

THE C.A.S.H. COURIER

THE COMMITTEE TO ABOLISH SPORT HUNTING

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Spring/Summer 2021

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of C.A.S.H. - Committee to Abolish Sport Hunting - is to accomplish what its name says in the shortest possible time. Understanding that abolishing hunting entails a process, a series of steps taken and not a single action that would effect our goal overnight, a time frame cannot be established. We hope for building a succession of wins, and if not wins immediately then at least a succession of stirrings of consciousness. We hope to encourage those who are still silent to speak out, awakening community after community about the heavy hand of state and federal wildlife management agencies. We hope to alter whatever belief still exists that sport hunters are conservationists and champions of the environment to a realization that they are destroyers of wildlife and ecosystems in the narrow and broad sense. Where the natural feeling for wildlife doesn't exist, we strive to engender among citizens outrage that their own rights are violated by legal hunting and their quality-of-life diminished.

Luke A. Dommer was the founder of the Committee to Abolish Sport Hunting. He was its president from 1976 until his passing in August 1992. Mr. Dommer's research and publications served as the foundation for the anti-hunting movement. He remains, through this organization, an invaluable and dedicated warrior in the battle to save wild animals, the environment, and general public from the silent economy that encourages and preys on the passion of a few to kill the wildlife that belongs to all.

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To Save the Wolf, Go Vegan!

BY JIM ROBERTSON

Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. —Albert Einstein

One doesn't have to be a genius like Einstein to figure out that the ultimate moral goal of our species should be to move forward in regards to our kind treatment of others. Yet, when it comes to our behavior toward animals—especially wildlife—the human species seems to be backsliding these days. Examples of it are many, while advancements are few and far between.

To counter this disparity, perhaps it's time we stop using the term "human rights" in reference to things that should be considered basic rights for all species. Surely, the human race doesn't need anything else singling it out to stroke its over-inflated, collective ego. Differentiating between human and non-human rights just encourages those who would sneer or scoff at the notion of animal rights.

Call it fairness, justice, ethical consistency, common decency or for that matter, call them natural rights or even individual rights. **Better yet, why not just use the term animal rights and include human beings in with our fellow animal individuals, all deserving of consideration and respect?** This notion of human superiority is for the birds.

The new year brought with it a huge sigh of relief for the natural world, now that Donald Trump and his Administration are no longer at the helm of the country and allowed to run rough-shod over environmental and wildlife protection rules, as it had for the past four years. Still, many species are not out of the woods quite yet. Our new President, Joe Biden (although he stated on day one of his governance that he would roll back any bad decisions made by his predecessor) has yet to remedy the issue of the gray wolves' reckless removal from the endangered species list—leaving states to "manage" them as they would any other "game" species...or worse.

Photo © Jim Robertson



With the wolves' federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections now lifted, Wisconsin saw its way cleared for the blindest, bloodiest butchering of the noble species since the 1800s. **In just three short February days,**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Letter from the President

Spring Greetings to all C.A.S.H. Members,

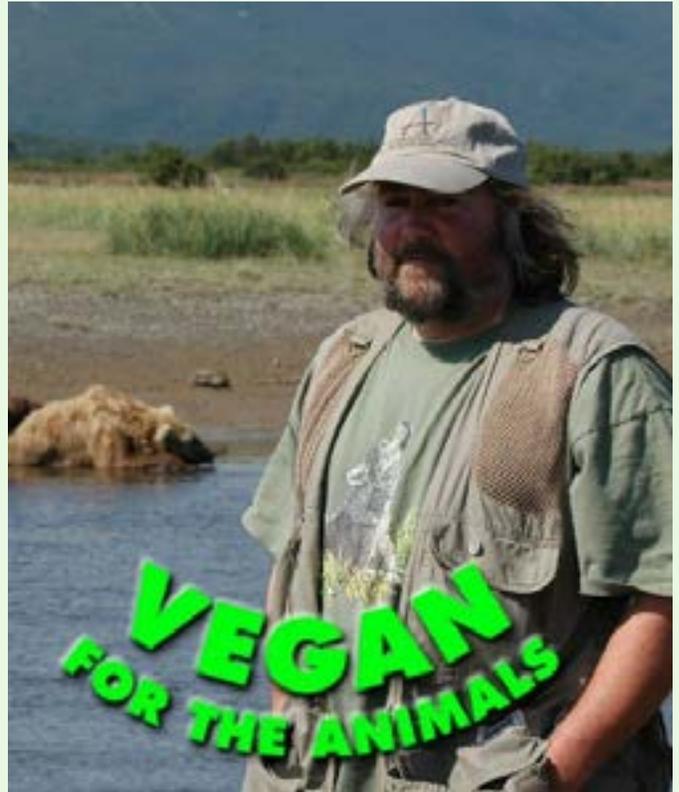
A lot has happened in the world since we put out our last issue of the C.A.S.H. Courier. For one thing, the countries' presidency has changed for the better! Now we have a comparatively reasonable leader, instead of a swellhead billionaire—father-of-a-pair-of-trophy-hunters—whose only concern for the environment is how much he can profit from it.

Still, I'm left with an uneasy feeling about the future of some of our fellow Americans—namely, in this case, the gray wolves. Though that species has been here much longer in the scheme of things than any of us humans, wolves are by no means fully recovered from the persecution they've endured over the recent centuries, as well as over the past few years. Nowadays, Western states have deemed their populations adequate enough to remove them from their state's endangered species lists and begin hunting and trapping them all over again.

This year, the heat's been turned up for the wolves and still more barbaric practices could be administered with a vengeance that can only come from sore losers of a mid-term election. It's as though Idaho and Montana's cowboys and trophy elk hunters can't wait to see the canines endangered yet again. Lately, a familiar, sinking feeling has crept over me. It's a dark, dismal, crushing feeling that (although some game department lackey somewhere might be tabulating the carnage and will call off the slaughter just before the entire species disappears—if only to keep the species from being relisted) untold and unnecessary animal suffering is about to begin anew.

It's a familiar feeling we get whenever an annual deer hunting season comes around again, and eager “sportsmen” (of both sexes and, it seems nowadays, practically any and all ages) begin dusting off the weapons of choice, while frothing uncontrollably at the mouth. It's the same feeling that came over me when politics had played itself out and there was no stopping the Makah tribe from paddling out to shoot the first half-tame gray whale who happened by.

The one good thing that came out of that otherwise awful event was that, ever since then, my wife and I swore off animal flesh and have gone meat-less, followed a few weeks later by swearing off dairy (because of cruelty to veal calves), to become two of the staunchest vegans you ever saw. Not that it could ever make up for the loss of an animal's life, but it helps to know we aren't contributing to the agony that untold beings go through for the sake of humankind's temporary desires. Perhaps through the words or photos herein, others of you might decide it's time to lay down your weapons, even if they're only forks and steak knives. Join us and together we can help ease the torment—one bite at a time.



The pandemic has precluded any public appearances, but C.A.S.H. has been busy keeping tabs of all the many Hunting Accidents and violations and adding them to our website: <http://abolishsport hunting.org/> Meanwhile, Anne Muller has been working tirelessly to keep 12 and 13 year olds off the deer and bear-hunt battlefields of her home state (more on that inside).

Speaking of battlefields, a shotgun blast is no small scratch, but you'd be amazed how many times people are mistaken for turkeys by overzealous hunters this time of year. For example: http://abolishsport hunting.org/hunting_accidents/mo-missouri-hiker-shot-in-the-chest-after-being-mistaken-for-a-turkey-police-say/

Of course, you can stay up to date on the wolf-persecution travesty, the New York hunting age fiasco and all other things hunting-related on the C.A.S.H. Blog: <https://committeetoabolishsport hunting.wordpress.com/> and Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Committee-to-Abolish-Sport-Hunting-CASH>

Until next time,

Jim

Jim Robertson

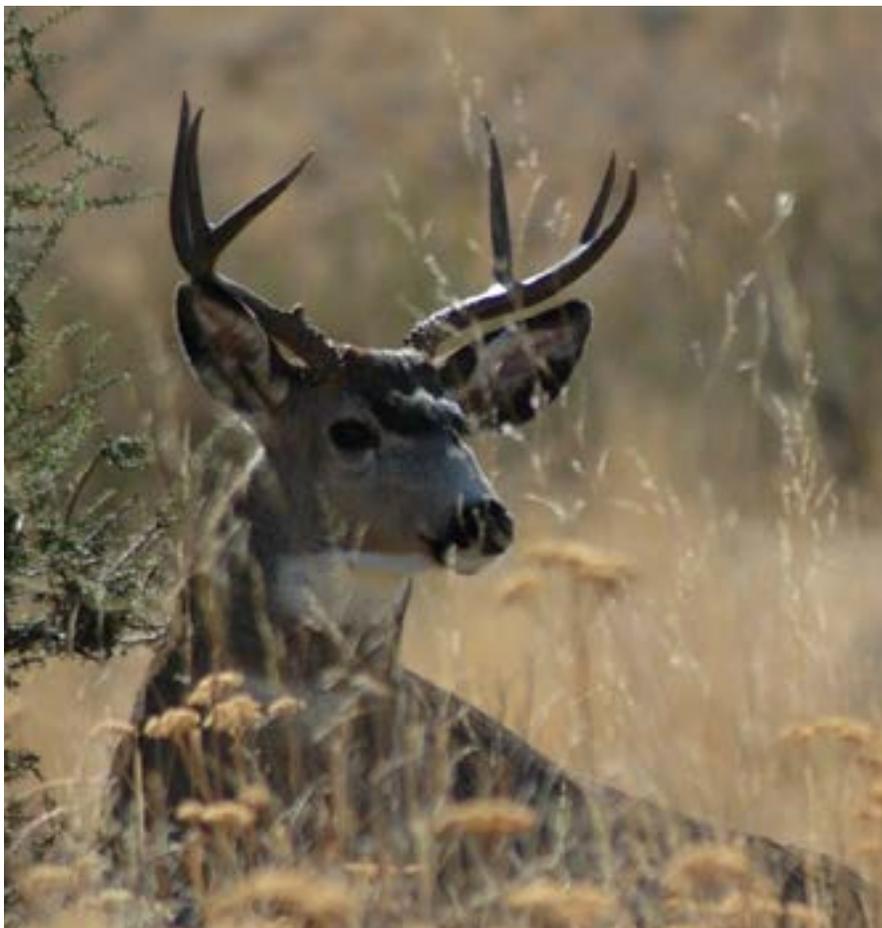
President, the Committee to Abolish Sport Hunting

hunters killed 216 wolves—nearly 100 over their “legal” yet arbitrary quota. In other words, it was a frenzied bloodbath comparable to the bedlam of a bunch of preschoolers let out of class for recess on a sunny, spring day. Yet, unfortunately, it would seem that President Biden is no loyal fan of his beloved domestic dogs’ wild canine cousins either—otherwise he’d be tempted to step in and do something to stop the ongoing insanity.

Now, the state of Montana—though wolves have been off their endangered list for some time—has gone more than a bit loco lately in regards to new anti-wolf legislation that puts them squarely in the category of absolute wolf-hating-ist (or at least in a close tie with their over-eager, wolf-loathing neighbors, Idaho and Wyoming). In addition to declaring their “experimental, non-essential” wolves “recovered,” Montana’s rabid state legislators (led by the ill-famed trapper-Governor Greg Gianforte) have passed recent state bills, including allowing neck snares placed on wolves’ travel-ways in addition to their standard leg-hold traps, and granting reimbursement payments for wolf hunters and trappers (much like a bounty straight out of the darkest days of yesteryear). Wolves there are in essence being reclassified as predators, meaning that they (like coyotes) could be killed without limit or even feigned concern for their “conservation.”

All that effort to recover the imperiled, if not quite currently endangered species could go to waste. Worse yet, all the careful rearing, nurturing, raising and training of their offspring by adult animals could be for naught if Montana follows Idaho’s example in their planned elimination of 90% of that states’ wolves. Governor Gianforte signed yet another anti-wolf bill extending the already overly enterprising wolf-hunting season, in addition to other

Photo © Jim Robertson



bloodthirsty bills allowing the killing of wolves at night with artificial lights and night vision scopes and the use of bait to lure wolves into traps.

Not to be outdone, neighboring Idaho drafted a bill to allow private contractors to reduce their wolf population from 1,500 to 150. It would permit the use of night-vision equipment to aid in killing wolves, as well as allowing the hunting of them while seated on snowmobiles and/or ATVs. Ah, what a dream-hunt that must be for them—killing big game animals without ever having to lift their abundant behinds from the cushy seats of their all-terrain vehicles.

In the scheme of things, it certainly has been a rapid backslide pertaining to how wolves are perceived, treated and “managed” by those bent on dragging us back to the Dark Ages for animals—the Nineteenth Century—when practices like bounties, culls and contest hunts were commonplace.

Hunters and ranchers in the tri-state area surrounding Yellowstone National Park, as well as in the Great Lakes region, are doing everything they can to resurrect the gory glory days of the 1800s, and predatory species like coyotes, cougars and wolves are paying the ultimate price.

The killing of wolves by those who detest them qualifies as a hate crime. By definition a hate crime is, “A crime, usually violent, motivated by prejudice or intolerance toward a member of a social group.” Well, you don’t get much more of a social group than a wolf pack—and you don’t find any greater prejudice or intolerance than among wolf-haters and hunters.

In an effort to defend his wolf hunting, wildlife snuff-filmmaker Randy Newberg presented the following shocking testimony to

the court of public opinion (via NPR News), “Having these hunting seasons [on wolves] has provided a level of tolerance again.” The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana, Idaho and Wyoming state game departments and, most shocking of all, Yellowstone wolf biologists, are all going along with this line of thinking.

Why do these fellow Americans have such murderous disdain for our natural predators? Well, partly because they want to continue to claim all the trophy elk, mule deer and other “big game” animals for themselves. And part of the motive comes from the fact that their open-range cattle have been forced to play stand-in for the wild “game” species our forefathers forcibly removed.

The fact is, if you really want to save the wolves, go vegan! And urge your friends, family, neighbors and co-workers to do the same. Tell it to the world: Eating meat is killing the planet, one wolf at a time; one species at a time; one ecosystem after another. Every time you order a steak or grill a hamburger, you legitimize wolf-culling for the sake of livestock growers.

And every time someone purchases a hunting license, they validate wolf trapping for the sake of deer and elk hunters. To game managers, every action, right down to the ammo and camo bought at Outdoor World is a show of support for their policies.

Those of us who are already aware might still be surprised just how many people who advocated for the reintroduction of wolves eat meat like there’s no tomorrow. Comfortable in their justification, they reason that cows are “domesticated” or “dumb” and therefore bred for slaughter. Their beef came from a feedlot (or so they assume) and not out on the open range, where wolves are being killed. Others pride themselves in eating only “grass-fed” beef, yet somehow they don’t see how their

food choice helps lead to a policy of “controlling” (murdering) wolves.

And how many hunters can honestly say that they don’t mind sharing their elk or deer with the likes of wolves, cougars or coyotes. Meanwhile, mainstream environmental groups and their members cling to the concept of “sustainable” beef. (Surely some of the ranchers and hunters out there can afford to look the other way when desperate wolves come around hoping for a quick meal to stave off hunger pangs).

Rather than continually trying to revise your rationale, wouldn’t it be easier just to remove yourself from the equation and leave the predating to the predators? Homo sapiens can live much healthier on a plant-based diet, like their primate relatives always have. True carnivores, such as wolves, coyotes, cougars, marine mammals or members of the weasel family have to eat meat to survive. If you’re not willing to go vegan for the sake of the animals you eat, maybe you should think of the other animals affected by your bill of fare.

Meanwhile, in spite of great efforts to educate people about the myriad environmental problems associated

sheep parts in every freezer, and pig parts on practically every plate.

This, of course, is all thanks to ever-worsening living conditions for farmed animals.

Professor William Ripple and co-authors of a research paper, “Ruminants, Climate Change, and Climate Policy,” prepared in Scotland, Austria, Australia and the United States, noted that about 25 percent of the earth’s land area is dedicated to grazing, and a third of all arable land is used to grow food for livestock. Reducing the number of cattle and sheep on the planet, and thereby reducing the methane gas emissions they produce, is a faster way to mitigate climate change than reducing carbon dioxide alone, the report concluded. The researchers pointed out that greenhouse gas emissions from cattle and sheep are 19 to 48 times higher per pounds of food produced than the gas emitted in the production of plant protein foods such as beans, grains or soy.

To get an idea of how unnatural and unsustainable 4 billion large ruminants is, try to imagine when vast bison herds blackened the plains. At that time there were only 40 million bison in all of North America. There are over 300 million human beef-eaters in the United States, every one of them expecting to see a fully stocked steak house, Subway or McDonald’s on every street corner.

All the while, the media is busily cooking up a spin to answer to



with factory farming and the dependence on meat consumption in an evermore crowded human world, the number of ruminants raised for food on the planet today is at an all-time high of 4+ billion--double what is was 50 years ago. Regardless of the burgeoning human population, not only do we have a chicken in every pot in this country, we now have cow and



meat's culpability in this planet's climate crisis. Articles on how methane from grass-eaters is a primary greenhouse gas are often accompanied by the suggestion that pigs and chickens don't produce as much. In other words, don't worry your little meat-addicted heads, if this beef-cow-causing-global-warming thing becomes a recognized issue, you can just switch over to other non-ruminants'



carcasses—surely, no one really expects you to become a vegetarian (satire intended)....

The coming decades are going to test just what human beings are made of. Are we progressive and adaptable enough to learn to share the planet with others and become plant eaters, or is our incessant breeding of animals and meat consumption going to put us into an all new classification—planet eaters?

Eye on the News

Eating Meat Affects Global Health

At this point, most people know that a plant-based, or largely plant-based diet is beneficial to our health. Some may even realize that eating less or no meat has a direct influence on our growing climate crisis. But after struggling with the COVID-19 pandemic for over a year now, researchers see even more reason for people to stop eating animals and animal products—the link between meat consumption and global health.

Zoonotic diseases are conditions passed from animals to humans. There has been little research in this area, despite a dramatic increase in the number of these diseases in the past 50 years. Animal exploitation, primarily for consumption, has been driving zoonotic diseases ever since we domesticated animals. While the origins of COVID-19 are still being debated, a new United Nations report warns that more diseases that pass from animals to humans are likely to emerge as natural habitats are ravaged by wildlife exploitation, unsustainable farming practices, and climate change.

Christian Drosten, who directs the Institute of Virology at the Charité Hospital in Berlin, was one of those who identified the Sars virus in 2003. Now, as the head of

Photo Credit: Hannah Dalmau (Unsplash)



the German public health institute's reference lab on coronaviruses, he has become the government's go-to expert on the the current pandemic. He predicts that our current consumption of meat is only encouraging more zoonotic diseases.

“Coronaviruses are prone to switch hosts when there is opportunity, and we create such opportunities through our non-natural use of animals – livestock. Livestock animals are exposed to wildlife, they are kept in large groups that can amplify the virus, and humans have intense contact with them – for example through the consumption of meat – so they certainly represent a possible trajectory of emergence for coronaviruses,” he said.

While many think a global pandemic

is something that happens once every 100 years, it simply isn't true—especially if our habits do not change. Sadly, the global demand for animal meat has increased 260% in the past half century, exacerbating the problem. While many focus on

places like China and Southeast Asia, researchers agree that livestock acts like a bridge for transmission between animal hosts, such as rodents and bats, and humans. In the Midwestern United States, for example, new strains of the flu emerge from livestock operations almost every year. This includes factories where meat is processed, slaughter houses, and factory farms.

It is clear we need to invest more in the research of zoonotic diseases and do more to restore the balance between humans and animals. Although it can often feel overwhelming—and it is—the best we can all do is decrease – or eliminate - our dependence on animals for consumption. C.H.

Who Should Read *Exposing the Big Game*?

BY © JIM ROBERTSON

<https://www.all-creatures.org/aw/book-exp.html>

Imagine you're a hunter and you just bought a copy of *Exposing the Big Game* to add to your library of photo books featuring images of bulky bull elk, weighty bison, scary grizzly and black bears and other animals you objectify and fantasize about one day hanging in your trophy room full of severed heads, or of "lesser" animals like prairie dogs and coyotes you find just plain fun to trap or shoot at. You don't normally read these books--you're too busy drooling over the eye candy to be bothered--but for some reason, this one is burning a hole in your coffee table. So, you take a deep breath and summon up the courage to actually consider the text and its meaning. Some of the words are big and beyond you and you have to find a dictionary to get through it, but soon you begin to figure out that *Exposing the Big Game* isn't just a bunch of exposed film featuring the wild animals you think of as "game."

More than just an album of wildlife photos, this book has a message, and the message is: hunting sucks.

You don't want to believe it. The notion that animals are individuals rather than resources goes against everything you've ever accepted as truth. Reading on, you learn about the lives of those you've always conveniently depersonalized. Finally, it starts to dawn on you that animals--like the ones staring up from these pages--are fellow earthlings with thoughts, feelings and interests of their own. By the time you've finished the third chapter, your mind is made up to value animals for who they are, instead of what they are. Now your life is changed forever!

Suddenly you're enlightened and, like the Grinch, your tiny heart grows three sizes that day. You realize that the war is over and the animals were never the enemy after all. You march over to the gun cabinet, grab your rifles, shotguns, bows, arrows, and traps, haul the whole arsenal out to the chopping block and smash it all to bits with your splitting maul. Next, you gather up your ammo, orange vest and camouflage outfits and throw 'em all down the outhouse hole.

Returning to the book, you now face the animals with a clear conscience, vowing never to harm them again. You're determined to educate your hunter friends with these newfound insights and you rush out to buy them all copies of *Exposing the Big Game* for Christmas.

...Or, suppose you are a non-hunter, which, considering the national average and the fact that the percentage of



Photo © Jim Robertson

hunters is dropping daily, is more than likely. For you, this book could shed new light on the evils of hunting, insight outrage and inspire a firm resolve to speak out against these atrocities.

And if you're one of the few who have devoted your life to advocating for non-humans, the photos of animals at peace in the wild will allow you a much needed break from the stress and sadness that living with your eyes open can sometimes bring on.

So, who should read *Exposing the Big Game*?--any hunter who hasn't yet smashed his weapons with a splitting maul...or any non-hunter who still isn't comfortable taking a stand as an anti-hunter. The rest of you can just enjoy the pretty pictures.

THE EFFORT TO STOP NEW YORK FROM LOWERING THE HUNTING AGE FOR BIG GAME FROM 14 TO 12; FROM A TO Z

BY REBECCA SUNSHINE



THE LEAGUE
OF
HUMANE VOTERS®
OF NEW YORK
POLITICAL ACTION FOR ANIMALS

There are a number of bills in the New York State Legislature that aim to lower the hunting age for big game (deer and bears) from 14 to 12. **The League of Humane Voters of NY** is vehemently opposed to these harmful bills and voiced our concerns with the chairs and members of the Environmental Conservation Committees where these bills are initially reviewed and approved.

The objective of these proposed laws is to increase the sale of hunting permits, as well as the sale of firearms, ammunition, bows, arrows, crossbows and bolts. Hunting permit sales raise the state's apportionment of the firearms excise tax, as well as enhance the firearms and bow and arrow industries' profits, which in turn feed both the federal and state wildlife management divisions of government. **The real goal of wildlife management is to increase hunting in order to receive a larger apportionment of the firearms excise tax. This symbiotic relationship overrides compassion and common sense. It puts lethal weapons in the hands of young children, targets our beautiful wildlife which is slaughtered and suffers greatly for the sake of this greed, and is antithetical to sensible gun control.**

To our great disadvantage these bills are quietly initiated and promoted by hunting groups and organizations, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Governor. But ninety-seven percent (97%) of New Yorkers do not hunt, and a majority support common sense gun laws as they elected a governor and legislature that supposedly champion this cause as well. Yet most people have no idea that these bills are even being proposed, and putting deadly weapons in the hands of 12 year olds could easily be slipped in under the radar.

LOHV/NY uncovered another frightening aspect of lowering the hunting age to 12 for big game. It could encourage 12 year olds to access or purchase semi-automatics (AR-15 and AK-47 rifles). These semi-automatic rifles are legal for hunting small game, but are not normally used for small game (though they can be). According to a conversation we had with a Bureau of Wildlife agent

in the hunting permit division, semi-automatics are more likely used for big game.

While we were fighting these bills, the New York State Budget was being negotiated. Quite by accident, and to our shock, it was discovered that Part X, a provision that would



Caption: "Gun Self Arrows Camping Survival Hunting Fishing" Just \$32.

lower the hunting age for deer and bears to 12, and expand the use of crossbows, had been inserted in the budget. We now had to urge the chairs of the Finance and Ways and Means Committees, the Majority leaders of both houses and the Governor to strike this provision from the budget. Some of our representatives were not even aware that it was put in there.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

THE EFFORT TO STOP NEW YORK FROM LOWERING THE HUNTING AGE FOR BIG GAME FROM 14 TO 12; FROM A TO Z

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

We emphasized the point that hiding serious, contentious issues in a budget bill would be a disservice to all. We also stressed the fact that this bill would benefit the firearms and bow and arrow industries, but would be detrimental to the public and environment. We expressed our fear that lowering the hunting age would incentivize the purchase and use of lethal weapons (such as AR-15s and AK-47s) for children at a time when the country is seeking ways to ban them.

LOHV/NY was joined by the following concerned organizations in the last ditch effort to stop this bill: **Animal Cruelty Exposure Fund, Animal Defenders of Westchester, East Hampton Group for Wildlife, League of Humane Voters New Jersey, NYCLASS, People for the End of Animal Cruelty and Exploitation, Their Turn, Wildlife Preservation Coalition of Eastern Long Island, and Wildlife Watch.** Many of these groups assisted LOHV/NY in sending out alerts via email and social media urging their members to contact the appropriate representatives.

The end result of this campaign was that Part X evolved into Part ZZ. The highlights of Part ZZ are:

- Turned an imposed statewide lower hunting age into an opt-in pilot program for each New York county that will expire in two (2) years and seven (7) months.
- Made the five (5) New York City Boroughs (The Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island), Long Island (Nassau and Suffolk Counties) and Westchester County ineligible to opt-in to the pilot program.
- Removed the hunting of bears from the pilot program.
- Allowed 12 and 13 year olds to

use crossbows for the duration of the pilot for deer, whereas Part X would have allowed them to use crossbows for any species in perpetuity.

While we were disappointed that Part X wasn't entirely removed from the budget, we were relieved to see that some concessions were made. We were encouraged that our representatives did take their time to listen to us and took our concerns seriously. Being able to stop any pro-hunting law is an accomplishment.

Once again the problem is that while the hunting organizations, firearms industries and the DEC are lobbying their lawmakers, the general public has been left out. LOHV/NY initiated a major outreach urging the County Executives, County Managers, officials and legislatures of the fifty-four (54) eligible counties not to opt-in to the pilot program. It was noted that those counties that do opt-in, may likely get an influx of hunters from those counties that are ineligible, which would have negative consequences for the environment, wildlife and public safety. Additional letters were sent to the officials of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Richmond, Sullivan and Ulster Counties, as they are the closest to the downstate counties that are not eligible and may be most impacted. We also asked that this pilot program be well publicized before a decision is made.

To cover all bases, press releases were sent, as well as state-wide alerts asking residents of the eligible counties to contact their officials. As of now eighteen (18) counties have opted in.

LOHV/NY spoke at the Erie County Energy and Environmental Committee meeting. They will be holding a meeting of the full legislature where this will be discussed.

We will watch the developments in the remaining counties, as well as how the DEC plans to monitor and report on this pilot program once it is enacted. And we will keep an eye on the original stand-alone bills to be sure they will not be pushed through.

We learned that we have to be extra diligent and keep our antennas up, because the hunting and gun lobbies, and the DEC, will not stop at any tactic to expand their programs and profits. **SNEAKING BILLS INTO A BUDGET IS JUST ONE OF THEM.**

Rebecca Sunshine is on the Planning Board of the League of Humane Voters/NY. She abhors hunting and has worked to stop hunts locally and at a state level.



Photo Credit: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/hunt/documents/deer-youthhunt.pdf>

TURNING FEELINGS INTO LAW

By ANNE MULLER

Of all the institutionalized animal abuse and killing, hunting has bothered and puzzled me the most. **While other forms of animal cruelty and killing are done as a means to an end, hunting has no excuse at all.** It's done for the perverse pleasure of killing an animal. While a small number of hunters hunt for food, they are a fraction of a percent of the already low hunting population, which is a mere 3% in NYS.

I agree that if animal rights concerns were to be ranked according to the number of animals affected, the animal food industry would be at the top of the list for its unfathomably high numbers of beings killed every second, the chillingly mechanical way in which they are killed, and their extreme suffering unacknowledged.

In this issue, **Jim Robertson** makes the connection between how wildlife suffers as a result of our meat-based diets, and the **Wildlife Watch Binocular** will always promote veganism. Not only would veganism cure the world of many physical ills, but it would bring peace to both humans and animals.

Working legislatively through the **League of Humane Voters® (LOHV®)** an organization that has broad animal protection concerns, it's clear that domestic animal bills don't face the same obstacles as bills that relate to agricultural animal abuse or wild animal abuse. Those are by far the most difficult areas in which to make headway.

This year, LOHV/NY decided to dive into the budget process. In prior years, LOHV/NY simply waited out the budget period, which runs from early January to April 1 (or a few days after) when it must be passed. So, the budget period lasts for three solid months before stand-alone bills are given the attention they deserve. Legislators, via Zoom, convened forums in which constituents could

make requests or present ideas for projects or entities in need of funding. NGOs appealed for funding, business owners urged the state to help keep them afloat. Legislators were in constant negotiations with each other to add or remove funding, and this process continued until the budget was finally approved by both chambers and approved by the Governor. The Governor's many budget bills take up more than 50 percent of a legislator's time during any session.

LOHV/NY entered the budget process when they discovered that not only were there stand-alone bills to lower the hunting age, legalize more types of weapons for youngsters, and lengthen killing seasons, but the Governor's Budget Bill included lowering the hunting age and legalizing more weapons as well!

You can see more in the article on page 7 by **Becky Sunshine**. **How did that get into a budget bill that gives away General Funds (your taxes and mine) for worthy purposes?**

LOHV/NY began to speak out against this, first by participating in a forum, then by writing action alerts and contacting legislators via email and social media. The barrage of calls to their offices certainly got attention. We can't say it was causal, but almost immediately the Assembly removed the language from their version of the bill. It forced the issue to go back to the drawing board in the Senate. After weeks of negotiation, some major changes were made.

It went from becoming a state law imposed on the entire state to becoming an "opt-in pilot program" for three years.

An opt-in lower hunting age would happen only by a vote of the county legislature. Amazingly, the unprecedented default was that counties were not participating in this pilot program. If they wanted to lower the hunting age for deer, they would have to opt in! This is something I had never seen before. Surely, it would have been far more advantageous to the

forces that wanted a lower hunting age if counties were automatically in unless they opted out! LOHV/NY is grateful for this serious negotiating!

And, thanks to **Sen. Liz Krueger (Chair of the Senate Budget Committee)**, **bears were dropped from the lower big game hunting age**, though 12 and 13-year-olds can still kill deer (deer and bears are the only "big game" in NY).

Interestingly, the legislators who were most involved in these negotiations were from New York City, Westchester, and Long Island (Nassau and Suffolk). All boroughs of NYC, and those three counties were made ineligible to opt-in!!! That indicates to me that they know which way the wind is blowing.

Attention now had to turn to the counties. There are 54 eligible (to opt in) counties in NY. Letters were sent to every county by LOHV/NY asking that they not opt-in to the lower hunting age. You'll see the letters below.

Special attention was given to the six counties closest to the ones that were ineligible: Putnam, Rockland, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, and Sullivan.

As Cuomo is a hunter himself and is close with his Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in which resides the Bureau of Wildlife (BOW), he obviously wasn't going to give in on lowering the hunting age, but the compromises made by the Governor's office are unprecedented and we are deeply grateful to the legislators who fought for them.

It's truly a HUGE first step.

The jury is still out with regard to how the counties will vote. We certainly don't expect miracles overnight, but it's the beginning of political pressure over hunting becoming more local, where a smaller number of people can determine who is voted in and who is voted out!

TURNING FEELINGS INTO LAW

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<https://www.amherstbee.com/category/opinions/letters-to-the-editor/>

DON'T LOWER THE HUNTING AGE IN YOUR COUNTY

May 12, 2021

Gov. Andrew Cuomo's budget bill included a hotly contested part that lowers the age to kill deer to 12, as well as allowing their use of crossbows. Under the budget bill as finally enacted, a county can lower the age for children to kill deer, but only if the county opts in to a pilot program which runs through 2023 by affirmatively passing a law allowing it.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation began its outreach to counties to persuade counties to opt-in immediately, and no one opposed would have heard about it via the DEC's vast network of hunting and trapping clubs, along with the NRA's connection with gun groups.

It's well-known in the hunting community that the younger the child, the easier it is to turn them into young hunters and users of firearms.

The lower hunting age was taken off the table for New York City, Long Island, and Westchester, which will no doubt lead to a greater population of 12-year old hunters in the counties that opt in. That influx could have dire consequences.

Further, not everyone agrees that hunting is the right way to treat wild animals, or that children learn "respect for wild animals" by killing them, or that it's essential for children to learn how to use firearms by killing animals.

And not everyone is aware of the circular and exclusive relationship between the wildlife management division of our government and the firearms industry. Wildlife management bureaus depend on the excise taxes on firearms and ammunition (and bows and arrows), and the firearms industry depends on wildlife being managed to become living, feeling targets for hunters. This symbiotic relationship benefits only the wildlife management bureaus and the firearms industry, while it wreaks havoc on the lives of wild animals and the residents in areas where there is hunting.

We are urging you to let your neighbors know about this law so the larger public can weigh in with their county legislators.

Anne Muller, The League of Humane Voters of NY

THE FOLLOWING LETTER TEMPLATE WAS PERSONALIZED AND SENT TO 54 COUNTY LEADERS WITH A REQUEST THAT THEY SHARE IT WITH THEIR COUNTY LEGISLATORS

As you know, the NYS Executive Budget (Bill S2505C/A3005C) has recently passed with a hotly contested law that allows 12 and 13 year-olds to hunt deer, as well as allowing their use of crossbows. The original law has been cut back so that counties (with the exception of the boroughs of NYC, Westchester, Suffolk, and Nassau, which were made ineligible to participate) will have to opt-in to a pilot program for 2 years and 7 months. Please be aware that other deadly weapons, such as modified AK-47 and AR-15 rifles are already legal for 12 year-olds to use on small game, though they are primarily used for large animals such as deer! That someone 21 or older needs to accompany youngsters doesn't mitigate the accident concerns or the wounding concerns as crossbows shoot like guns, and archery is considered to be far crueller for its lack of accuracy and higher wounding rates. It is little known that federal excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, and bows and arrows are distributed to a states' wildlife management divisions whose purpose is to sell hunting permits, thus increasing the use of firearms, ammunition, and bows and arrows or bolts. The amount of the federal excise tax received depends in part on the number of hunting permits the state sells, which in turn adds to the profit of the firearms industry. It's a circular economy and not a penny goes to the general fund of the state. As several downstate counties are ineligible to participate in the pilot program, and other counties vote not to opt-in, youngsters and the older hunters accompanying them will pour into counties that choose to opt-in. This skewed population of hunters could have consequences for local wildlife. Additionally, there will be even more lead pumped into the environment, and the increased congestion will likely lead to a greater chance of hunting accidents. While it works for the firearms industry and the wildlife bureau, it is clearly not working for society, the environment, ecology, human safety, or wild animals. We urge XXX County not to opt-in to this disturbing pilot program.

ON THE DEATH OF HUNTING

BY JIM ROBERTSON

Literally, figuratively and statistically, hunting is a dying sport—it just hasn't accepted that fact yet. Over the centuries, hunting in this country has been on a slippery, downward slope. It's gone from being an almost universally practiced, year-round method of meat-gittin' and "varmint" eradicatin' (during the pioneering, God-given "Manifest Destiny" days that near-completely brought an end to the continent's biodiversity) to the desperate, "sportsmen are the best environmentalists" perjury of present day—a laughable last-ditch attempt to stay afloat if you ever saw one.

Whether consciously aware of it or not, hunters, individually and as a well-funded whole, are in the process of grieving the impending demise of their favorite pastime. The question is, which stage of grief are they currently in, and more importantly, when will they finally give up the ghost and leave the animals alone?

If we apply the Kübler-Ross [model](#) (a hypothesis introduced by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in her 1969 book, *On Death and Dying*, commonly referred to as the "five stages of grief" including denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance) to the death of hunting, it would appear that hunters are somewhere between the first and the middle stage in their emotional journey toward acceptance. Kübler-Ross originally applied these stages to people suffering from terminal illness, later expanded this theoretical model to apply to any form of catastrophic personal loss, which could include job, income, freedom or some other significant life event. To a dyed-in-the-wool nimrod, the death of hunting definitely qualifies.

Known by the acronym **DABDA**, the five stages of the **Kübler-Ross model** include:
1) Denial — "I feel fine." "This can't be happening, not to me."

Denial can be a conscious or unconscious defense mechanism; a refusal to accept facts or the reality of the situation. This feeling is generally replaced with a heightened awareness of possessions that will be left behind after the death—in this case, after the death of their blood sport. For hunters, these possessions might be their beloved weapons, which they covetously cling to with Gollum-like obsession and zeal. Whenever the specter of gun control rears up after a mass school

Photo © Jim Robertson



Grizzly Bear Cub Waving Goodbye to Hunting -- Yellowstone National Park (NP)

shooting, you can hear them breathlessly whispering, "My precious, my precious." Denial is usually only a temporary defense for the individual, but some can become locked into this stage...

2) Anger — "Why me? It's not fair!" "How can this happen to me?" "Who is to blame?"

Once in the second stage, the individual recognizes that denial cannot continue. Because of anger, the person is very difficult to be around due to misplaced feelings of rage and envy. Anger can manifest itself in different ways. For hunters, it's usually directed toward non-hunters, especially environmentalists or animal advocates, but is often also directed against species they view as competition, such as coyotes or wolves. It is important to remain detached when dealing with a person experiencing anger from grief.

3) Bargaining — "I'll do anything for a few more years." "I will give my life savings if only..."

The third stage involves the hope that the individual can somehow postpone or delay death (or the death of their favorite lethal hobby). Usually, the negotiation for an extended life is made with a higher power in exchange for a reformed lifestyle. Psychologically, the individual is saying, "I understand I will die, but if I could just do something to buy more time..." In the case of hunting, this negotiation is with the non-hunting majority and includes reinventing their persona, trying to sell themselves as "the best environmentalists;" pitching hunting as an admirable part of our

heritage and trying to get laws passed to enshrine it; or recruiting women and young children into the fold.

4) Depression — "I'm so sad, why bother with anything?" "I'm going to die soon so what's the point?" or in the case of the hunter, "If I can't have my beloved blood sport, why go on?"

It's natural for the hunter to feel sadness, regret, fear and uncertainty when going through this stage. It is not recommended to attempt to cheer up an individual (or a hunting organization, such as the NRA or the Safari Club) who is in this stage, as these emotions indicate their acceptance of the situation.

5) Acceptance — "It's going to be okay." "I can't fight it, I may as well prepare for it."

In this last stage, individuals begin to come to terms with their mortality or another tragic event, such as the loss of a loved one...or, for the hunter, the long-dreaded ceasefire in the war waged against the animals.

One of the most popular arguments for hunting is, "But humans are carnivores, we've always been hunters." The fact is, human predatory behavior is killing the planet. The only way any of us are going to survive is if we lay down our weapons and return to our plant-eating origins.

Sound radical? Arthur Schopenhauer spelled out his own set of stages that undeniably applies here: "All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident."

TURNING FEELINGS INTO LAW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

....AND HERE IS A RESPONSE FROM ONE COUNTY EXECUTIVE WHO WILL ENSURE THAT HIS COUNTY OPTS IN TO A LOWER HUNTING AGE.

If anyone would like to respond, please e-mail WildWatch@verizon.net and put RESPONSE in the subject line.

Ms. Muller,

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the recent changes in NYS youth hunting laws. Your uneducated bias is quite clear from the narrative in your request. As a County Legislature, we have not discussed our options yet, but we will in the near future. I am happy to give you some insight as to my personal position, and perhaps some education as well. I will be advocating for xxx County to "opt in" to the new pilot to continue to educate our youth to be good stewards of our wilderness and our wildlife. Hunting isn't simply about killing, regardless of your enlightened opinion.

As a small and big game hunter for nearly 4 decades with 2 children, I can assure you there is no better way to promote the safe use of firearms, the humane dispatching of wild animals, and the love and respect of nature than to teach our children at an early age. Hunters are not thugs running through the woods shooting at everything they see.

Personally, I don't know one single person who hunts big game with an AR-15 or an AK-47 as you suggest. They simply aren't practical for that application, and are NOT "primarily used for large animals such as deer!" Your assertion that the Federal Excise Tax simply adds to the profit of the firearms industry and adds nothing to the general fund of the State is misguided and incomplete. If we follow your logic, the circular economy that created the additional firearm purchases and Federal Excise Tax also created sales tax revenue that DOES go directly to not only the State general fund, but local governments as well. In fact, one would successfully argue that it has allowed NYS to continue to purchase land in both the Adirondack and Catskill Parks for conservation purposes. Complete the circle, don't stop where your narrative ends.

For generations, NYS hunters have assisted in keeping our wilderness clean and sustainable. We help control wildlife population where needed, as determined by NYSDEC biologists, not Political Action Committees. We faithfully practice the "carry in, carry out" mantra, and pick up trash left behind by those less responsible. The more people who are educated in this manner, the better it is for wildlife. The earlier our youth is conditioned to be safe and responsible, the more likely they are to continue those efforts as adults. Our local rod and gun clubs organize trail clean-ups, perform wildlife census counts, run fishing derbies, gun safety courses, archery classes, youth hunts, and host many other events to raise awareness in our communities. Safety is always paramount. We appreciate them for it, and recognize their efforts on a greater scale. As a Legislature, we will continue to support their responsible efforts in any way we can. Without hunters, wildlife populations will grow out of control, overcrowding will be the norm, and wildlife will die a slow, painful death from starvation or vehicle collisions instead. To anyone claiming to be interested in humane wildlife conservation, that's what should be disturbing.

For clarification, Counties don't need to vote to NOT opt in. The law doesn't allow for a County to participate unless they DO opt in.

Regards,

xxx



Dear Amy,



Dear Amy,

I know you animal whacktivist treehuggers are all boo hooing the new legislation that'll let 12 and 13 year old kids hunt with an adult and use crossbows. My advice since you obviously need it is you're barking up the wrong tree. My generation grew up in the woods and fields and kids these days need more of that and less time on the I Phone. My grandkids all use their AK 47s and AR 15s LEGALLY and now they can add crossbows which are better than smart phones. At least New York did one thing write. Only a snowflake like you would disagree.

Signed, Rod H. "Cueball" Perkins, Sr.

Dear Cueball (if I may),

The recent passage of the Bill you refer to has been criticized not only by animal activists, but by anyone with a sliver of common sense. Have you ever read *The Blessing*, by Gregory Orr? It's not a book against guns or hunting, rather, it relates the devastating, lifelong consequences of the author's deadly shooting of his brother at age twelve. Young Gregory had just shot a deer when he was overcome by excitement, and accidentally emptied his chamber into his brother rather than the ground. The boys were accompanied by a responsible adult--their father--who had taught them gun safety. It is a horrific story, and one we see repeated far too often.

Placing a deadly weapon of any kind into the hands of a seventh- or eighth-grader is asking for trouble. I KNOW (and adore!) kids this age, and while I love

their silliness, their curiosity and impulsivity, children generally can't (and shouldn't be forced to) bear the weight of life-or-death responsibility. Plus, the use of crossbows by hunters of any age inevitably results in slow and agonizing death for the animal involved. This cannot be contested: dying by crossbow is a terrible way to go. I don't suppose you'd want it done to you, but I suspect you pride yourself on teaching your grandkids some version of the Golden Rule. Oh, the irony!

Young people do indeed benefit from spending less time on electronic devices, and more time connecting with nature. There are valuable lessons to be found in this kind of engagement, but what kind of message are we sending when we say that killing animals for sport is okay? How is that an acceptable way to commune with nature, knowing all that we do about the fragility of the environment, the complexity of the animal kingdom? I've been lucky to connect with many former hunters in my time as an activist, who are scarred by the trauma of having felt parental pressure to hunt, to (in many cases) "be a real man" by killing wildlife. Lowering the minimum age for hunting is a deliberate attempt on the part of state agencies and the hunting lobby (including many hunter-cult parents) to indoctrinate young people as soon as possible, and ensure the next generation of wildlife killers.

Most counties in NY will need to opt-in to this proposed change. To NY residents, the pressure is on to encourage these counties NOT to opt-in!

Dear Amy,

We have been proudly facilitating a well-known contest for more than a decade to fundraise for our local volunteer fire department. I won't name the contest because we've done great work with rebranding in recent years, after animal activists turned the spotlight on our picturesque town. This impacted not only local business but even home prices as well! As a team that has worked hard to raise money for an amazing cause, we are appalled that you continue to go after charitable contests that are rooted in tradition and that control unwanted nuisance species. We see your efforts in many states to strip these rights from us, and we are here to tell you that we will not back down!

Signed, Anonymous but Proud Conservationists.

Dear AbP,

Your unwillingness to name what you're referring to is telling. Just say it: wildlife-killing contest. I know that many such contests are "rebranded," as you say, with catchy, esoteric names, or labeled as "hunting contests." Rebranding often includes replacing terms like "derby" or "slam" with catchphrases like "responsibility," "management," and "conservation," while doing nothing to change the content of the event.

Hunting, trapping, and fishing are neither responsible management nor conservation, but wildlife killing contests are seen by many activists (and informed members of the general public) as especially

despicable. Killing contests are not about subsistence hunting (neither is modern hunting for most, but that's another story). These contests typically award prizes to hunters or trappers who "bag" the heaviest individuals of the target species, and often target predators such as coyotes, bears, and bobcats. They may also victimize crows, squirrels, fishes, and other wildlife. Even many state agencies and hunting proponents recognize that there is no conservational value. Those who endorse mass-slaughter events defend them by citing tradition and charitable fundraising, as you have claimed in your letter, along with the "control" of "nuisance" species.

You fail to understand, however, that each species holds their vital niche within the ecosystem; each has evolved interdependently to claim that space. To insist that certain undesirable species must be controlled by lethal human intervention is to ignore the ever-

increasing body of work by scientists whose salaries are independent of the sale of hunting and trapping licenses. Even some state wildlife agencies have denounced killing contests, which speaks volumes since, as we all know, their positions are almost always representative of their hunter constituencies.

It's impossible to deny the palpable hatred the sportsmen's community has for coyotes in particular. While claiming that humans must lethally manage deer populations, many in the hunting crowd also cheer on killing contests intended to decimate predators, since these individuals are viewed as competition. I remember one hunter telling me, when our paths unfortunately crossed at a Christmas party, "No coyote is going to take MY deer!"--a revealing and proprietary statement that reflects the killing contest mentality. Ironically, killing coyotes doesn't reduce their population, and has even been shown

to disrupt pack structure and increase individual numbers.

Beyond the die-hard, slaughter-happy contest defenders, anyone with a scrap of conscience and a pulse would be appalled by the photos of mass-slaughter events, which reveal hundreds of bloodied bodies laid out, strung up, on display. As awareness grows regarding the grotesque superfluity of killing contests, more states are taking a stand, with Maryland being the latest state to ban them. You can rebrand all you like, pretend that it's necessary, and say it's for a good cause. Or you can promote your cause honestly, and raise money in about a million ways that harm no one: Plant trees! Host an adopted-dog social! Hold a mini-marathon to encourage human health! Wildlife killing contests have nothing to do with social responsibility or good conservation, and they must be brought to an end in every state.

PUBLIC NOTICE AND COUNTY PUBLIC HEARINGS SHOULD BE REQUIRED BEFORE A LEGISLATURE LOWERS THE HUNTING AGE OR FURTHER LOOSENS RESTRICTIONS ON HUNTING



Because hunting involves deadly weapons, and because there are more homes being built within bullet, arrow or bolt range, and because hunting is becoming more and more contentious for its numerous side effects of noise, damage to home, injury and death of compan-

ion animals and people, any law that has the potential to harm people, pets, or property, such as a lower hunting age should require public notice and provide the opportunity for individuals to speak at a public hearing via Zoom and/or in person along with other means of providing input to legislators.

We hope that this transparency will allow residents the opportunity to protect themselves and their loved ones from armed individuals.

C.A.S.H. CATALOG

A Voice in the Wilderness

Videotape approximately 20 minutes.
\$12.00 and \$8 for members.

This video is an expose of wildlife management by Luke Dommer, founder of C.A.S.H. It was produced by Focus on Animals, CT. Esther Mechler of Focus has generously given C.A.S.H. the right to sell this videotape. Copies have been generously donated by Nancy Gordon of HAVE, an audio-visual company in Hudson, NY.



Luke Dommer

CASH HAT

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C.A.S.H. T-SHIRT

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Front of shirt

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- ✓ Become a member
- ✓ Include WILDLIFE WATCH, INC. in your will (you may earmark bequests for C.A.S.H.). Please include Wildlife Watch Inc. in your Will or Trust, and/or make Wildlife Watch one of the beneficiaries of your life insurance policy.
- ✓ Donate shares of stock, avoid capital gains, and get a tax deduction! Notify your broker or the company whose stock you hold. Ask them to transfer stock to Wildlife Watch, Inc. Federal Tax Identification Number: 13-3076705

A copy of our latest annual report may be obtained from Wildlife Watch, Inc., or from the Office of the Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

PETER'S HUMOR?

C.A.S.H. apologizes if you are not amused

Two hunters are sitting at a bar when an antihunter comes in and sits next to one of them and says, "Want to hear a stupid-hunter joke?"

The hunter replies, "Well, before you tell that joke, you should know that I'm 6 feet tall, 200 pounds, and I'm a hunter. And the guy sitting next to me is 6'2", 225 pounds, and he's also a hunter. Now, do you still want to tell that joke?"

The anti-hunter responds, "Hell no, I don't want to have to explain it twice."



At the world-famous Hunters-Are-Not-Stupid Convention, the host of the show begins, "We are all here today to prove to the world that hunters are not stupid. Can I have a volunteer?" One hunter steps up. The host says to him, "What is 15 plus 15?" After 20 seconds, the hunter blurts

out, "Eighteen!"

Obviously, with worldwide press in the audience, the 5,000 attendees are a little disappointed and embarrassed. They then demand that he be given another chance, and start yelling in unison, "One more chance!" The host finally agrees, and this time makes his question easier, "What is 5 plus 5?" After nearly 30 seconds the hunter meekly asks "Ninety?" The host sighs - everyone is upset and the hunter starts crying. Again, the audience of hunters yells, "One more chance!"

The host, by now afraid of damaging the reputation of hunters, says, "Ok! What is 2 plus 2?" The hunter closes his eyes and after a whole minute eventually blurts out, "Four!"

There's not a dry eye in the house, and the anguish is obvious as they all yell in unison, "One more chance!"



Fans of Peter's Humor



www.ebaumsworld.com/pictures/view/557305/#

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Your generous contributions will help us to do much more.

Thank you for your support.

Please visit:

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