

NLTA 38th AGM Highlights

On the weekend of August 16 and 17, the Newfoundland and Labrador Trappers Association held their 38th annual general meeting at the Salvage Bay Motel, in Eastport, Newfoundland. Attendance was good with over 31 members and their families in attendance.

Following a director's meeting on the evening of August 15, the general meeting proceeded at 10 AM on Saturday, August 16. Following the adoption of the 2013 minutes, we learned from Treasurer Hayward Smith that our association membership now numbers 213 persons. Hayward also related that in the past year we had renewed our registration under the Corporations Act, since this was now a government requirement on us in order to deliver trapper education training.

Next up were our guest speakers. Brad LeDrew of Intervale Associates, under contract to Wildlife Division, spoke on marten avoidance in traps and rabbit snares and demonstrated several options in this regard. He also spoke of the marten hair-snaag project to determine marten presence in areas and encouraged new participants. From Brad's talk and general discussion on marten, it is apparent they are expanding their range, with captures as far north as Plum Point on the Northern Peninsula, and one potential capture as far east as Come by Chance. Marten are also naturally repopulating available habitat between their natural western NF population and the introduced Terra Nova Park population.

Ken White made reference to the 2017 COSEWIC review of the status of NF marten, and encouraged all members to report marten occurrence to contribute to this assessment. It is obvious the species has spread widely, and there may even be enough recovery evidence to warrant removing the species from the Endangered Species Act.

Our provincial fur biologist, Bruce Rodrigues, was next to speak, and added some information on marten population distribution, along with new info on the spread of their major prey species, the Red-backed Vole, which continues to spread in NF.

Bruce acknowledged that there are still ongoing problems with problem beaver control. NLTA is in the process of finalizing a discussion paper on this for presentation to Wildlife Division. Bruce mentioned action taken on a number of NLTA resolutions submitted in 2013. Several of these resolutions remain outstanding, and will again be included in our 2014 resolutions submission.

Nathan Spence was last to speak on behalf of Wildlife Division, and passed along regrets from Chris Baldwin who was unable to make our AGM. On Chris' behalf, Nathan updated us on our attempts to initiate a new and fair Trapper Cabin Policy for the province. In Nathan's words, Lands and Wildlife have initiated the review, and "Something is moving on it" and they will be consulting NLTA on this in the near future.

Howard Noseworthy of Fur Harvesters next took the floor and presented Hayward with a cheque on behalf of FHA. Howard gave a brief synopsis of the current state of world fur markets. To say the least, the picture is grim, and it may be a few years before things recover.

Several items were raised and discussed during our New Business segment and a number of these will be addressed with Wildlife Division in our planned resolutions submission. Of note are concerns on the use of #110 Conibear traps on land for mink; the current low population of Newfoundland Muskrat and the need to find out why; and problems experienced by trappers in submitting coyote carcasses and in arranging stamping of beaver pelts. It was questioned if there is really a need for beaver pelt stamping by resource staff at all, and that we should return to the tag system that trappers apply themselves.

The general meeting concluded for lunch at 12:30 PM, following which an election of officers was held.

Up for re-election this year, following a two-year term of office, were the positions of President, Vice-President and Treasurer. There were no nominations from the floor and all agreed to serve an additional term. Ken White remains our President, while Clay Grant remains as Vice-President and Hayward Smith as Treasurer. Also up for re-election was Bill Newhook, Director at Large. Bill was re-elected by acclamation, and two new Director positions were established. Former Director, Dave Woodworth of Churchill Falls, Labrador has been appointed as Director at Large, and Jamie Reardon of St. Anthony has been appointed as our Director for the Northern Peninsula. Jamie is a welcome addition to our executive, as this area has not had representation in a number of years.

Following the election of officers, our annual auction commenced. We were again entertained by our own Derm Eason, musician and auctioneer extraordinaire, who conducted a lively and enjoyable auction. Similarly, Derm and his musically-gifted daughters provided the evening entertainment later in the day for our evening barbeque.

A series of door prize draws of \$100 each were won by Gerald Spencer, Kirk Holden , Dave Woodworth and Lesa Newhook. A ticket draw for a framed print of an Andrew Barron original oil-painting was won by Cynthia Butt.

Following the auction and draws, a motion to adjourn was made by Bill Newhook and seconded by Roy Bowers.

On Sunday, August 16 our friendly competitions were held, with the following results:

Sling Shot Women-----1st Allie Bath, 2nd Lesa Newhook, 3rd Victoria Newhook

Sling Shot Men-----1st Ed Piercey, 2nd Bill Newhook, 3rd Eugene Tiller

Log Sawing Women---1st Denise Bowers, 2nd Lesa Newhook, 3rd Wanetta White

Log Sawing Men-----1st Roy Bowers, 2nd Ed Piercey, 3rd Derm Eason

Trap Setting -----1st Ed Piercey, 2nd Dave Woodworth , 3rd Clay Grant

Fly Casting-----1st Matt Reid, 2nd Eugene Tiller, 3rd Ken White

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