

May 2008

Trapper Education Newsletter

This has been a busy month thus far. I managed to get to the line and trapped for a couple of days. I attached the diary in the event anyone cares. I just returned from a four-day workshop. Two of the days involved a biologist workshop and the other two related to instructor development. The Biologists were primarily from Alberta with some representation from BC and the Yukon. What a great bunch! Most of my instructors were able to take in this event which was held at the trapper's college. The only thing that could have made it better was the weather. We had Margo Pybus, Dave Hatler, Alison Beal, Mark Boyce, Melissa Flemming and Floyd Kunnas as the main speakers. Topics ranged from fur bearer management, DNA testing, disease, the fur trade, new traps along with set demonstrations and trapping equipment. Look for an article in our magazine down the road.

The instructor's workshop involved the normal strategies and concerns; however Dee Barrus gave us an outstanding 6-hour workshop on teaching techniques. Ryan Sealy from the Yukon was with us again and he gave as much as he received. We are getting bigger, better, meaner and cutting edge all of the time. Gordy has a great site for these events and Ali and Evelyn are two of the best cooks it has been my pleasure to meet.

The summer courses at the college are going. The August one for sure and I suspect the September one will go as well. I am particularly excited about this course. Because we are "trapped" at the site, I know we will be eating and breathing trapping the whole time.

Our Website is changing with a DAO section now in place. Have a look at it and watch it for courses.

Anne Troake (film maker) was at these workshops and we had a moment to discuss the School DVD. This is a lot of work but exciting as hell and I hope we can put this together. We have had requests for outdoor camps, women's workshops and outdoor ed. Presentations. We fill them when we are able, but with enough funding we could be going almost full time on public talks alone. The requests just keep coming in and we are committed to excellence in our presentations.

I see the NAFA May sale results are in. Go to their website for the complete list but Marten did well (av. \$107), Fisher (\$80), Otter (\$30), Rats (\$3), and lynx (\$260).

Jason Parker, an Alberta Trapper, has started a group on face book called Canadian Trappers. He invites anyone with a trapping interest to join.

We have a few courses nailed down (check the website) but are planning for Loon Lake, Fort Chip, Edmonton and probably Fort Mac later this winter. We have the ability to deliver a course year round with proper planning. We can use mock sets in the off-season or regular sets during a trapping season. This should be interesting should we do a spring beaver session while the

fur is still good. The trapping college courses (Aug and Sep) are pilot projects and we will evaluate them once completed.

Convention is coming fast and I think the banquet may get sold out. Not sure about this but if you want the banquet, my advice is register early. Check the website for details. We have Nate Webb as one of the confirmed speakers. Nate was / is involved in the wolf sterilization project around Nordegg , so that should be good to hear. Along with other topnotch presenters, we will have special sessions on trapping and fur handling. If you have never been to a convention before I encourage you to think about it. Those that have gone before come back as they keep getting bigger and better every year. Got to go, have fun, stay safe and see you at convention.

PS – Dave Donahue (good trapper, Slave Lake) called me about his granddaughter, or niece (sorry Dave can't remember). She gave a science project in Red Deer about the beaver and trapping in general. Dave came down as an audio visual aid. Anyways she placed high and is now going to Victoria with her project. Our congratulations accompany her.

Jim

Jim Mitchell

Trapper/ Public Education