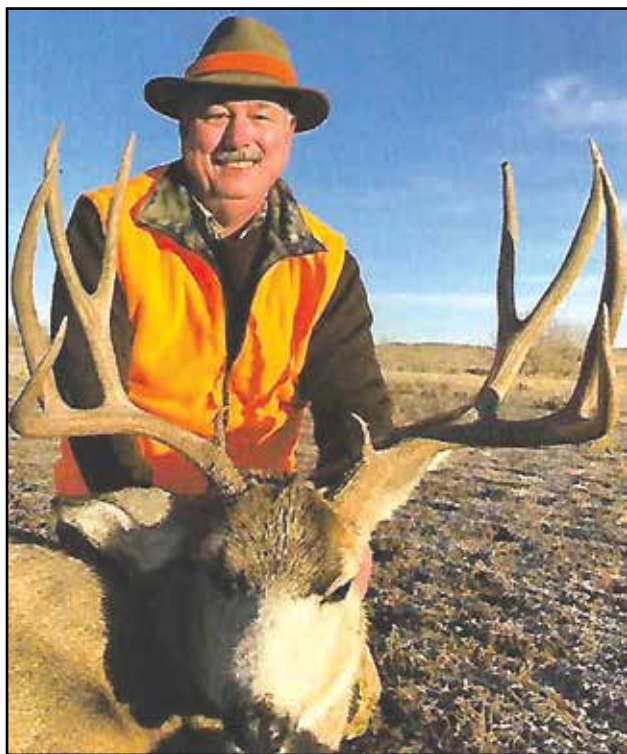
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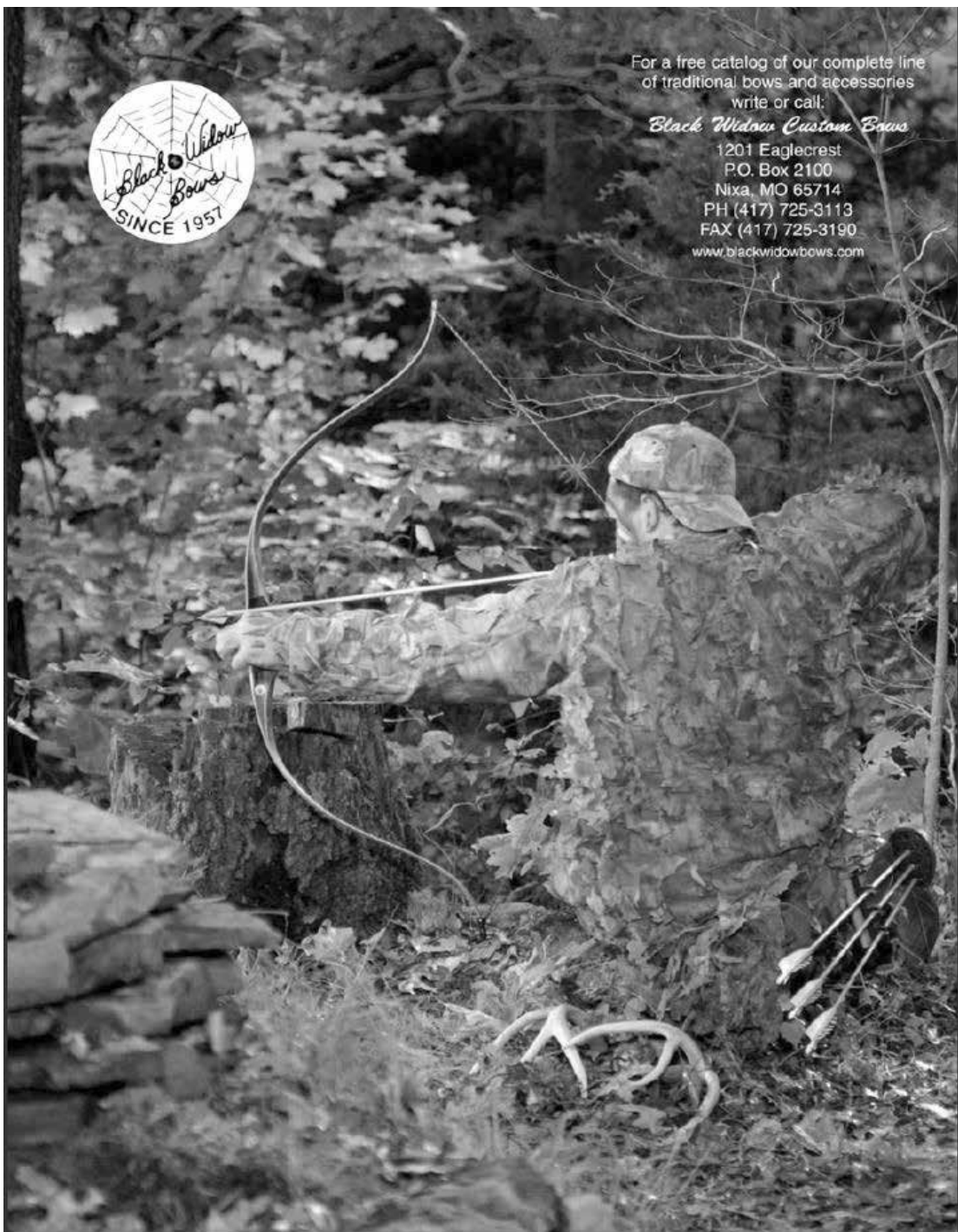
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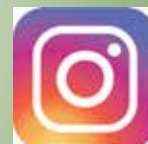
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