

2404 E. Broadway, Alton, IL 62002

VOLUME 38 ISSUE 2

MARCH 2008

Rosi Franke, Editor

Tel: 618-396-2509

e-mail: rgfranke@frontiernet.net

**3-Year Blind Allocation Drawing
Mississippi River Fish & Wildlife Area
Pools 25 and 26**

Sunday, June 1, 2008

See Page 7 for more information.

MWHI OFFICERS

President

Scott Bryant
217-983-2025 (home)
618-535-0151 (cell)

Vice-President

Bob Jones
Area Projects Chairman
618-498-4724
618-578-9547 (cell)

Treasurer

Larry Franklin
618-465-5686

Membership Secretary

Mike Devening
618-791-1692

Correspondence Secretary

Jeremy Maggart
618-535-4997

Recording Secretary

Jeremy Arnold
618-779-8313

MWHI DIRECTORS

John Gineris
Banquet Chairman
618-786-2596

Eric Rhuede
Golf Tournament Chairman
618-410-9853

Duane Hahnenkamp
Wood Duck Nest Box Chairman
Refuge Chairman
618-786-2053

Greg Franke
COE Chairman
618-396-2509

Chance Funk
618-917-4137

Dave Geisler
618-576-9845

Justin Wolfe
Carlyle Lake Area Projects Chairman
Catfish Tournament Chairman
618-377-0397

Josh Schneider
618-974-4328

Matt Grassle
618-550-3124

Nathan Wilson
618-535-8325

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, March 3, 2008

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 p.m

Saturday, April 5, 2008

MWHI 8th ANNUAL
WETLAND CONSERVATION BANQUET
at K.C. Banquet Hall, Godfrey, IL

Monday, April 7, 2008

MWHI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
at 2404 E. Broadway, Alton at 6:15 p.m

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

MWHI GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
at Alton-Wood River Sportsmen Club
in Godfrey, IL at 7:00 pm

REMEMBER!

MWHI 8th ANNUAL
WETLAND CONSERVATION BANQUET

April 5, 2008

K.C. Banquet Hall, Godfrey, IL
For more information and reservations
contact John Gineris at (618) 786-2596

If anybody is interested in participating in the banquet committee or who can give/find donations for the banquet, also contact John Gineris.

The *Sentry* is published monthly except for December and January by Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc., 2404 E. Broadway, Alton, IL, 62002. The *Sentry* deadline is always the second Monday of each month.

Statements and opinions expressed in the *Sentry* are those of the individual and do not necessarily represent the views of Migratory Waterfowl Hunters, Inc. Officers, Directors, Advisors, Members or the Editor. The appearance of an ad in this newsletter does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of a product or service. We encourage our members to take note of those businesses advertising in our newsletter and shop with them when they are in the market for their product or services.

Changing Times

Duane Hahnenkamp

Two hundred years ago, when this country was first started, the settlers survived by being hunters. One hundred years ago, farm kids who brought home meat for supper and market made up the bulk of the everyday hunters in this country. After World War II, the sportsman hunter came to be. They gave us the glory days of hunting and brought us to where we are today.

Slowly over the last thirty years, as the sportsmen from the World War II era died off or gave up hunting, another change occurred. This one has more to do with the world around us and not so much the hunters themselves. As our country has become more urban than rural, fewer of the city people understand or like hunters and hunting. Some of these people even see hunters as just killers of wildlife. Some just as soon believe that hunters are a sick, lower form of life that likes to see something die in misery and pain. Yes, I do shoot ducks and geese, turkeys, game birds and even an occasional deer. However, do I do it just to watch something die or do I enjoy being outdoors, watching and learning about animals while I'm hunting?

Most of these non-hunters have not grown up around hunting, consequently they don't understand hunting or why we hunt. When I talk to other duck hunters and they tell me about their hunts, it usually starts out about how many birds they saw and how well the birds worked that day. Then they will tell me how many ducks their blind killed and if their own shooting was good or bad. I have yet to hear another hunter brag about watching animals dying in pain. In fact, I have always seen hunters do their best to kill the game as quickly as possible. Trust me, if we just wanted to watch something die, it would be a whole lot cheaper and easier to shoot a tame rabbit than go hunt a wild Canada goose. Not to mention that eating a tame rabbit would wind hands down, too.

Then there are the bird watchers who are afraid that we are killing all of their wildlife in the woods. I see hunters as just a different type of bird watcher, one who watches all types of birds and animals while they are hunting. I have had the chance to sit down and talk to bird watchers on different occasions. When I tell them about the array of wildlife I have seen over the years from a duck blind, I can a times see the envy in their eyes.

Hunters, by being in a blind or camouflaged in the woods, see wildlife in its natural environment. While bird watchers see birds from 50 to 100 yards or more away, hunters often see wild birds as close as a few yards or even feet away. I have told bird watchers about seeing an osprey pick up a gold fish in my decoy spread and then fly away just a few feet from our duck blind. I talked about the untold eagles that have flown less than 30 yards over my duck blind, the 300 pelicans that land just outside my decoy spread, the sandhill cranes that flew over the blind, and the rare snipes that I saw while duck hunting in North Dakota. And then there were the eight 'Trumpeter Swans' that flew less than 20 yards over the goose pit last January.

Sights like these would make an average bird watcher's day, if not year. We as hunters just take for granted the types of wildlife we see while hunting, but it doesn't mean we don't enjoy seeing them. Non-hunters need to realize that hunters see and watch a lot of wildlife daily, but only kill a very few. One time I was talking to a bird watcher and he was excited about what he had seen the night before -- he had heard and then saw a great horned owl. I swear that sometimes I think bird watchers would get excited a whole lot more if they just took up hunting.

I guess what I am saying is that I don't apologize for being a hunter. When I talk to a non-hunter, I let them know all the reasons why I hunt and that there is a lot more to hunting than just killing. All they seem to know is what they have read or some anti-hunter has told them. So think about your hunting days, your outdoor experiences and why you enjoy hunting. Then, one of these days when you run into a non-hunter, you just stand up for yourself and feel good about being a hunter. Remember, we as hunters have a heritage that began when this country was started.

MWHI 2008 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE RAFFLE

Craig Sondker, Membership Drive Chairman

Prizes will include:

Duck/Goose Hunting Trips

Catfish Fishing Trip

Benelli Nova

Raffle starts October 2007 - ends October 2008

See upcoming Sentry for more details.

3-Year Blind Allocation Drawing Mississippi River Fish & Wildlife Area, Pools 25 and 26

**Public drawings for waterfowl blinds at the Mississippi River Fish and Wildlife Area will be held on
Sunday, June 1, 2008.**

Drawing Locations:

Alton Wood River
Sportsmen's Club
3109 Godfrey Road
Godfrey, IL

Calhoun Country Fairgrounds
North of Hardin on Rt. 100

Batchtown Ball Diamond
In Batchtown

Jersey County Fairgrounds
Jerseyville American Legion
North end of Jerseyville
On Hwy. 267

Draw for Blinds at:

- Glades/12 Mile
- Fuller Lake
- Helmbold Slough
- Piasa Island

- Godar Diamond
- Red's Landing
- Rip Rap Landing

- Batchtown
- Mississippi River
Area

- Stump Lake
- Calhoun Point
- Illinois River

Registration for the drawing will be from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. with the drawings to be held immediately after. To be eligible to draw, participants must be 16 years old on the day of the drawing and present either a 2007 or 2008 Illinois hunting license and State Waterfowl Stamp (unless exempt by law). Illinois residents must have a valid Firearm Owner Identification Card (FOID), or one that has expired within the past 12 months; no validity checks will be made; and registrants will have to have cards in their possession to register. Those who are between the ages of 16 and 21 who do not have an FOID card must be accompanied by an adult who meets the FOID requirements.

Persons who draw blinds will have from Wednesday, June 4, 2008 through Friday, June 13, 2008 to register blind builders. Blinds can be registered daily between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. at the Mississippi River Area H.Q located on Rt. 100 at Rosedale. A 2008 Illinois hunting license and Ste Waterfowl Stamp must be presented for each person to be listed as a blind builder. Please refer to forms which will be distributed to successful participants on the day of the drawing.

The blinds will be allocated for a three-year period. Maps and other information will be available at the drawings. For more information call 618-376-3303.

License and Stamps will NOT be available at the draw sites.

Defamation Suit Brought Against America's Leading Anti-Hunting Group

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance, January 10, 2008

The nation's most vociferous opponent of hunting and all outdoor sports is being sued in a California court for defamation.

According to court records, Center for Earth Concerns de Costa Rica founder Karin Hoad partnered with the Humane Society of the United States to establish and maintain her organization. HSUS provided \$35,000.00 yearly to help operate the shelter, and in 1994 increased the amount to \$50,000. Hoad claimed she ran the facility for 12 years with HSUS support. The facility rehabilitated abandoned and injured domestic animals.

The suit claims that after 12 years of working within this agreement, the HSUS and its top leaders publicly stated that she "murdered" domestic animals. According to court documents HSUS also urged people to stop contributing to the Costa Rica facility.

Hoad filed suit in California Superior Court in San Diego in November seeking \$15 million in damages, alleging defamation, criminal defamation and conspiracy to defame. Defendants include the Humane Society, HSUS President Wayne Pacelle, HSUS CEO Andrew Rowan and HSUS officer Roger Kindler. On December 5, the Humane Society moved to remove the case to the U.S District Court on the grounds that the defendants live in DC.

Submitted by George Hamilton, February 2008

Chicago Mayor Unveils Annual IL Gun Control Package

- **Chicago Mayor Richard Daley held a news conference yesterday to announce his annual agenda for new Illinois gun-control legislation**, citing the shootings at Northern Illinois University as evidence that more gun-control in Illinois is necessary.
- The package of proposals includes several bills that have been introduced repeatedly in the Illinois state legislature at Daley's urging, but have stalled or been defeated in the Illinois Congress following heavy opposition from gun-rights advocates.
- Once again, Daley wants the Illinois legislature to introduce legislation to outlaw "semiautomatic assault weapons" and .50-caliber military-grade rifles, wants to use the State Police to license gun dealers (in addition to the federal license), seeks to ban the sale and possession of high-capacity gun magazines (that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition) and he wants to limit handgun purchases to one a month per person. In addition to these perennial measures, **Daley also wants state legislators to introduce several new proposals: requiring that semi-automatic pistols be equipped with the ability to microstamp ammunition; mandating trigger locks and locked containers be used in homes where guns are accessible to children under 18 (instead of 14); and requiring background checks for individuals that engage in the private purchase of a handgun.**
- Daley supporters in the Illinois legislature will now introduce individual bills in the state Congress to address each aspect of Daley's gun control package.

Illinois' New Gun Background Check Law & NIU Shootings

- The Associated Press published an article this evening reporting that **Illinois' new, stricter gun background check law, approved last year following the shootings at Virginia Tech, was not yet in effect when the Northern Illinois University gunman legally purchased firearms from an Illinois gun dealer over the past seven months.**
- The article explains, however, that it is unclear if the new Illinois measure -- which takes effect this June and requires more detailed reporting to state officials about those who have received mental health treatment -- would have prevented the legal gun sales.
- As previously reported, new federal legislation -- which received bi-partisan support -- was also recently enacted and requires that states provide the mental-health information they do gather for use in a national background-check system.
- **While gun control organizations are using the Northern Illinois University (NIU) shootings to push for even stricter gun laws in Illinois**, which already has some of the most stringent laws in the nation, **gun-rights activists argue that looser gun laws may have enabled students to defend themselves during the NIU attack:** Illinois is one of only two states in that nation with an outright ban on carrying concealed weapons (Wisconsin is the other.)

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

NRA Update on Gun Bills **1-800-392-8683**

Federal Senate Office **1-202-224-3121**

Federal House Offices **1-202-225-3121**

Illinois State Rifle Association **1-815-635-3198** www.isra.org

Illinois Senate Information **1-217-782-4517**

Illinois House Information **1-217-782-8223**

Sen. Deana Demuzio – 49th District
Tel: 217-854-4441 Fax: 217-854-5311

Sen. Frank Watson – 51st District
Tel: 618-664-9108 E-mail: frank_watson51@sbcglobal.net

Sen. John O. Jones – 54th District
Tel: 618-242-9511 E-mail: jojones@mvn.net

Sen. William R. Haine – 56th District
Tel: 618-465-4764 E-mail: haine@senatedem.state.il.us

Sen. James F. Clayborne – 57th District
Tel: 618-875-1212 E-mail: clayborne@senatedem.il.us

Sen. David Luechtfeld – 58th District
Tel: 618-243-9014 E-mail: sendavel@midwest.com

Rep. Jim Watson – 97th District
Tel: 217-243-6221 E-mail: jimwatson@localnetco.com

Rep. Gary Hannig – 98th District
Tel: 217-839-2859 E-Mail: hannig@hdsml.state.il.us

Rep. Ron Stephens – 102nd District
Tel: 618-667-8669 E-mail: stephens@apci.net

Rep. Kurt Granberg – 107th District
Tel: 618-533-2153 E-mail: kgranberg@hdsml.state.il.us

Rep. Jay Hoffman – 112 District
Tel: 618-345-2176 E-mail: jayhoffman@charter.net

Rep. Thomas Holbrook – 113th District
Tel: 618-394-2211 tholbrook@housedems.state.il.us

Rep. Wyvetter Younge – 114th District
Tel: 618-875-1691

Rep. Mike Bost – 115th District
Tel: 618-457-5787 mikebost@midwestmail.com

Rep. Dan Reitz – 116th District
Tel: 618-443-5757 E-mail: dreizt@egyptian.net

Costello - jfc.il12@mail.house.gov

Durbin - dick@durbin.senate.gov

Barack Obama – <http://obama.senate.gov>

Shimkus - <http://www.house.gov/shimkus>

Sportsmen Should Investigate Candidates' Stance on Sporting Issues

U. S. Sportsmen's Alliance, February 13, 2008

Sportsmen are a powerful political force, but their power lies in their willingness to take action and make their voices heard. This year, American voters will select a chief executive. The electorate will decide upon legislative leadership at the local, state and federal levels.

For information about the presidential candidates, you can check their websites, or phone their campaign offices and ask about the issues that affect your rights as sportsmen. Also it is important to look at voting records, and what candidates have said in the past. Below are websites and phone numbers for each presidential candidate.

Hillary Clinton (703) 469-2008	www.hillaryclinton.com
Mike Huckabee (501) 324-2008	www.mikehuckabee.com
John McCain (703) 418-2008	www.exploremccain.com
Barack Obama (866) 675-2008	www.barackobama.com
Ron Paul (703)248-9115	www.ronpaul2008.com

For more information on where candidates stand on key issues, their background, and articles about them, visit projects.washingtonpost.com/2008-presidential-candidates/.

Even more important than the presidential candidates are the local and state candidates who want to represent you. State and Local representatives are the people who put into motion most of the laws and ordinances which could affect your rights as a sportsman or sportswoman. To find out more information about who your representatives are, and how to get in touch with them visit the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance legislative action center at www.ussportsmen.org.

In the past, sportsmen have stepped up and defeated the anti's in campaigns to protect mourning dove hunting, bear hunting and trapping in several states. But without the sportsmen's votes, the anti's tactics will be successful and outdoor sports will suffer.

Take Action! Encourage your family, friends, and fellow sportsmen to investigate where candidates stand on the issues that affect you. A voter has power. Fulfill your obligation as an American citizen to help decide the future of our nation.

###

SOUTHERN ZONE TURKEY SEASON DATES

1st Season: Monday, April 7 – Friday, April 11
2nd Season: Saturday, April 12 – Thursday, April 17
3rd Season: Friday, April 18 – Wednesday, April 23
4th Season: Thursday, April 24 – Wednesday, April 30
5th Season: Thursday, May 1 – Thursday, May 8

Bag Limit: One male turkey (gobbler); or one hen with a visible beard per permit, with a maximum of three permits. Once you have your limit, you may not further participate with a weapon in any turkey hunting party.

Federal Offers Cash Rebates on Turkey Loads

For the first time in several years, Federal Cartridge is offering mail-in cash rebates to spring, 2008 turkey hunters on purchases of its Premium Mag-Shok Heavyweight (tungsten-based) turkey loads and Premium Mag-Shok lead turkey loads. The maximum rebate per household is \$20, with individual rebate amounts as follows:

Federal Cartridge: 2008 Spring Turkey Load Rebate Amounts

5 Rounds Federal Premium® Mag•Shok®
HEAVYWEIGHT™ Turkey Loads \$7.50
10 Rounds Federal Premium® Mag•Shok®
HEAVYWEIGHT™ Turkey Loads \$15.00
1 Box (10 rounds) Federal Premium® Mag•Shok®
Lead Turkey Loads \$2.00
2 Boxes (10 rounds) Federal Premium®
Mag•Shok® Lead Turkey Loads \$5.00

In a separate promotion, Federal Cartridge is offering consumers a free (\$2.95 shipping & handling) "Flite-Control to Major Tom" cap with the purchase of one box of Federal Premium Mag-Shok w/Flite-Control Wad lead turkey loads. This promotion coupon also promotes the fact that -- for every box of Mag-Shok ammunition marked with the NWTF logo -- Federal Premium gives a portion of the proceeds back to the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Prior to this year, the only spring turkey promotion offered by Federal over the last several years was a free "Flite-Control to Major Tom" T-shirt with the purchase of Federal Premium Mag-Shok lead turkey loads.

2008 St. Louis District Recreation Operating Plan

CORPS News Release, 2/11/2008

Carlyle Lake, Carlyle, Illinois, February 11, 2008 – Four lake projects operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, are announcing reduced recreation service levels this summer. Flat-to-declining budgets are dictating reductions at Mark Twain Lake in Mo., and Shelbyville, Carlyle and Rend Lakes in Ill.

Even after reducing services, Corps managers point out that they will start the 2008 recreation season with 92 percent of campgrounds open until after the July 4th weekend, 85 percent until after Labor Day weekend and 75 percent will remain open until the season's end. Similar figures are cited for beaches, picnic shelters and boat ramp lanes. In addition, the four lakes offer state park facilities that are not affected by the Corps budget reductions.

The heaviest impacts are being felt at two Corps Lakes. At Carlyle Lake, some campgrounds and facilities will open on schedule but close early. At Rend Lake, South Marcum Campground and the North Sandusky and North Marcum Day Use Areas will be closed all season.

Lake Shelbyville and Mark Twain Lake will operate all of their campgrounds on a normal seasonal schedule but, as at all four of the lakes, services will be reduced for visitors.

Reductions will include less frequent mowing, refuse pickup and facility cleaning. In addition, Visitor Centers will operate on weekends only, when demand is at its highest. Corps officials also acknowledge that support to some activities and events will have to be curtailed this year.

The Corps is realizing other savings by accepting gaps in vacated full time positions and not hiring as many of the temporary summer employees as in the past.

Corps managers also acknowledge that they have no contingency funding for unexpected breakdowns. They explained that if something major breaks they will either have to identify additional cuts for repairs or do without the service until they can find other funds.

At Carlyle Lake, all recreation areas and campgrounds will open as scheduled, however some operating seasons will require adjustment. Dam West, Boulder, and McNair Campgrounds will open April 1, April 15 and May 1 respectively, with all three closing September 2, following the Labor Day holiday. Coles Creek Campground will open May 1 and close July 7, following the Fourth of July holiday. The Dam East Spillway Campground and the Eldon Hazlet State Park operating dates will be unaffected—they are open year-round.

The entire Coles Creek Recreation Area, including the campground, beach, day use area, boat ramp and the Lotus Group Use Area, will operate through the 4th of July weekend, closing on July 7th. For boat launching, alternatives include Boulder Recreation area on the east side of the lake, Dam East Boat Ramp and Dam West Boat Ramp on the southern part of the lake, and Keyesport Recreation Area and Eldon Hazlet State Park boat ramps on the west side of the lake. The Dam West, McNair and Keyesport beaches will remain open through Labor Day.

For more information on Carlyle Lake, contact the Carlyle Lake Project Office at (618) 594-2484 or email at carlylelake@usace.army.mil.



Banded Pintail from Japan

Fred Scott of Ruleville, Mississippi is in possession of one of the rarest bird band recoveries in history. Fred recovered the band on January 3, 2008, from a drake northern pintail near Ruleville. The drake northern pintail was in fact banded on Hyoko Lake near Niigata, on the northwestern coast of Japan.

The pintail had been banded on February 12, 2000, by Ryuhei Honma, a bird banding specialist for the Japanese Bird Banding Association, as part of an ongoing research project conducted by the Bird Banding Research Center.

Majority of Congress Urges Support of 2nd Amendment

A majority of the members of the United States Senate and U.S. House of Representatives – including southern Illinois congressmen Jerry Costello and John Shimkus – signed a 58-page “amicus curiae* (friend of the court)” brief on Friday, urging the U.S. Supreme Court to affirm the “individual rights” view of the Second Amendment when the justices consider the upcoming case on the constitutionality of Washington D.C.’s ban on handguns (*D.C. vs. Heller*), a case which many expect will result in a landmark ruling on the interpretation of the Second Amendment.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in the case – which is the most closely watched case of this Supreme Court term -- beginning March 18th.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENT

The Second Amendment provides: “A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.” Congress adopted that wording and proposed it to the States in 1789. It became part of the Bill of Rights which the States ratified in 1791. As the text and the drafting history demonstrate, the Amendment was intended to guarantee the right of individuals to possess and keep ordinary firearms.

Following the abolition of slavery, Congress sought to end the incidents of slavery, including prohibitions on possession of firearms by African Americans. In 1866, over two-thirds of Congress passed the Freedmen’s Bureau Act, which declared protection for the “full and equal benefit of all laws and proceedings concerning personal liberty, personal security, and . . . estate . . . , including the constitutional right to bear arms”

In passing firearms regulations for the District, Congress has been sensitive to Second Amendment concerns. An 1892 enactment prohibiting the carrying of concealed weapons exempted one’s place of business and dwelling house. In 1906, Congress empowered the District to pass “such usual and reasonable police regulations” deemed necessary to regulate firearms, which today remains the District’s only delegation to regulate firearms. A ban on handguns is both unusual and unreasonable. In 1932 Congress passed a comprehensive firearms act which remains largely in place. As the Senate report for that act stated, “the right of an individual to possess a pistol in his home or on land belonging to him would not be disturbed by the bill.”

In 1941, Congress enacted the Property Requisition Act, which authorized the President to requisition certain types of property. The Act declared that it must not be construed “to authorize the requisitioning or require the registration of any firearms possessed by any individual for his personal protection or sport” unless prohibited or already required to be registered, or “to impair or infringe in any manner the right of any individual to keep and bear arms”

The Gun Control Act of 1968 declared that “this title is not intended to discourage or eliminate the private ownership or use of firearms by law-abiding citizens for lawful purposes.” And in the Firearms Owners’ Protection Act of 1986, over two-thirds of Congress

found that the rights of citizens “to keep and bear arms under the second amendment to the United States Constitution” as well as other constitutional rights “require additional legislation to correct existing firearms statutes and enforcement policies.”

Attempts to ban handguns through litigation led Congress to enact the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act in 2005. Approximately two-thirds of Congress found that the Second Amendment “protects the rights of individuals, including those who are not members of a militia or engaged in military service or training, to keep and bear arms.” The Act precludes lawsuits against the lawful industry “to preserve a citizen’s access to a supply of firearms and ammunition for all lawful purposes”

Confiscations of firearms in the wake of Hurricane Katrina led Congress in 2006 to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to forbid seizures of lawful firearms in disasters. Over two-thirds of the House enacted Findings that the seizures violated citizens’ Second Amendment rights to have firearms for protection in the home and elsewhere. The Findings were deleted when the bill was added to an appropriations bill in the Senate, but its underlying basis in the Second Amendment remained understood.

The “District of Columbia Personal Protection Act,” a bill which passed the House in 2004 and is currently pending, includes the Finding that: “Legislation is required to correct the District of Columbia’s law in order to restore the fundamental rights of its citizens under the Second Amendment”

In sum, historically Congress has interpreted the Second Amendment as recognizing the right of law-abiding individuals to keep and bear arms. This Court should give due deference to the repeated findings over different historical epochs by Congress, a co-equal branch of government, that the Amendment guarantees the personal right to possess firearms. The District’s prohibitions on mere possession by law-abiding persons of handguns in the home and having usable firearms there are unreasonable per se.

No purpose would be served by remanding this case for further fact finding or other proceedings.

###

Illinois shootings prove Brady Campaign is horribly wrong on guns

By Alan Gottlieb and Dave Workman, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms

Illinois ranks 9th on the “state scorecard” maintained by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, meaning it is in that anti-gun organization’s “Top Ten” states with restrictive gun laws.

Illinois has some of the toughest gun laws in the country, which makes the Brady Campaign very happy. Illinois cities can sue gun manufacturers, background checks are required at gun shows, there is a waiting period on all gun purchases, and college and university campuses are “gun-free zones.” Adding to the Brady Campaign’s delight: Illinois is one of only two states in the nation where private citizens are prevented from carrying concealed handguns for personal protection.

The recent massacre of five women at a suburban Rockford shopping mall and the St. Valentine’s Day shooting of five students at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb is proof positive that the Brady Campaign’s scorecard is not worth the paper it is printed on. Two multiple shootings in less than two weeks puts the lie to any argument that restrictive gun laws which leave citizens unarmed and create so-called “gun-free zones” make us safer.

If just one person in that Rockford store, or one student at NIU had been armed, they might have stopped a bloodbath.

The anti-self-defense extremists at the Brady Campaign – who have consistently battled common sense concealed carry laws that put law-abiding citizens on a level playing field with criminals and crazies – are real proud of themselves. They should be begging forgiveness for the horrific crimes that occur in shopping malls, on college and university campuses and anywhere else that their hysteria and political demagoguery have prevented sensible right-to-carry statutes from being enacted.

Gun-free zones are nothing more than government-enforced killing fields, all of them supported and defended by the gun control lobby. Instead of security, they have given us heartbreaking body counts. They constitute a giant loophole in public safety, and the fact that every one of these mass shootings has occurred in such a zone is a national disgrace.

In our new book, *America Fights Back: Armed Self-Defense in a Violent Age*, we explode the myth of gun-free zones, revealing them to be nothing more than designated areas of victim disarmament. We prove that

the two biggest threats to public safety today are gun-free zones and legislative resistance to concealed carry laws.

Yet with murder statistics climbing and mountains of evidence piling up against their effectiveness, the Brady Campaign and other anti-gun rights lobbying groups continue to demand more restrictions on the most basic of all human rights, the right of self-defense.

Outraged Illinois citizens should focus their anger not at firearms manufacturers or gun rights organizations, but on lawmakers in Springfield, particularly those under the political influence of Chicago Mayor Richard Daley. Every state legislator who resists the adoption of a progressive concealed carry law should resign or be thrown out of office for malfeasance and dereliction of duty. They, and politicians like them all over the country who share their gun phobia and serve as puppets of the gun control lobby have utterly failed in their responsibility to public safety. The blood from NIU, Rockford and other places including Virginia Tech, is solely on their hands.

It is time to dramatically change our perspective on self-defense in this country. It is long past the time for lawmakers to find the courage to ignore the gun control zealots, and make them swallow their own words when we adopt responsible concealed carry laws to prevent more tragedies like the ones in Illinois.

As anti-gunners often say when they battle sensible gun rights legislation: “If it saves just one life, it’s worth it.”

IDNR News Bits

Buy 2008 Licenses: Illinois fishing, hunting and sportsmen combination licenses for 2008 are available from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, online through the IDNR web site at <http://dnr.state.il.us>, and by calling 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). DNR Direct makes buying licenses, habitat stamps, and waterfowl stamps convenient and easy. By going online, license buyers can use American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa or E-Check and print the license or receipt - and the system is available 24 hours a day. The new IDNR license year begins April 1. The 2008 licenses will be valid through Mar. 31, 2009.

ISRA Alert:
**AMMUNITION BAN BILLS ON THE
MOVE IN ILLINOIS GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

A pair of ammunition ban bills are up for hearing in the House Executive Committee this week. If enacted, either of these bills would effectively ban the purchase of ammunition in Illinois. The bills in question are **HB 4269** sponsored by Rep. Monique Davis (D-Chicago), and **HB 4349** sponsored by Rep. Naomi Jakobsson (D-Champaign).

Here is what passage of either of these bills would mean to you:

1. Ammunition manufacturers would be required to imprint a secret code on cartridge casings so that the purchaser of the ammunition could be identified.
2. When you purchase ammunition, that secret code would be registered to your name.
3. All your ammunition purchases would be registered with the Illinois State Police.
4. You would be responsible for all eternity for ammunition registered to you.
5. It would be in your best interest to destroy all expended ammunition casings because an unaccounted for empty casing could be used to frame you for a crime you did not commit.
6. You would have to surrender all unregistered ammunition you now own to the Illinois State Police.
7. Reloading would be banned.
8. The Illinois Department of Revenue would be authorized to place a tax on ammunition and raise that tax any time for any reason.
9. Taxes and increased manufacturing costs would raise the price of a box of .45 ammo to \$200 or more.
10. Gun ownership would become too costly for most people.

WHAT YOU MUST DO TO HELP SAVE YOUR GUN RIGHTS:

1. Call Rep. Monique Davis' office at (217) 782-0010 and POLITELY tell the person that answers that you are a law-abiding gun owner and you would oppose Rep. Davis' attempt to ban ammunition.
2. Call Rep. Naomi Jakobsson's office at (217) 558-1009 and POLITELY tell the person that answers that you are a law-abiding gun owner and you would oppose Rep. Jakobsson's attempt to ban ammunition.
3. Call each of the members of the House Executive Committee and POLITELY tell whoever answers the phone that you OPPOSE HB4269 and HB4349 and that you would like them to vote against those bills in the Executive Committee. Remember, you represent the gun owners of this state, so BE POLITE. ###

**IDNR Addresses Recent Internet Rumors
of Cougars in Illinois
IDNR News Release, 2/6/2008**

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is addressing recent internet rumors claiming photographic evidence of cougars in Illinois. These photos are being falsely identified as being taken in Illinois – in many cases claiming to be taken near Findlay in Shelby County. The photos are real, but appear to have been taken in 2001 or 2002 in Lander, Wyoming where cougars are common. The internet rumors have been circulating throughout Illinois via email and usually misidentify the location of the photos.

“While it is not completely impossible for a cougar to be found in Illinois, sighting of a wild one is highly unlikely,” said Acting IDNR Director Sam Flood. “Wild cougars have been found in neighboring states but again, very, very rarely.”

Flood also addressed rumors sometimes mentioned in these hoax emails that the IDNR is releasing these animals into the Illinois ecosystem.

“It is absolutely not true that the Illinois Department of Natural Resources is releasing cougars anywhere in the state for any reason,” Flood said.

Below are a few links that may help avoid confusion about the validity of these photographs. One is a link to a website devoted to correcting internet rumors, and the other is a link to a report by a Missouri Department of Conservation biologist which also addresses the origins of these photos.

<http://www.snopes.com/photos/animals/patiomountainlion.asp>
<http://www.cougarnet.org/Assets/CougarHysteria.pdf>

The IDNR urges people who have been sent photos of cougars claiming to have been taken in Illinois to compare them with ones found in the links above.

While the IDNR does investigate several alleged cougar sightings each year, most if not all turn out to be a case of mistaken identity. The animals most often mistaken for cougars are coyotes, bobcats, or large domestic dogs or cats.

Actual cougar sightings in Illinois are few and far between. The last cougar found in Illinois was in December of 2004 in Mercer County. It was found already dead, apparently shot with an arrow. Another cougar was found dead after it was hit by a train in Randolph County in July of 2000. Prior to 2000, the last verified record of a cougar in Illinois was from Alexander County in 1862. ###



