

COVER STORY

Two-Year Vigil with
Big Crittenden Buck

Page 14

CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

HUNTING GUIDE

INSIDE

Deer Forecast

Harvest Information

Season Calendar

New License Information

Public Hunting Opps

Big Buck Winner

FALL 2018
CRITTENDEN COUNTY
KENTUCKY

FREE PUBLICATION

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

2018 Kentucky Hunting Dates

Bullfrog	May 18 - Oct. 31
Squirrel	Aug. 18 - Nov. 9
Dove	Sept. 1 - Oct. 26
Deer Archery	Sept. 1 - Jan. 21
Turkey Archery	Sept. 1 - Jan. 21
Crow	Sept. 1 - Nov. 7
Raccoon Hunt	Oct. 1 - Feb. 28
Deer Crossbow	Oct. 1 - 21
Youth Gun	Oct. 13-14
Deer Muzzleloader	Oct. 20-21
Turkey Gun	Oct. 27 - Nov. 2
Deer Crossbow	Nov. 10 - Dec. 31
Deer Rifle	Nov. 10 - 25
Squirrel	Nov. 12 - Feb. 28
Raccoon Trap	Nov. 12 - Feb. 28
Bobcat Trap	Nov. 12 - Feb. 28
Fox Hunt/Trap	Nov. 12 - Feb. 28
Dove	Nov. 22 - Dec. 2
Duck	Nov. 22-25
Canada Goose	Nov. 22 - Feb. 15
Snow Goose	Nov. 22 - Feb. 15
White Front Goose	Nov. 22 - Feb. 15
Bobcat Hunt	Nov. 24 - Feb. 28
Duck	Dec. 3 - Jan. 27
Deer Muzzleloader	Dec. 8-16
Dove	Dec. 22 - Jan. 13
Deer Youth Free	Dec. 29-30
Raccoon Youth	Dec. 29 - Jan. 4
Fox Youth	Dec. 29 - Jan. 4
Crow	Jan. 4 - Feb. 28
Goose Conservation	Feb. 16 - March 31
Coyote	Year Round
Groundhog	Year Round



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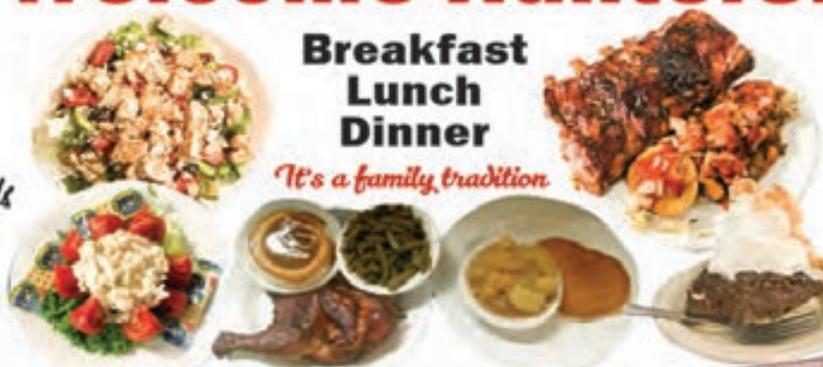
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SHAWN HOLEMAN

Keeping his faith on target

STAFF REPORT

Local minister Shawn Holeman might have been a professional archer, but God was tugging him in another direction.

Although he's answered the Lord's calling, Holeman hasn't stopped enjoying the daily refinement of an art and sport that dates back to before Christ.

The 38-year-old minister of children and youth at Marion Baptist Church still finds plenty of time to hone his bow shooting skills outside the church. An indoor range in his basement is set up for cold weather, and there's an outdoor gallery where he can sling arrows 90 yards or farther. And, what's most amazing, is that he piles them into a target in groups smaller than a hymnal.

Holeman is also the Marion Baptist Church Family Life Center director, which along with his archery talents has opened a great number of opportunities for further ministry. He might not be shooting on a pro circuit, but Holeman is doing work for which he's certain God intended. He's a community advisor for the Sportsman's Club at Crittenden County High School and a certified instructor for National Archery in the Schools Program. At the church, he oversees the Centershot Ministries Program.

In the early 2000s, he was shooting in national archery competitions and stacking up trophies. Now, he keeps score by the number of lives he touches, and also the number of deer he harvests. His basement is full of wall-hangers – including a Boone-and-



A Crittenden County minister, Shawn Holeman has a passion for his faith, and for archery and whitetail hunting.

Crockett-worthy buck he took last year with a bow. His tongue is complete with story after story of how his passion for archery and Jesus has allowed him to reach into the souls of others.

Holeman builds his own targets – wooden frames covered with canvas and stuffed with old tattered clothing.

"I have less than \$15 or \$20 in a target," he said.

Perhaps those savings were part of the reason he decided to get a new bow recently.

"I was impressed with the new technology that Hoyt is putting into their bows so I bought a new one this year."

Pulling 80 pounds on a 29-inch draw, Holeman fires with a preacher's precision, all based on years of shooting. He hardly misses a day with his bow in the backyard. It is therapy and more.

"I do it for conditioning. Archery, you're doing nothing but training for muscle memory," he explains. "When you have a big buck out there in front of you, you want to be on auto pilot."

His arrows seem to have some type of mystical GPS targeting system on board because despite being far enough away to make the bull's eye look like a peanut, he's ping the centers.

"Most people don't start off shooting 70 yards like this," he says, pulling back the string and gazing down the arrow shaft to-

ward an adjustable sight.

"I like to practice at 90 yards. When you shoot 60, 70, 80 and 90 yards then move up to 20 or 30, it's like shooting basketballs into a 50-gallon drum, if you know what I mean," he says with a chuckle and starts down range to pull the arrows he's just fired.

When it comes to deer hunting, he never shoots that far, though. He waits for close shots with a high probability of successfulness. Archery deer season opened last weekend in Kentucky, but few take



advantage of the late-summer opportunities. Holeman says he likes the early opening.

"In 2012, I killed a deer on opening day. It was Sept. 2 and it was the best meat I've ever had."

Holeman reasons that bucks are not full of rutting testosterone in September.

"They have just been sitting

around getting fat and sassy. They don't move around much at that time of the year, just going from food to bed to water. Now, you have to deal with them fairly quickly if you shoot one when it's hot. You certainly don't let it hang, and you might have to shoo the green flies off of it," he finished with a smile.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

DEER HUNTING OUTLOOK GREAT FOR 2018-19

Crittenden's quality improving with quantity

When hunters take to the hills, hollows and forests this fall they will encounter plenty of whitetail deer. The herd in Crittenden, Livingston and other nearby counties is healthy. Indeed, Crittenden County has about 25 deer per square mile, making it among the most dense areas in Kentucky for whitetail deer.

In fact, Crittenden was among the first Kentucky counties to be restocked with deer during the modern era. It was after World War II when Kentucky's wildlife department relocated deer to Christian, Crittenden, Livingston and Ballard counties from Wisconsin.

Over the past 25 years, hunters have harvested about 65,000 deer from Crittenden County and in 2017 it was the largest producer of whitetails in Kentucky with 3,451 checked in through KDFWR's Telecheck system.

There is no argument that deer hunting is seeing its best days right now, but local biologist Philip Sharp said it can be even better. Sharp is a private lands biologist for Crittenden and some surrounding counties. He is in the field daily and observes the local herd in the wild and on paper though data prepared by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. Sharp

says the quality for Crittenden County has improved alongside the quantity.

"Ten years ago, most of the bucks we were harvesting around here were a year and a half old," he explains. "Now, about 75 percent of them are two and a half years."

Because Crittenden County has near perfect habitat for whitetail deer, Sharp says bucks can reach 150 or 160 inches on the Boone and Crockett scoring system before they're a full three years old.

"Anybody will shoot one like that," he continues, "but if we can hold off on taking those 130 and 140 class deer it will make a huge difference."

Sharp said many hunters exercise some measure of restraint, which is reflected in a buck harvest that's gone from mostly yearlings to two and a half year olds.

"If we could just take that next step and get them to three and a half or four and a half, that's where you start getting world-class bucks."

Harvesting the oldest deer in your herd is best management, Sharp said. That might mean taking an aged six-pointer and letting that two-year-old 10-pointer walk.

"Eight pointers are the most common," Sharp says. "The 10-pointer

is the one we want to protect (until it matures).

Where an eight-pointer might grow enough to put on 15 inches of antler in the coming year, Sharp says a 10-pointer might add 25 inches.

"We have everything we need right here to grow big, mature Boone and Crockett bucks, but most bucks just don't get old enough," he said.

For early-season hunters, Sharp says oak stands are a good bet. An acorn survey conducted in Livingston County in late summer found that white oaks were about 13 percent producers while red oaks were about 67 percent full of nuts. In general, red oaks only bear acorns every other year while whites can produce annually. Deer seem to prefer white oaks to reds, Sharp said, perhaps because red oak nuts have a higher acid content.



Sharp rates the red oak production as very good and the white oak production fair. Most white oaks will drop much earlier than reds. White oak acorns are mostly already eaten up by the time rifle season rolls around.

Persimmon trees were full of fruit

this growing season and hickories had a great mast-producing year.

Sharp said small game are also beneficiaries from a good mast-producing season. He says rabbits and squirrels are plentiful, but numbers for quail and turkeys are declining here.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Crittenden County - Kentucky DEER HARVEST TOTALS

1993	2,357	2006	3,085
1994	1,826	2007	2,927
1995	1,857	2008	2,707
1996	2,065	2009	2,549
1997	1,874	2010	2,952
1998	2,728	2011	2,829
1999	2,201	2012	3,010
2000	2,597	2013	3,033
2001	2,272	2014	3,224
2002	2,695	2015	3,359
2003	2,586	2016	3,081
2004	3,032	2017	3,451
2005	2,593		

TOP HARVEST COUNTIES 2017-18 DEER SEASON

County	Male	Female	Total	Wildlife Region
Crittenden	1634	1817	3451	PURCHASE REGION
Hardin	1790	1584	3374	GREEN RIVER REGION
Pendleton	1615	1666	3281	BLUEGRASS REGION
Christian	1794	1483	3277	PURCHASE REGION
Owen	1524	1600	3124	BLUEGRASS REGION
Breckinridge	1627	1257	2884	GREEN RIVER REGION
Hopkins	1427	1406	2833	GREEN RIVER REGION
Graves	1271	1432	2703	PURCHASE REGION
Shelby	1347	1295	2642	BLUEGRASS REGION
Grayson	1426	1209	2635	GREEN RIVER REGION
Ohio	1413	1196	2609	GREEN RIVER REGION
Webster	1110	1429	2539	GREEN RIVER REGION
Hart	1353	1130	2483	GREEN RIVER REGION
Nelson	1160	1091	2251	BLUEGRASS REGION
Trigg	1143	1057	2200	PURCHASE REGION
Bracken	1075	1103	2178	NORTHEAST REGION
Grant	1132	1043	2175	BLUEGRASS REGION
Muhlenberg	1145	941	2086	GREEN RIVER REGION
Caldwell	1070	941	2011	PURCHASE REGION
Washington	986	1014	2000	BLUEGRASS REGION
Harrison	1065	893	1958	BLUEGRASS REGION
Livingston	965	969	1934	PURCHASE REGION
Logan	1056	857	1913	GREEN RIVER REGION
Anderson	975	928	1903	BLUEGRASS REGION
Boone	916	946	1862	BLUEGRASS REGION

SO WHAT'S A BOONER?

Bucks taken with a gun can qualify for Boone and Crockett Club's recordbook and for bowhunters the book is kept by Pope and Young. For "Booners" the minimum scoring points for whitetail deer is 160 inches. For Pope and Young the minimum for a whitetail is 125 inches. There are also minimums for non-typical antlers. There is a well-defined system for measuring the antlers in both categories, which uses length and mass as the key factors.

MOST COMMON GAME VIOLATIONS

KDFWR officials say these are the most common violations made during hunting season.

1. Not filling out back of hunting license.
2. Failure to call KDFWR Telecheck system.
3. Trespassing.
4. Failure to wear appropriate hunter orange.

KDFWR
Deer Tele-Check System
1-800-CHK-DEER
1-800-245-4263
REPORT A POACHER
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The Crittenden Outdoors Hunting Season Guide was designed and published by The Crittenden Press, Inc., at 125 East Bellville Street, Marion, Ky. It is available in PDF form at The Press Online or MarionKentucky.org. Contact us at (270) 965-3191.

KENTUCKY HUNTING LICENSE FEES

License or Permit	Resident	Nonresident
Annual Fishing	\$23.00	\$50.00
Joint Husband/Wife Annual Fishing	\$42.00	Not available
1-Day Fishing	\$7.00	\$10.00
3-Year Fishing (available online only)	\$55.00	Not available
Nonresident 7-Day Fishing	Not available	\$30.00
Nonresident 15-Day Fishing	Not available	\$40.00
Trout Permit	\$10.00	\$10.00
Annual Hunting	\$27.00	\$140.00
1-Day Hunting (not valid for deer or turkey)	\$7.00	\$15.00
7-Day Hunting (not valid for deer or turkey)	Not available	\$55.00
Annual Youth Hunting (ages 12-15 only)	\$6.00	\$10.00
Annual Trapping	\$20.00	\$130.00
Annual Landowner/Tenant Trapping	\$10.00	Not available
Annual Youth Trapping	\$5.00	Not available
Annual Combination Hunting/Fishing	\$42.00	Not available
Senior/Disabled Comb Hunting/Fishing	\$12.00	Not available
Sportsman's License	\$95.00	Not available
Youth (ages 12-15) Sportsman's License	\$30.00	Not available
Statewide Deer Permit (two deer)	\$35.00	\$120.00
Youth (ages 12-15) Deer Permit (one deer)	\$10.00	\$15.00
Additional Deer Permit (two deer)	\$15.00	\$15.00
Spring Turkey Permit (two turkeys)	\$30.00	\$75.00
Youth Turkey Permit (one turkey, spring or fall)	\$10.00	\$15.00
Fall Turkey Permit (four turkeys)	\$30.00	\$75.00
Migratory Bird/Waterfowl Permit	\$15.00	\$15.00
Federal Duck Stamp	\$25.00	\$25.00
Sandhill Crane Permit	\$3.00	\$3.00
Elk Drawing Application (deadline April 30)	\$10.00	\$10.00
Youth WMA Elk Drawing (deadline April 30)	\$10.00	\$10.00
Quota Bull Elk Permit (if drawn)	\$100.00	\$550.00
Quota Cow Elk Permit (if drawn)	\$60.00	\$400.00
Youth Elk Permit (if drawn)	\$30.00	\$40.00
Out-of-Zone Elk Permit	\$30.00	\$400.00
Bear Permit	\$30.00	\$250.00
Youth Bear Permit	\$10.00	Not available
Bear Chase Permit	\$30.00	Not available
Youth Bear Chase Permit	\$10.00	Not available
Peabody WMA User Permit	\$15.00	\$15.00
LBL Hunter User Permit	\$25.00	\$25.00
LBL Hunt/Backcountry Camping	\$35.00	\$35.00
Temporary Hunter Ed Permit	\$5.00	\$5.00

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Local WMAs offer various public hunting opportunities

Big Rivers WMA

Located in Crittenden and Union counties, the WMA is 7,574 acres. Directions: From Sturgis, Ky., at the intersection of U.S. HWY 60 and KY 109, travel north on KY 109 for 1.65 miles, turn left (west) onto KY 1508 and proceed 1.45 miles to main Union County entrance on left. Also from Sturgis, at the intersection of US 60 and KY 365, travel west on KY 365 and proceed 2.5 miles to main Crittenden County entrance and area office on right. Additional Crittenden County access is available on Bells Mine Road off KY 365. From Marion, travel 7.5 miles east on US 60, turn left on KY 365 and travel for 6.8 miles.

Description: Steep to very steep upland hardwood forests, flat to rolling bottomland hardwood forest, and agricultural lands bordered by the Ohio River to the west and the Tradewater River to the south. Good populations of deer, turkey, squirrel, and furbearers exist on the area. ATVs, horseback riding, and camping are prohibited.

Regulations: Hunting is open under statewide regulations for small game, furbearer and turkey seasons, except these seasons are closed during the two-day quota

hunt that starts the first Saturday in November.

Other Exceptions: Deer hunting is open under statewide regulations for the archery, crossbow and youth firearm seasons; however, during quota hunts, all deer hunting seasons on this WMA are closed, except to drawn hunters. Archery/crossbow-only quota hunt from the Monday following the October youth-only weekend through Nov. 30, except when closed during the two-day quota hunt that starts the first Saturday in November.

Waterfowl: Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to 2 p.m. Hunters may not enter the area until 4 a.m.

For more information: Call Contact: (270) 374-3025.

Livingston County WMA and State Natural Areas

Consists of three tracts, the Bissell Bluff SNA (562 acres), Newman's Bluff SNA (461 acres), and Reynolds (873 acres).

Regulations: Open under statewide regulations for squirrel, rabbit, quail, fall turkey and furbearer seasons.

Exceptions: Deer: The archery, crossbow, youth firearm, muzzleloader and modern gun deer sea-

sons are open under statewide regulations, except modern firearms may not be used to take deer during the modern gun season.

Turkey (Spring): Open for the youth-only turkey season, and open only to youth hunters during the general spring turkey season.

Ohio River Islands WMA

On the Ohio River upstream from Smithland Lock and Dam, Stewart (Birdsville) Island and surrounding river area is a waterfowl refuge closed Oct. 15-March 15. Accessed by numerous ramps along Ohio River, including Birdsville Ramp off KY 137. Public hunting allowed prior to closure.

Twin Sisters, Pryor, Rondeau islands and a large marsh area located between Pryor and Twin Sisters islands provide waterfowl hunting from temporary blinds.

Access to the islands on Kentucky side north islands at Givens Creek Ramp off of Golconda Ferry Road, and south at Birdsville Ramp off of Birdsville Road at KY 137. Roads are accessible off of KY 137, north of Smithland, and on the Illinois side at Davidson Memorial Boat Ramp and Golconda Marina Ramp.

Stewart Island/Birdsville Island Unit: Deer: Open under statewide



archery and crossbow seasons through Oct. 14 only. Open during October muzzleloader season; closed during December muzzleloader season. Open during the youth gun season; closed for free youth weekend. Quail & Rabbit: Closed. Squirrel: Open from the third Saturday in May through the third Friday in June; and from the third Saturday in August through Oct. 14. Turkey (Fall): Archery and crossbow seasons open under statewide regulations through Oct. 14 only. Closed for fall gun season. Turkey (Spring): Open

under statewide regulations. The Stewart Island Unit is closed to public access Oct. 15 - March 15, except during early muzzleloader deer season. Waterfowl: The portion of the Ohio River from Smithland Lock and Dam upstream to the powerline crossing at river mile 911.5 is closed to hunting. Stewart (Birdsville) Island is closed to public access Oct. 15 - March 15, except for October muzzleloader season. Shooting hours are from one-half hour before sunrise to 2 p.m. Hunters may not enter the area until 4 a.m.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Thompson's outdoors lifestyle leads to biggest buck



For Larry Thompson, the outdoors are very much a part of his life.

Being a tow boat captain affords him some timely opportunities to enjoy the family farm near Mattoon. He has a couple of stocked ponds, enjoys hunting deer and turkey and simply observing wildlife.

Last fall, he scored the best buck of his hunting career, a whopping 11-pointer that might make the Boone and Crockett Record Book and one that earned him the top prize in the local big buck contest. The contest is sponsored by Hodge's Sports and Apparel and Marion Tourism Commission. The winner earns a nice cash prize and bragging rights that can last a lifetime.

"This was definitely the best buck I'd ever gotten," said the 66-year-old hunter. "I have been entering this contest since its inception so this was great. There was some doubt whether I would ever get a big one like this even though I have eight of what I call wall-hangers."

His latest harvest will be on the wall soon, too, but he chuckles a bit in describing his wife's reaction to yet another mount.

"She says eight is enough. When a new one goes up, one must come down."

Local taxidermist Robert Kirby is preparing

Thompson's buck for display. It has been scored at a fraction over 171 on the B&C Scoring System. It field dressed 201 pounds.

Thompson bagged the buck on opening morning of the 2017 rifle season. Large deer tracks around his ponds had hinted that a big buck might be working the area, but Thompson doesn't deploy any trail cameras so he wasn't sure.

"It was the first deer I saw that morning," he said. "I thought, dang there goes my season."

Of course the rewards were worth a short-lived hunt. He'd seen the same buck a year earlier and had missed his chance that season because his gun jammed.

He keeps a close watch on the herd, observing his food plots and spending a whole lot of time on the farm when he's not on the boat.

"It's nice living here on the farm because I can be out the door and in my stand or blind in five minutes," he said.

He has been cultivating habitat on the farm for 30 years, and it's starting to pay big dividends. His son, Steve, took a big buck a few years ago.

"When we first got the farm the bucks were kind of scraggly," he said. "We've kind of built the herd up and it's getting better every year."

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Local Amish community is largest in Kentucky

Forty winters have come and gone since a handful of Amish men and their families migrated to rural Crittenden County and settled what would become the largest Amish community in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

They initially settled on an 1,800-acre tract of property that had one small clapboard house, then systematically populated a greater portion of the landscape in the northern section of the county.

Today, John Detweiler says that by his count, there are more than 30 Amish homes on that original farm where the Christian group's settlement began in December 1977.

Detweiler, 90, peers through a set of strikingly blue eyes centered beneath his long white locks and a snowy beard and tells how things have changed over the last four decades of Amish occupation in the area of the county near Mattoon.

"There's not much farming being done here anymore," said Detweiler.

These days, many of the working age men are carpenters, loggers, mill operators, cabinet makers, butchers, grocers or producers of fruit, flowers and berries. The days of each

household raising a few acres of corn and hay are about gone.

The community has, in some ways, evolved into a cottage economy of retail services and goods that serves the greater Crittenden County area, and it has also blossomed from about a half-dozen families to almost 100.

Through it all, there's one thing that has remained constant. Their faith.

The Amish – although they worship in a similar manner as other Christian denominations – do not build brick and mortar churches in which to congregate on Sundays. Instead, their faith is the church, and they meet regularly in the homes of members. Attendance is compulsory unless there's ample reason for missing Sunday services.

The Amish community in Crittenden County is divided into four church districts and each is served by a bishop, two ministers and one deacon. Every Sunday there are worship services at two different homes, generally, for about three hours, ending around noon.

The host families typically move out all of the furniture and replace it with pew-like

benches to accommodate churchgoers. Oftentimes, a family will have a large shed or outbuilding more spacious and suitable for such a gathering. Funerals sometimes attract 500 to 600 people.

Detweiler was bishop for almost 30 years until 2008 when he passed the mantle to a younger man.

Simon Beachy, a minister in one of the districts, was one of the very first men to arrive in Kentucky. He came in the fall of 1977 from Pennsylvania.

"I thought we'd come south, but we got snowed in the first winter," said the soft-spoken man who describes himself as a farmer.

At age 79, he's among the last of the earliest men to bring their families here. Elmer and Jonas Yoder were early migrants. They both passed away in the last few months. The two were known far and wide in the broader community. Elmer was a farmer who raised beef cattle, operated a sewing shop and made baskets. Jonas operated an offset printing shop in the community.

William Cramer was a carpenter who came here with the original group. His wife died

soon thereafter, the first Amish death after the families had moved to Crittenden County. He died several years ago and his son-in-law, Jacob Stutzman, who was also among the earliest arrivals, moved to Ohio years ago. He's still living there. Samuel Hertzler came to Crittenden County in the early wave of migration, too, but he is no longer living.

Hertzler and Detweiler came to Kentucky from South America where land, at the time, was even less expensive than Kentucky.

"We purchased some for \$2.50 an acre and the rest was \$7 an acre," Detweiler said about Paraguay, a country in central South America below the equator where the climate is very hot. Property became so expensive in Pennsylvania it made expansion of the Amish community there difficult.

He remembers making some inquiries in the 1970s about the type of land available in Kentucky. He wrote a letter to his friend, Elmer Yoder, who was already here. Detweiler said he was told that the land was rolling, but when he got here, he found it a bit

Continued on Page 16

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Turkey study conducted here

Although wildlife biologists believe nothing beyond Mother Nature is challenging the local wild turkey population, they were here last spring conducting some scientific due diligence just to be certain.

For days in April, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) staff were in Salem thoroughly checking carcasses of deceased wild turkeys. Armed with tweezers and an assortment of other instruments, they took blood samples, plucked parasites, aged and closely examined bodies for details that might indicate something awry in the local population.

Wild turkeys were virtually extinct in western Kentucky throughout most of the 1900s. A major restoration projection brought them back during the early 1990s. Soon thereafter, a sustainable flock allowed hunting to begin. By the early 2000s there were bountiful harvests. Crittenden County turkey

hunters set a record in 2002, taking 544 birds. Livingston was following suit. Hunters were joyous and times were good. As late as 2012, Crittenden gunners were taking lots of turkeys, setting a new modern-day record with 566.

Then, something happened. Numbers started folding. Crittenden County hunters have taken fewer than 400 turkeys for five straight seasons. Livingston and Crittenden counties are among 17 statewide that are seeing decreased harvests the last few years.

It hasn't gone unnoticed.

Zak Danks, KDFWR Turkey program coordinator, says biologists are not sure what's happening that's why they wanted to conduct autopsies and take tissue and blood samples.

Detailed blood and tissue results are not yet available, but the preliminary carcass study found nothing significant. Complete results should be available by early 2019.



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A father's memory

BY MARK WILLIAMS
WHITETAIL PROPERTIES

Last hunting season was special for me, not because I harvested a massive buck (by the way, I didn't). It was special because my oldest daughter, Emma, and I were able to hunt together when she shot her first deer.

It wasn't a big bruiser, just a little button buck. I usually wouldn't be happy if someone shot a button buck on my property, but with her, I was beaming with pride.

I know one day she is going to be grown with children of her own. She may stop hunting and move on to other things, but I will always have that day.

I do not need a video or picture to remind me of the look on her face when that deer hit the ground. It is burned into my memory for eternity.

I hope that this was just one of many hunts with Emma, and eventually her sister, Bella.

Making more memories with the ones I love on God's creation and sharing father and daughter experiences are what are really important.



Emma Williams with her first deer.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

COVER STORY

Technology, old-fashion scouting are keys to big buck success

BY CHRIS EVANS

THE CRITTENDEN PRESS

For most hunters, deer season begins the second Saturday of November and runs for 16 straight days until the Sunday following Thanksgiving.

For Joey Rich of Marion, the season is much longer, and in some instances, it ends much earlier.

Rich spends countless hours scouting – both the old-fashioned way and with new modern equipment such as trail cameras. He studies movements and spends time spotting bucks until he finds the right one.

Sometimes, it takes him only a few weeks to finish the deal, but many times, as most hunters understand, that monster buck eludes him. Rich spent several months watching a nice Boone and Crockett buck starting in the late fall of 2016 and into the early part of the 2017 hunting season.

On Oct. 25 of last year, Rich bagged the whopping Crittenden County buck with his bow.

It produced a green score of 176% and the deer weighed about 240 pounds.

"I'm not sure of his age, but I think he is 5½ or 6½ years old," said Rich, who has taken other good bucks in his hunting career, but none larger than this one.

The local coal miner is a former U.S. Marine who served in combat in Iraq. He's also something of a local football legend, having played on some great high school football teams in Crittenden County and being



Joey Rich has trail camera photos of the buck last fall before he harvested it and the winter before. See the date stamp on the pictures.



named to the local sports hall of fame a few years back.

When it comes to hunting, Rich approaches his sport much like he did on the football field in high school, with a great deal of intensity.

Rich methodically reconnoiters his hunting area with high-quality trail cameras. He has many images of the deer he took last fall. Most of them were snapped at night on his trail camera. Some were from the winter of 2016-17. He knows it's the same deer because of a cut or tear on an ear that is evident in all of the photos.

"The main beams are kind of the same shape and G2s look the same as last year," Rich said.

The buck carried a 10-point mainframe rack with two additional kicker points on the left base. The spread was nearly 22 inches at the tips of each main beam.

Rich was hunting a narrow funnel field between a pond and hardwoods forest. With the dry weather, deer have been using ponds for watering late in the day.

"He came out of the woods into the field. There were other bucks already in front of me, but they were too young," Rich said. "He started thrashing a

tree limb and made a scrape then walked toward the other bucks. They moved away from him, but he stood there quartered to me looking at the other

bucks for a few minutes."

Rich remained patient and waited for a high-percentage shot.

"He finally turned and gave

me a good shot at about 15 yards. That part of the field is narrow, only about 26 yards wide," he explained.





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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Guns are heirlooms: Keep them firing right, well preserved

KENTUCKY AFIELD

Proper firearms maintenance is important throughout the year, not just on days leading up to the next season.

"If you want your rifle to last longer, the best way to do that is to keep it from getting rusty," said Bill Balda, an expert marksman and the Hunter Education Supervisor for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. "The best way to keep it from getting rusty is to clean and lubricate it. As a result, you get to know your rifle better and you know it's in safe working condition."

A well-maintained rifle can last generations and will perform better over time. Neglecting routine maintenance can lead to a buildup of gunpowder residue and metal fouling. Muzzleloading rifles require even more rigorous care. "The simplest way to unload a muzzleloader is to fire it into a

safe backstop. But the residue from burnt black powder and even its substitutes is extremely corrosive," said Mark Marraccini, Kentucky Fish and Wildlife spokesman and a muzzleloader craftsman. "If you leave that inside the barrel for very long it would be just like dipping any piece of steel into corrosive acid or salt. It's going to start etching its way into the steel immediately."

Marraccini warns against creating pits in the barrel. "They will affect accuracy later and could make your muzzleloader unsafe," he said.

Before undertaking any cleaning routine, first make sure the rifle is not loaded. For centerfire rifles, Balda suggests cleaning the barrel with patches wet with gun cleaner first, then, a wet brush for five to 10 passes. After the initial cleaning, continue to use dry patches until they come out clean.

A light coat of oil then can be applied in the bore.

"If you want to remove copper buildup after shooting 500 to 1,000 rounds, there are chemical cleaners that can be used. I use a bore paste, which is like a jeweler's paste. It has grit in it that is harder than copper but not hard enough to score the steel of the barrel," Balda said. "Most liquid cleaners have ammonia in them. When you run that patch through and take it out and it has blue on it that means you have copper in the barrel. I would first brush it out and then go ahead and patch it dry. Then, put bore paste on another patch and scrub it in there. You can go back and forth, particularly at the throat, seven or eight times."

Balda recommends placing a piece of wood on the end of the barrel to prevent the cleaning rod from coming out.

"When you pull that out, that paste is going to look black no matter what," he said. "Then check it with a wet patch. If the wet patch is blue, there still is copper present. Then, you have to keep doing it. Even if you only get half the copper out of it, it will still shoot better."

While you're at it, check the bedding screws. Wood stocks tend to shrink and swell with changing environmental conditions and that can loosen those screws. For pesky screws that refuse to stay tight, Balda suggests securing them with blue Loctite.

If your rifle is a bolt action, Balda suggests removing the bolt and cleaning the bolt face and the receiver inside the action with a toothbrush-style cleaning brush. Then, wipe with a light coat of oil. Wipe down the outside of the rifle and clean the lenses on the scope.

For muzzleloaders, hot soapy water effectively cuts through black powder residue and the heat from the water helps dry remaining moisture inside of the barrel after running a dry patch through it, Marraccini explained.

If you can remove the barrel, set the base of it in the water and work the cleaning rod similar to a plunger.

"When you can run a dry patch down it and it comes out entirely clean, then I like to put some natural greases on; Bore Butter is one brand of it. There are other brands out there, too," Marraccini said. "You put it on a patch and run it down there until you're satisfied that you've got a coating on the inside of the barrel."

Treat the exterior of a muzzleloader the same as you would any rifle: wipe it dry and remove any fingerprints.

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CRITTENDEN OUTDOORS

Crittenden County Amish Community

Continued from page 9

more hilly and perhaps more suitable to cattle farming than row cropping.

"I'd still like to be out there on the farm with the horses, churning the dirt," he said. "Nowadays, about all I can do is look at it."

Although he walks with two canes to urge along a couple of bad knees, Detweiler still can be found in his harness shop; however, he says there's a whole lot of competition in the market.

The community has two saddle shops, a second harness shop and many more hand-crafted artisans who have found new ways to make a living beyond farming.

Stretching from U.S. 60 East to Ky. 91 North, the Amish community is 13 miles in diameter and includes almost 500 or more people. There are five schools – Twin Oaks, Daniel's Ridge, Happy Hollow, Crooked Creek and Meadow Ridge. The teachers are home-grown, and on warm days, you might catch one taking students to a nearby home where they sing a song to brighten someone's day. They are taught to speak fluent German in their schools.

Most of the families who have settled here have Delaware roots. Beachy grew up there, and he and his wife Sarah moved to Pennsylvania to begin raising their family. After a short period, they decided to head further south in hope of finding a longer growing season.

Those first few winters were rough. In fact, the winter of 1977-78 was the snowiest on record in western Kentucky.

"But we enjoyed them because we didn't have so many chores to do," said Beachy. "We didn't have any frozen water pipes."

Before long, their homes had running water, but they've never had electricity. They heat with wood and light their homes with kerosene lamps or Naptha lights. They power refrigerators and stoves with kerosene, too. In earlier years, they purchased 100-pound blocks of ice in Morganfield to keep their food cool.

The Amish have come to embrace some power tools that run off compressed air, and they use heavy equipment likes tractors, usually on metal or hard rubber tires. Those types of wheels slow down the vehicles and make them impracticable for any type of general transportation. They move around mostly in horse-drawn buggies, but you see many walking, and the kids ride skates on paved roads.

"It's a simple life," said Beachy.

And that's the way they like it. Tourists and curiosity-seekers bring commerce to the community, but it has its pitfalls. Sometimes, the traffic can be a little vexing.

When they get sick, home and natural remedies are common treatment. However, they do see doctors in town and take prescription medication when warranted. There are no doctors in the Amish community, but there are providers for massage treatments and plenty of places to get herbs and vitamins.

There are three groceries and a farm store in the community. There's little reason for a family to venture into town, but most do from time to time.

"I'd prefer to take my horse into to town," said Detweiler, "but I'm getting too old for that stuff. Now we get a ride. We were there yesterday, but it had been six weeks, I guess, since the last time."

The broader community has been largely receptive to the Amish. Former county magistrate Helen McConnell, whose late husband was a magistrate before her, has developed strong relationships with her neighbors, the Amish. She lives on the same road as many of them just west of the tiny village of Mattoon. The Amish, she said, have taken many farms that were grown over and out of production and made them into something again.

"They've cleaned a lot of these places up and done a whole lot for the countryside," McConnell said.

She calls the Amish caring neighbors who are quick to lend a hand. She said the children walk by her



house every morning going to school about 30 minutes before the big yellow buses start rolling by to collect children heading into town for their public education.

"I live in two worlds out here," she says with a laugh. "I see their world go by my house, then I see my world go by. There's a big difference," McConnell said. "Their children are all very well behaved."

Trouble very rarely spills from the Amish community. They tend to take care of behavioral matters either within the family or within the church.

"Their discipline seems to be a little tougher than ours a lot of the times," said David Travis, who also lives nearby and has served the county in various capacities, including emergency management director. He knows many of the Amish by name, knows where they live and, to a great extent, their family trees.

Travis doesn't think most people in Marion realize the vast number of tourists attracted to the Amish community for cultural tourism and shopping.

"During certain tourists seasons,

it's a solid line of traffic in front of my house," he said. "They come by the bus loads. A lot of church buses go by."

Travis was a teenager when the Amish first moved to the area. Over the years, he's developed strong bonds with some, and so has his son.

"They're accepted, and they're respected. And that respect goes both ways. They want a good rapport with the outside world," Travis said.

There is a good bit of misinformation about the Amish. They pay taxes – including the local school tax – on their property and sales tax on goods sold at their shops. They are not registered to vote in government elections, and their schools are not regulated by the Commonwealth of the Kentucky. There are indeed many differences in their ways when compared to mainstream culture, and that simplicity of life is arguably as instrumental to their faith as is the church.

"They're people just like we are, they just live a little differently," McConnell said.

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remains alongside the road or onto someone else's property without permission.

Disposing of it on the side of the road is not a good idea, it is littering. This practice makes hunters look bad. Nobody wants to see or smell a deer carcass. Be considerate of others. Just because you've taken a deer, that doesn't mean it's over. Disposing of the carcass is part of the process of deer hunting.



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Hunters provide a necessary service besides keeping game animal numbers within reason. They are the eyes and ears on the ground, and help inform wildlife management decisions. Hunting also generates benefits from hunter-supported organizations like conservation groups, habitat enhancement services and restoration outfits.

Over the last 10 years, data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicates that more and more females are taking up hunting.

Hunting seasons vary depending on where you live. Regulations designed by local conservation, game, fish and wildlife departments often dictate the start and end of hunting season. Although the licensing, seasons, limits, and fees for hunting may differ geographically, the preparation that goes into getting ready for hunting season is similar regardless of geography.

Many seasoned hunters realize hunting season does not begin on "opening day." Rather, it can take weeks or months to get ready for a successful season. Considering hunting seasons can be brief, preparation helps hunters make the most of their time spent in the field.

* Purchase your license, tag or stamp. Many wildlife departments require hunters register in advance of the season, and this registration includes securing a hunting license. Because there is a limit to how many animals each hunter can hunt, tags for the animals they're hunting also will be issued. Hunters planning on going out for the season should stay apprised of when licensing and registration begins and ends so they can hunt legally.

* Scout areas. The landscape can change from year to year depending on a host of factors, including construction, commercialization and weather. Areas once open to hunting may now be restricted lands. Map out your potential hunting location and be aware of any new landmarks or changes.

* Check and replenish gear. Inspect weaponry, field-dressing supplies, clothing, and other supplies for wear and tear. Address any issues that need to be fixed, or replace items as necessary. If a rifle, bow or shotgun hasn't been fired in a while, take it to a range to verify accuracy and sighting. If you hunt out of a tree stand or blind, make sure it is sturdy and in good condition prior to use.

* Get in shape. Hunting often requires hiking in and out of the great outdoors in various terrain. It's helpful to increase physical activity leading up to the hunt to prepare your body for the physical demands of hunting.

* Organize and pack gear. Ensure your equipment is clean, in working order and packed away in your travel bags. Establish a system of organization and a checklist so you're certain you will have what you need. Don't forget to bring along your hunting license and animal tags.



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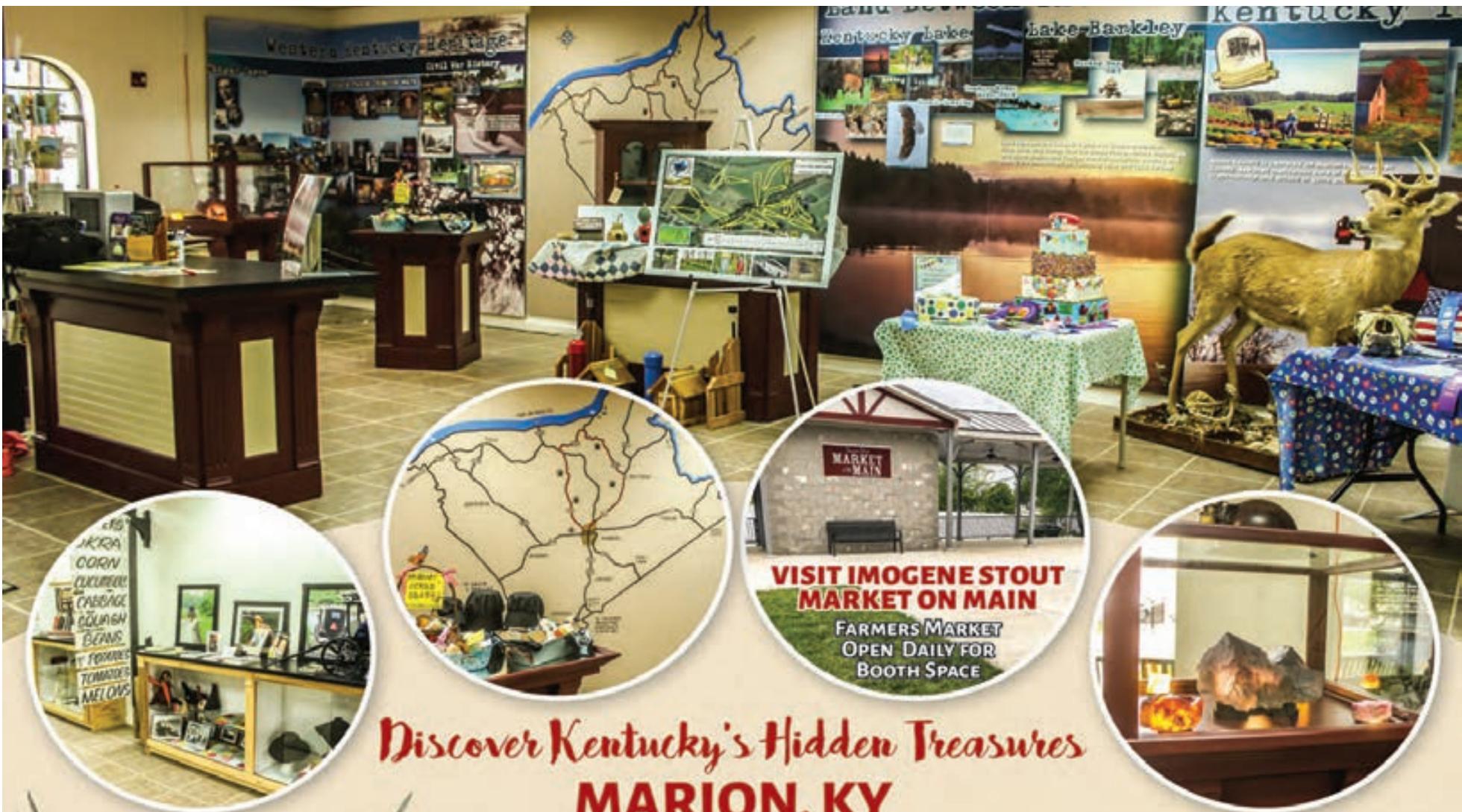
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