



ROD & GUN GAZETTE

VOLUME 21 | ISSUE 1 | MARCH 2021

The Fin's 2021 Ice Fishing Derby:

It Was Time to Catch Something – GOOD!



Fin members enjoying themselves.



Jeff Butterfield and Joel Harmon "Who's got the Pizza"



First Place winner, Mike Royce III, with the money pay off.



Vance with Dawn at huge hobo barrel. Now all we need is a train whistle.

The Club hosted a great day of Ice Fishing on February 13th at the Upper pond where the weather was clear and cold, and the ice finally cooperated after many years of either no ice or thin ice. A special shout out to Vance Stuart who organized this event with many other Fin members. It provided a learning experience for the younger kids, and to show off who has the best fishing tactics. The above pictures tell the tale of an excellent day.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members,

Spring season is here! I am pleased to announce the clubhouse will re-open on 3/19/21. We will be following all COVID-19 guidelines. I sincerely hope you will come out support and enjoy your club!

There are dinners and events scheduled for the upcoming year. Please check your emails in the newsletter for dates and times.

CLUB WIDE WORK DAY

On 4/24/21 starting at 8 AM we will be working together to clean up club grounds it's a great opportunity to get your work hours! All ranges including skeet and trap will be closed till 1 PM. **Rain-date 5/1/21.**

I foresee this year to be a great year! Thanks for your support and dedication to your club throughout the year.

Troy Quick, *President*

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Any members interested in working around the club grounds or buildings, please contact Dick Palmer @ 860-933-4768. We need individuals who can work by themselves or with a team to complete tasks around the Club. This can be grass trimming; cutting trees, moving mulch or dirt around, to staining wooden structures, building picnic tables, the list goes on. What I like to see after our annual spring cleanup, is to select a half day work party like once a month to complete any bull work and set forth a list of smaller chores to do on your leisure. All of these tasks will be given work hours. So, if you love to work outside, please contact me 860-933-4768 or e-mail rpalmer12@snet.net

Another item, any Club member needing wood, there are those cut trees in front of the metal wood storage shed that needs cleaning up, if you want to cut and split that wood, have at it.

Thank you. Dick Palmer

ANNUAL RAFFLE

Members reminder that the Club's Annual Raffle tickets are due in by May 11th before 6:30 pm, as the drawing is this night at 7:30 pm. Members are responsible to purchase or sell a minimum of 8 tickets of the 12 received.

1st prize is worth \$1,000.00 gift certificate at Cabela's, 2nd prize is worth \$750.00 certificate at L.L. Bean, 3rd prize is worth \$500.00 certificate from Columbia Sports, 4th prize is worth \$250.00 certificate from Home Depot, and 5th prize is a \$125.00 certificate from Willimantic Brewing Co.

Any questions please contact Bill Neff.



APRIL 24 SPRING CLEAN UP

Members, every spring we have a **Spring Clean Up** around the Club grounds. This year the President has set a date of April 24th at 8 am, with a rain date of May 1st at 8 am. We need members to come out to pick up branches, blow leaves, move mulch, whatever it takes to brighten up the Club. The more members, the more tasks are completed, and the quicker we can finish. Work hours will be assigned. If you have power tools, dump trailer, even small bucket loader, those will help out to complete this work. Any questions please contact President Quick or Dick Palmer.





COME IN THE CLUBHOUSE IS OPEN

BAR NEWS

It has been about 1 year since the Covid shutdown closed our bar. But we are happy to announce that we will be opening back up on March 19th! Some things have changed since our closing, we now have a new Permittee, John Fitch, as well as a new bar manager Erin Jones.

We will continue to follow the latest state guidance as they change.

At this time guidelines include the amount of people allowed inside the bar area, mask rules apply while moving throughout the bar/hall. A "meal" is necessary to comply with the restrictions. Food will be available to purchase when the bar is open. Food purchase will be required in order to be served any alcoholic beverages. Seating in the bar room will be limited, the hall will be set up with tables for seating, and the hall window to the bar will be open.

We ask that all members and guests please follow these rules and be respectful as we move forward with our reopening. Bar hours will be sent out via email and posted to the clubs Facebook member's page. Stop down to the bar and visit Erin 3/19, Annie 3/20 and Vicki 3/21.

Thank you to Annie and Vicki for your patience and help during the shutdown.

Erin Jones, *Bar Manager*

MEMBERSHIP

Currently, the club membership has:

Regular - 327; Associate - 272; Junior - 14; and Life - 168. The club added 101 new members in 2020 which was an all-time high. I guess all the new gun owners needed a place to shoot!

Unfortunately there were 71 people that did not renew their membership to the club this year. I am sure some of this was due to COVID-19. If you know of anyone that is interested in becoming a member, I can email you an application or you can download one from the club's website. That information is under the Members Only Section. Just a reminder the user name and password are case sensitive.

User name: ffclub

Password: chaplin

We have added additional information to that section as well. If your email has changed, please send me the updated address. I send out several emails during the year about work parties and events.

Don't wait until September to get your work hours completed.

I will be holding a Range Safety Seminar sometime this Spring, this will cover the use of the Skeet & Trap machines as well as the rules for the pistol/rifle range.

Bob Hruskocy, *Membership Chairman*

MEMBERS

In the past the Club has always had a jar on the bar for donations to the Kids Activities, with the Bar opening on the 19th of this month, this jar again will be present and we hope that you can donate to their fund.

April 17th is the start of our Dinners here at the Club, we'll follow all state guidelines in COVID-19 rules, so you can feel safe in coming out and enjoying these dinners. April 17th is that fantastic Prime Rib Dinner, in 2019 tickets sold out within three (3) weeks, so please watch the e-mails when it announces the tickets are on sell.

SPORTING CLAYS

Sporting clay season is right around the corner and I can't wait. It has been far too long since we all have had the opportunity to get together to shoot the variety of clay targets that sporting clays has to offer. There is something to be said about walking through the woods with your friends, carrying your gun in pursuit of the elusive clay target. It kind of feels like hunting rabbits, pheasants, and ducks all in one morning, and who knows we may even see some squirrels.

And that's not all, we always have a lunch (expertly cooked by some crazy long haired guy). Hot dogs and hamburgers to be enjoyed with your friends. The thought of a cocktail in the bar to wrap up the day pretty near gives me goosebumps. So stash away a couple of boxes of shells so you can come to the Fin on one of the below dates and get in on what we are all about, FUN!

Sporting clays is labor intensive and if you want to get in on the fun while earning some work hours, new or old members alike you will be made to feel welcome. No experience necessary. All events are open to members and non-members.

Reach out to me if you have any questions or would like to work.
Matt Halloran: Birdhunter312@gmail.com | 860-428-1818

Dates:

May 8 - work party course set up, 8 till noon

May 23 - shoot 50 targets

June 13 - shoot 50 targets

July 11 - shoot 50 targets

August 8 - shoot - 50 targets

September 11 - Ducks Unlimited 100 target shoot

September 12 - 100 target Fin shoot

Stop at the snack shack and say hello to our long hair cook, "Crazy Bruce", best food around.



SHOTGUN SHOOTING SPORTS REPORT

The Winter Skeet League ECSC is almost over and in another month the standings will be announced. The clay target inventory control is being closely monitored by the Skeet and Executive Committees. We were up and down the past two(2) months, but ended on a positive note. Upcoming events, dates, and work parties will be posted by e-mail, and Club bulletin boards. Please keep an eye out for these events. We would like to thank all Fin Members for their continued work and support for these programs.

Thank you, The Skeet Committee

5 STAND

The 2021 5 Stand season will be getting started soon. Planning on shoots starting in May. Field clean up and setup will be started as soon as the weather allows. Anyone looking to help out there will be an email sent for a work party.

One change to the 5 Stand program this year is the cost to shoot a round. Due to the cost of standard and specialty targets it was necessary to raise the price per round. Members will play \$5 and non-members will pay \$7.

Shoot dates will be emailed and posted to the clubs Facebook page.

Thank you. David Jones, *5 Stand Chairman*

TRAP

Now that the weather is getting a little nicer, I am sure members are anxious to get out of the house and start shooting! PLEASE remember to let the pump on the machines warm up before shooting in colder weather. This should eliminate wasted targets. PLEASE do not adjust the machines. They are set at a specific height for a reason. If there are any issues with the trap equipment, please contact me asap.

If anyone is interested in learning the basics of trapshooting, I might be holding a trap shooting seminar sometime late Spring. Details to follow.

Bob Hruskocy, *Trap Chairman*

SUMMER SKEET LEAGUE 2021

The summer skeet league will start the week of June 6th and will run for 10 weeks. All members including Jr members are all welcome and encouraged to participate. Sign up for the league will be posted in the bar early May. If you have any questions please contact me at 860-576-1214 or email corey.curtisgray@gmail.com Thank you Corey Curtis-Gray

PLEASE FILL OUT THE APPLICATION BELOW AND RETURN IT TO THE BAR.

FIN FUR FEATHER CLUB 2021 HUNTING APPLICATION

You Must Purchase a Hunting Badge to hunt any game on Lease or Club Property.

Please check off all that apply:

Method of Hunting:

- Shotgun Archery
 Muzzleloader

Leased Land: Upland

- Deer Turkey
 Small Game Waterfowl

Club Land: Upland

- Deer Turkey
 Archery ONLY

Hunting Pheasants?

- YES NO

If hunting pheasants,
please select one group:

- A B or Wed

Fill out the information below. Please Print Clearly.

Last Name _____

First Name _____

FFF Club Membership # _____

License Plate # _____

Hunting License # _____

Telephone # _____

SIGNING THIS FORM MEANS YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL CLUB HUNTING RULES.

Signature _____

Date _____

HUNT COMMITTEE

First off I would like to say thank you to all who worked hard to make this past pheasant hunting season a success. There is so much work that goes into making the program succeed, whether it is feeding, stocking, delivering, each task is so vital to the success. Without your support we wouldn't be able to have what we have. Last year we were able to stock 1871 birds for our members. I know there were many great memories that were made this year. I can't wait to see what our next season has in store.

With one season closing we are right around the corner from the next. Spring Turkey will soon be upon us. Please remember that before hunting you must purchase a 2021 hunting Badge. All badges can be purchased in the bar during regular hours. Private Land Permission slips will be available. Please remember that permission slips must be carried when hunting on club or leased property for Turkey and Deer season. If you are in need of a copy of hunting maps and rules they can be picked up at the bar as well during open hours. I would encourage all members to read the rules and make sure you know all property boundaries prior to hunting. We are very fortunate of the land we have and wouldn't want to risk losing it.

Over the past year we have seen a influx of members who are interesting hunting and may not have ever been exposed If you are willing to Mentor a Junior.Hunter or a new hunter or if you are a member who is looking for a mentor please email me at corey.curtisgray@gmail.com and I will compile a list and make sure we connect members.

Corey Curtis-Gray, *Hunt Chair*

FISH COMMITTEE REPORT 2021

- All fishermen and women must purchase a badge for \$25 which entitles them to fish and hunt.
- All Junior Members must also purchase a badge for \$10. The badges are available at the bar.

Fish stockings will take place on the following dates:

1st Stocking – March 25th (weather permitting)

2nd Stocking – April 8th

3rd stocking – April 29th

The stocking will start around 4:30 pm each day and we would appreciate any volunteers who can make it. Buttonball Trout Hatchery located near the club will supply the fish. The fish will be in good shape since they only have a short trip from the hatchery to our ponds. Brook and rainbow trout will make up over 90% of the fish stocked, with 12" – 14" fish being the minimum size with a good number of 16" fish added as well. Brown Trout will make up the remaining percentage of fish stocked at the last stocking as they are more temperature resistant.

FYI- The Upper Pond will be CLOSED from April 30th until May 2nd, the day of the Kid's Fishing Derby. The Upper Pond will be closed IMMEDIATELY following the Kid Fishing Derby and will reopen after John Shea's Biggest Trout Derby on May 9th.

The Kid's Fishing Derby will be held Sunday, May 2nd, from 9 am - 12 noon at the Fly Pond. Sign up sheets for kids who will be attending will be located on the message board in the bar. The maximum age limit for participants is 15 years of age. Members who do not have children within this age limit can bring a relative (niece, nephew, grandchild) instead. Lunch will be provided free to the children and the kitchen will be open for adults to purchase food and drinks.

We are seeking donations so we can purchase additional fish and prizes for the derby. There will be a sign-up sheet located in the bar. Please donate and help make this even fun for all participants!

All ponds open for fishing (catch and release) on March 27th at 8 am.

Middle and Skeet Pond open for fishing (catch and keep) with 2 fish limit on April 10th at 6 am.

Upper Pond opens for fishing (catch and keep) May 9th after John Shea's Biggest Trout Derby.

Starting March 19th the Club bar will open for a couple of days each week until we get our feet back on the ground. As in years past there has always been a collection jar on the bar for the Kid's, and we ask if possible to donate to our kids activities, Fishing Derby, Christmas Party, etc.

Another activity which has always been a sellout is the Prime Rib Dinner, this year the selected date is April 17th, there are limited tickets for this dinner, which are available through the bar. There will be adequate sitting as we must follow the State guidelines during the COVID-19 situation. An email will be sent when tickets will go on sale, in 2019 we sold out within 3 weeks.

PHEASANT COMMITTEE

The club's pheasant program in 2020 experienced some minor setbacks as the previous longstanding Chairman stepped down. We are fortunate to have great members in our club that stepped up to fill big shoes and ran our program for 2020 without a delay. However, as we enter the 2021 season, we are learning that we have lost some historical customers to other vendors. Pheasants raised by the Fin for sale to other clubs and outfitters helps subsidize the cost of our own birds in order to try to provide members the maximum possible opportunity and a positive hunting experience throughout bird season. It is always the goal of the club to maintain the lowest cost to our membership. The pheasant chairman and committee members are already implementing some measures to recoup some of the lost customers. The committee will also work to mitigate any effect throughout the year in an effort to ensure another positive pheasant season members are accustomed to.

HUNTER EDUCATION

The Fin Fur and Feather will be hosting a hunter education modified field day on April 10th 2021. We have two classes scheduled. First class is 8:30-11:30 AM and 1pm-4pm. The club has 10 reserved seats available for club members in each class. All non-members can sign up through the State Of Connecticut On-line sportsman's website. Registration will open March 27th. Any member who is a state instructor and wishes to assist or any member who would like to attend please contact Corey Curtis-Gray at 860-576-1214.



NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENTS

Members, over the years we have solicited our members to see if they would like to advertise their business in our Newsletter. If you're interested in posting an advertisement again, please contact Dick Palmer by email with a copy of your business card or a drawing to rpalmer12@snet.net. The cost will be \$50.00 for business card size ad and this will run for two years for a total of 8 newsletters. Check payable to the Fin Fur Feather Club or cash at the bar. This will be the last quarter that your advertisement will be seen, and you'll have three months till the June Newsletter to submit your advertisement.

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Our Purpose: *To Promote The Conservation of Fish, Game, and Other Natural Resources, To Practice and Teach the Highest Degree of Sportsmanship and to Promote Safe and Proficient Use of Sporting Equipment.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Troy Quick, President 860-933-2585
Dick Palmer, Vice President 860-933-4768
Tom Hoagland, Treasurer 860-208-4477
David Jones, Secretary 860-230-5925

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Glen Heinonen 860-559-5021
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Cory Curtis-Grey 860-576-1214
Matt Halloran 860-428-1818
John Mathewson 860-974-2775
John Fitch 860-460-0797

ALTERNATES

Gary Charron 860-455-0145
Ted Powell 860-908-4906

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

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Jim Dowd 860-537-2986

BAR

John Fitch 860-460-0797
Erin Jones 860-230-4015

BUILDING

Open Position

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