

The Official Publication Of The Minnesota Duck & Goose Callers Association

THE HAIL CALL

WINTER 2012



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President's Report

Hey Callers,

The hunting season is winding down and the off season brings opportunity for new events and ideas for the MNDGCA. We are always looking for new ways to bring people together in the sport we all love so much. It also means the banquet is right around the corner. Mark the date for Jan. 21st, 2012, our banquet is our major fundraiser for the year and it is what makes all the things we do possible. I hope to see all of you there.

We had another great year of contests at the Mankato Scheels Waterfowl Expo. Thanks to Scheels for helping put on our state and regional contests. I would like to congratulate the winners: Ben Marleau, North Star Duck; Field Hudnall, North Star Goose; Mike Anderson, MN State Duck and Mike Benjamin, MN State Goose. Thanks to everyone who helped out and participated in this event.

I was fortunate enough to be able to spend the whole week up at Woodie Camp again, what an awesome camp!! We had an amazing group of kids this year and a great week of weather. Every year the MNDGCA is able to send two kids to camp and these kids do not have to pay for any part of the camp. Thanks to all of the volunteers that makes this camp possible and a special thanks to our own John Molkenbur, Ciara McCarty, and Jay Von Bank for helping out. At last years camp meeting in January the instructors thought it

would be great if we could do an Advanced Woodie Camp, take a small number of kids who have been to Woodie Camp and take them out hunting. Well, we did it and it was incredible!! We took 9 kids over MEA weekend up to Viking Valley Lodge in Ashby, MN for the 1st annual Advanced Woodie Camp. We wanted to create a "Duck Camp" type atmosphere and we did. We shot sporting clays, hunted pheasants and hunted duck and geese over water and in the field. I had some of the best "down home" cooking by our Chef Matt Connor who is the director of Prairie Wetlands Learning Center in Fergus Falls. I would like to thank Brad Nylin of MWA for allowing me to be part of this camp and hope we can keep doing it in the future. You will see some of the pictures in the newsletter.

The MNDGCA started its own event this year with the 1st annual Women's Hunt. The hunt was held the weekend of Nov 11th-13th in Fergus Falls MN. 10 women participated in the hunt and they had a pretty good weekend of shooting both ducks and geese. The Women of the Wild were there to film the hunt as well. I would like to give Kari Palashewski, Ciara McCarty and Alice Anderson a huge "Thank You" for working so hard to make this hunt happen. A special Thanks to Ryan Barthel and Brad Hansen for putting on the hunt and the use of their equipment, fields and talents.

As you read through you newsletter please take note of the sponsors page and logos. These are the companies and people that help make our banquet and contests possible. Please let them how much they are appreciated by buying from them. We also have some new recipes to check out along with some great stories to tell. Don't forget about your Banquet registration either. There is a registration form on the back of your newsletter or on our website www.mnduckandgoosecallers.org

Have A Great Holiday Season!

Andy Thill, President

We would like to thank the following partners for their continued support.



The Dawning Of A New Era

By Brad Nylin





I thought Advanced Woodie Camp exceeded my expectations in every way. Being that this was the first time we have done this, we didn't really know what to expect, other than what we planned, which we just kind of winged.. The lodging at Viking Valley Hunt Club was first class and allowed the kids and mentors to sort of take it over and, our hope was to make this an actual " Duck Camp" experience, and from the comments from the kids, we accomplished that. The food, again was gourmet like. We had Matt Conner do the cooking. Matt is the Director of the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center , where Woodie Camp is held. So I think we all weren't expecting to eat like we did, and that was terrific.

The 9 kids that we had, were really great to have there. They were all excited to be there,

not only to hunt, but they were just as eager to take in the entire surroundings. The sun rises, sun sets, the fog, the camp fire, the stories and the games.

We wanted this to be unlike anything they have ever done before, if that was possible. Most of these kids have all been on a hunting trip, but with everything that they got to do, on a different level, it was even better than they expected. I really think that be doing this camp, that we have instilled a terrific memory of the entire trip, not only the harvest. I like to think that is what will help keep bringing kids that are interested in doing something like this, well into the future.

SO, as you can tell I hope, I thought it was one of the best things that we have done as an organization, and personally, I would say the same thing.



Calling The Audible

By Josh Dokken



Not because I guide waterfowl hunts for 60 days a year. Not because I make Duck Calls for a living. Not because I'm smarter than you, but because of many foolish mistakes, I have come to learn, you must have audibles and you darn better use them!

While hunting waterfowl, I have a rule of thumb that I use religiously. "If you think it's "probably" good enough, it's not. In fact, you may consider doing the opposite."

Like an offense calling an audible on the opposing defense, I like to be able to make changes quickly and for the better. It is the one thing as hunters that we always have in our favor, CHANGE. Whether it is switching decoy patterns to allow birds into your kill

hole, turning blinds with changes in the wind, calling at them more or vice versa. Whatever the adjustment may be, knowing how and when to make it is critical.

Now you're thinking, "Well that's all great "j-money" but how am I supposed to know what vicissitude to generate and are you going to send me a text message when it's time to?"

To answer that, let me first ask, have you ever went into a hunt questioning some form of your set-up? Furthermore, have you ever neglected to make that change only to find out you should have made it, except it's now too late? I should now have your attention, and so should your future hunting sets.

The initial set-up, this is where I believe we can make our biggest gains. As waterfowl hunters our window of time can be narrow, thus making quick changes ultra-important. I don't know about you, but many times I lack the manpower, ability or even desire to completely switch out an entire decoy spread in sufficient time. Because of this, I start every hunt with what I call my "dummy set."

The dummy set is exactly that, dumb. It's a very neutral pattern and is easily altered to any given direction. It's not appealing to the eye and to be honest, it most likely won't be very effective. However, it does do one thing very well; it allows me to see firsthand the reaction of that day's prey.

Example, birds fly in and skirt to the right. I call the audible, block them on the right, resulting in a quick, simple fix. Now, let's say the very next flock attacks the same area as the last flock, even after I've tried to contain them. I have

just pin-pointed where the birds intend to light that day and I make that my new kill hole. Obviously this is a very general example, some hunts may require more in- depth changes, but by limiting variables and making quick, simple adjustments, I have allowed myself plenty of time for a successful hunt.

Now, the initial dummy set should still have some attributes (kill hole, shooting lanes, etc.) of your "normal" decoy spreads. A pile of decoys in the middle of a field is not ideal, and it won't serve its purpose. Give yourself the opportunity to make a quick adjustment, by starting the hunt with a simple, compact, neutral set-up.

Keep your hunt fool proof by using a dummy set and be prepared to call the audible. Successful hunts are in your future.

**Until next time,
Josh Dokken**





Species Spotlight

White-Fronted Goose

Latin: *Anser albifrons*

Average length: M 29", F 27"

Average weight: M 6.2 lbs., F 5.5 lbs.

Description: The white-fronted goose is named for the distinctive white band found at the base of bill. The sexes are similar in appearance, but males typically are larger. The head, neck and upper back of white-fronted geese are grayish-brown. The lower back and rump are dark brown, and the tail is dark brown and edged with white. The chest and breast are grayish with dark brown to black blotches and bars on the breast, giving it the nickname "specklebelly." The belly and upper and lower coverts are white. The bill is pinkish and the legs and feet are orange.

Breeding: White-fronted geese are circumpolar in their breeding distribution. The majority of white-fronted geese in North America breed near the Arctic Circle from Alaska to central Canada. They are solitary breeders and nest on both tidal flats and upland areas, most frequently among tall grass and sedges bordering sloughs and marshes. Female white-fronted geese lay an average of 5 eggs.

Migrating and Wintering: White-fronted geese migrate along the Pacific or Central flyways and winter in California's Central Valley, coastal and mid-continent Mexico and coastal Texas and Louisiana. Winter habitats include coastal marshes, wet meadows and freshwater marshes.

Population: Currently two populations of white-fronted geese are recognized: the Pacific Population and the Mid-Continent Population. Numbers of Pacific Population white-fronted geese have increased steadily over the last decade.

Food Habits: The white-fronted goose is primarily a grazer and feeds on marsh grasses, grain crops, tundra plants, aquatic plants and fresh plant growth in fields. They also eat berries, aquatic insects and their larvae.



Cabin Chili

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. Ground Beef or Cubed Steak
- 1 Medium Onion Chopped
- 1/2-Cup Celery Chopped
- 1 Small Can Regular or Roasted Green Chilies
- 2 Tablespoons Chili Powder
- 1 Teaspoon Ground Cumin (optional)
- 2 Teaspoons Salt
- 1 Teaspoon Pepper
- 1 14.5 oz Can Tomato Sauce

1 Cup Water

- 1 14 oz Can Chopped Tomatoes (or fresh)
- 2 Cans of Beans, Pinto, Chili, White, Black (any 2 will do) add liquid too

Directions:

Brown, meat with onions & celery, add spices and green chilies, add rest of ingredients stir and simmer covered for 1-2 hours or put in crock pot.

Serve with favorite toppings, Fritos, crackers, tortilla chips, cheese, onions, sour cream.



16th Annual

Duck & Goose Callers Banquet

Saturday, January 21nd, 2012

Blainbrook Entertainment Center

12000 Central Ave NE,
Blaine, MN 55434-3912

5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Social Hour
6:30 pm Dinner



Donate a non-perishable food item at our banquet and be entered into a prize drawing! All donated food will be given to a local food shelf.

Register Today!

*Early Bird Drawing for \$100 in Raffle Tickets
Must be in by Saturday, January, 14th to be Eligible*

- Guns
- Raffles
- Artwork
- Championship Calls
- Decoys
- Silent & Live Auctions
- Kids & Ladies Raffles
- And much, much more!

TICKET PRICES: *Cost Includes Membership*

Tickets purchased prior to the banquet:

ADULTS.....\$30

Kids 16 & Under.....\$20

Tickets purchased at the door:

ADULTS.....\$40

Kids 16 & Under.....\$25

Make Checks Payable to: MN Duck & Goose Callers

Mail To: P.O. BOX 599, Excelsior, MN 55331

Questions, Please Call: Andy 612-749-9503

2012 Minnesota Duck & Goose Callers Banquet

Adult Names: _____

Kids Names: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone#: _____

E-mail: _____

Total (\$): _____

Guests: _____

Credit Card: Visa MasterCard

Credit Card Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____ SSV# _____



P.O. BOX 599
Excelsior, MN 55331