

Welcome everyone. My hope is that you are well, safe, and looking forward to a better year than last. The activities of your association will certainly strive and show this to be the case as well. The events of the past three months will certainly help bring about a better world. A world that is financially stable and relatively free from conflict provides the environment for countries and businesses to be prosperous. It is the world that determines what is fashionable, thereby determining the climate of the fur industry. I believe the world's leadership changes will have a positive and profound effect on the world's financial health, which will eventually trickle right down to each of us on the prairies of the upper Midwest. North America produces the finest wild fur collections in the world, and North Dakota is an important contributor to those collections. Most importantly, active regulated fur hunting and trapping benefits those species and helps maintain balance. I am optimistic that the fur industry will improve and grateful for all that North Dakota has to offer.

Another important piece of information - you will find a brief synopsis of the Turtle Mountain marten research project included on our website. You can feel proud that your cubby and equipment support made a significant and important improvement for marten identification.

I'll close with a reminder to keep your membership current, so you don't miss any of the association's activities and information. Please consider volunteering for any of the leadership positions or helping with an activity. Until next time, God bless You and God Bless America!

Respectfully, Rick Tischaefter

**2025 Summer Rendezvous and Annual Meeting**

The summer rendezvous is a family and friends' event and will be held on Saturday June 21st at the Velva Wildlife Club. Velva Wildlife Club sits on 52 acres of Mouse River bottomland three miles west of Velva on Hwy. 52. The club is a multi-activity location that includes an education facility, rifle range, 3 house trap shooting range, 3 bag target archery range, 23 target 3D archery range, and a new catch and release pond stocked with northern pike. The archery ranges and fishing pond will be open during our rendezvous. The river bottomland provides a variety of habitats which make it a great place for education classes and demonstrations. Primitive camping exists on the grounds, and Ceder (yep, that's the way it is spelled) Lodge (701-338-3080) in Velva has both motel rooms and hook-ups for campers. Velva also has a city park which has camping.

Demonstrations – if you have something you'd like to see, do, or help with, please let me know. We need suggestions! It's hard to put together a schedule when you're not sure what folks want to see. We've tried to provide what's current with the fur market and with the feedback, we've done very well. The folks doing the demonstrations were outstanding and appreciated by those who were on the receiving end. Have an idea? Share it!

Auction Items – we are always in need of new, slightly used, and used items for our auction. Past auctions have been a blend of stand-up comedy and opportunities for a deal or two. Auctioneer Phil does an amazing job for everyone. In all honesty, it is an important event that benefits the association and the education program. Items that have already been donated include traps, trapping equipment, stretchers, hard and soft water fishing equipment, rifle scopes, and reloading equipment. There is always a need for more, so please donate and attend this enjoyable event!

Vendors – are welcome and vendor space is free. It doesn't always have to be about trapping – folks have many interests, and you never know what that may be until you set up as a vendor. Let me know if you'll need space or have any questions or special needs.

Our annual meeting - will be held during our summer rendezvous on Saturday, June 21, 2025. The meeting will begin at 12:30 PM. The location is the Velva Wildlife Club, Velva, North Dakota.

## **Election Cycle**

The positions of Vice President (Travis Leier), Secretary (Chris Tischaefter) and Directors for Districts 1 (Garrett Volk) and 3 (Chris Flann) are up for election in 2025. Names for any nominations or volunteers for these positions should be brought to my attention by May 1, 2025. Please consider helping.

## **2025 North Dakota Game & Fish Department Special Allocation Big Game Drawing**

The North Dakota Century Code provides a special allocation big game license lottery for qualified non-profit organizations which are federal tax exempt under IRS Code 501(c)(3). North Dakota Game & Fish Department manages the application process and conducts the lottery drawing. Successful applicants may be awarded a license to be used as a fundraiser, with a portion of the proceeds used for a conservation or education project. We apply every year for this opportunity but have yet to be selected. We were recently notified that we were unsuccessful in the 2025 lottery.

The number of eligible organizations applying for the sixteen big game special allocation tags continues to increase every year. Currently, eligible organizations must be IRS Code 501(c)(3) non-profit and in good standing the North Dakota Secretary of State. Documentation must be submitted proving such with each application. One hundred and forty-six organizations applied in the 2025 drawing. House Bill 1094 (in the current legislative session) seeks to expand that eligibility to any IRS Code 501(c) organization or entity. If eligibility changes as outlined in the legislation, the flood gates will open and there will be a significant increase in future applications for any one of those sixteen tags.

## **North Dakota Cooperative Education Program**

Important dates for our education program:

### June

21 NDFHTA Summer Rendezvous, Velva Wildlife Club

### July

17 State Fair Trapping Booth Set Up, Minot

18-26 State Fair, Conservation Park in Minot

27 State Fair Trapping Booth Take Down, Minot

### August

TBD Fur Harvester Education Course in Bismarck

### October

2-4 Fur Harvester Education Course, Velva Wildlife Club

11 Using Cables Devices in North Dakota Seminar, Velva Wildlife Club

Using Cable Devices in North Dakota – This seminar includes everything from cable device construction to actual field setting of both restraining and lethal devices, checking sets, ethics and responsibility, and detailed information for targeting different furbearers. Reservations are required so let me know if you are interested.

2024 Education Program Roll-Up – The education program had 16 separate events in 2024, which put our program in front of 448 members of the public. 68 individuals enrolled in our course and were certified. These numbers do not include the estimated 35,000 individuals that pass by and interact with our booth during the North Dakota State Fair. It comes at a cost for our volunteers though, totaling 429 volunteer hours with approximately 3210 miles driven. That is out-of-pocket expenses and time away from family or family events. A very special appreciation and we're grateful to each of you and your families. Those individual instructors were:

Travis Leier	Chris Tischaefter	Rick Tischaefter	Phil Mastrangelo
Nat Bornsen	Stephanie Tucker	Mason Ryckman	Brent Ternes
Lloyd Jones	John Paulson	Justin Voight	Mitch Davis
Jason Friedt	Cody Krause	Jeremy Duckwitz	Tony Halpin
Jim Job	Erik Schmidt	Ben Matykiewicz	

Donations – we are always looking for carcass animals for our education classes, pelt collections, or handled so that they generate a little revenue for the education program. We also receive requests from schools looking for pelts throughout the year. Let me know if you can help. Education program donations to date include:

Ken Blotter, Turtle Lake – 3 carcass mink, 10 carcass muskrat, and 10 carcass raccoon  
Lane Pederson, Cando – 5 carcass mink  
Chris Tischaefter, Butte – 51 carcass muskrat  
Ben Schaaf, Mandan – 15 coyote pelts  
JR Pederson, Fairbanks, AK – 1 dozen coil spring traps

Volunteer Help for State Fair - We need a volunteer or two to set up our trapping education booth at the state fair and once the fair is over, taking down and storing all the equipment until next year. The set up occurs on Thursday before the fair begins and the take-down is done Sunday morning after the fair closes. It is not difficult; it just requires a few hours on each of those days. If you are interested, please let me know.

Education Program Tanned Pelts for Sale – we currently have some really nice red fox and bobcats at Moyle Tannery. Once they are finished and returned, we'll offer those for anyone interested. The funds generated from these pelt sales go directly to our education program. Stay tuned ....

Correspondence Course Now Available - We offer a correspondence course for individuals to complete our fur harvester education class for certification. This is another option for individuals who may be unable to attend the full 16-hour course currently offered. Individuals can contact the North Dakota Game & Fish Department Outdoor Education Office (701) 328-6300, NDGFD website, or me to enroll. Participants will be required to satisfactorily complete the chapters of our student manual and attend an 8-hour field day for certification. Field days will include hands-on training with equipment and satisfactorily complete the authentic assessments included in the student manual.

Fourth Edition Education Manual – Work continues with the fourth edition of our education manual. Our timeline suggests that it will be printed and ready for the 2026 education season. Some chapters with notable improvements include lure making, furbearers as food, and cable devices. A dictionary of lure making ingredients is also added as an Appendix to complement the lure making chapter.

Bob Gangl Memorial Awards – We were unable to present these two awards in 2024 as all course graduates were adults.

## **2025 Legislative Assembly**

We monitor the legislative activity daily and check how certain legislation progresses several times a day. Things move very fast, and you must pay attention to matters important to the association and its members. You can monitor the outdoor related legislation by visiting the home page of North Dakota Game & Fish Department website at <https://gf.nd.gov>.