

# October 2024 TRAPLINE

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE

### MICHIGAN TRAPPERS AND PREDATOR CALLERS ASSOCIATION

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT Joe Velchansky, Sr**

Hello members! First of all I would like to thank everyone who has reached out to offer help to me in my new position. As of convention I was elected as President of the MTPCA. I submitted my name with much thought. Can I do what's best for the association and its members? Will I be able to pick up where Mark Spencer left off? And many more questions I had to myself. One of the major concerns I had about running for President was how much time would it take away from my family? All of these concerns were valid worries for me. With all the support I have had in the last month, I know the people behind me will not let me fail.

Within just a couple days as President I sat in at the Fur Bearer Workgroup meeting in St. Ignace with many other sportsmen and women as well as many DNR personal. The main topic of the meeting focused on the four limited take species. Martin, Fisher, Otter and Bobcat. As of the meeting all of these species are very stable if not increasing in numbers or expanding their range. Bobcat seem to be spreading out across the state and Otter in the U.P. seem to be increasing in numbers. There was discussion on a U.P. coyote season all year long. Not so much for the lower peninsula. This Fur Bearer Workgroup meeting was one year in advance. There will be another meeting to discuss more on these issues next year. All these discussions will impact the 2026/2027 season. So more to come. I did submit a proposal to the DNR to let fur harvesters keep their skulls every other year since the DNR has been collecting skulls for research since the late 1980's, yes the late 1980's. I'm not sure they are ready to let us fur harvesters keep them yet. More to come on this also. It has only been a month since convention, and it seems we are making changes and moving forward. If you haven't seen it yet there is a donation link up and running on the MTPCA web page. The link is a donation link that will go to our defense fund. Very soon our website will accept payment for new memberships and renewals using debit and credit cards. I want to thank Mitch and Shane for all their help on getting these things done. There is always something to do with the MTPCA, if any you would like to get more involved with the MTPCA please let me know.

For those of you who know Lisa Bagalay you know she has been a board member and a face with the MTPCA for many years. She has worked many shows and many conventions over the years. She was our inventory specialist for a number years. But recently Lisa notified us that she must step down due to taking care of a family member. I will ask you all to please keep Lisa and her family in your hearts and prayers. If you have any ideas or thoughts on how to improve the MTPCA or make it stronger, please reach out to me anytime. Here is one more eye opening fact. In 2022/2023 and 2023/2024 there were more than 27,000 fur harvester licenses sold in Michigan. 27,000 per year, yet less than two percent (2%) are members of the MTPCA.

Thank you,

Joe Velchansky Sr. *MTPCA President*

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**Vice President Report Carl Roeller**

I hope everyone had a great time at the convention. I know I did, despite the weather.

Processing of incidental catches from the DNR has been wrapped up.

The MTPCA is planning to host a youth trapping and predator calling tournament in January 2025. I have been working hard to coordinate all of the details for that. Stay tuned for more exciting updates coming in the next month or so.

Outside of MTPCA business, I've been preparing for the upcoming deer and duck hunting seasons, as well as the trapping season.

**NTA Report Kenneth (Bernie) Burzynski.**

Hello fellow trappers,

N.T.A. The convention in South Dakota was good, MICHIGAN was well represented, meaning by Michigan vendors. It was good to interact with Western trappers. Great people.

As a member of MTPCA, as their affiliate for the NTA, sitting in the meetings for two days is an eye opener. The meetings are run very well organized with each state given their report and business report.

In Michigan there is project coyote not to be confused with coyote project which is a study on coyote movement and predation in Ohio. (Ohiocoyote.org) Coyote project is a movement to ban coyote hunting. Which begs the question How many coyotes do we have in Michigan ?????

As of the NTA convention Michigan has 919 NTA members I would like to see us reach 1000.

Take a minute and join the NTA. In my opinion, it's the best thing going to preserve your trapping rights, which are not a given. Here is a report from John Daniel, the NTA president. Please read

## President Annual Report

Welcome to Sioux Falls.

It is good to have everybody under the same roof again. Hope everyone had a productive year.

I'm sure through following the board mailings you are aware that the NTA has had a busy year, as well.

We went straight off of last year's convention into August and the Northeast Regional/New England Trapper's Convention.

From there into September we went onto the Southeast Regional Readiness Summit in Louisiana.

From there into October onto the Southeast Regional Convention in Tennessee.

While in Tennessee we recorded some of the first NTA's podcasts. These podcasts are designed to help trappers understand what the NTA is and what is going on in the NTA. Due to some scheduling conflicts with the host, we have had some slight delays in the podcasts.

We have recently enlisted the help of the Linkhart Group to help co-host some of the podcasts.

In December, the NTA delegation was at the NASC Summit in Delaware. Once again we partnered with the FTA and gave presentations on trapping.

I feel trapping was well represented at this summit. We are making real progress with establishing contacts and friendships through our affiliation with NASC.

We had short break in January and then our annual presence at the NWTF convention in Nashville in February.

In early May we held 2024's first Readiness Summit in Reno, NV.

In June, we had the Western Regional Convention in Idaho. Also in June, we had a booth and attended the FTA board meetings Harrisonburg, VA.

The next Readiness Summit will be in Connecticut in September.

Our lawsuits continue on at the pace of the judicial system. You will find a detailed report of those in the legal reports of Leistico and Esch.

Over the last few months myself and General Organizer Rusty Kramer have been working with Keith Landies of Ohio on ways to promote the NTA, raise additional funds and increase memberships. The results of this work has been funds raised for lawsuits, and new ads that will soon be in the hands of readers in NRA publications as well as a few other magazines.

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Also, the donation of a special rifle donated by Keith's brother, Robert, to raise funds at our auction.

And, last but certainly not least, Keith, out of his own pocket, donated the materials to build the fort walls around our Interpretive Center and also purchased the log siding to go on the Lookout Tower. Thank you so much, Keith, for all you are doing for the trappers of this nation.

Our partnership with Turkeys for Tomorrow continues to grow. Just recently, southeast regional director, Chip Davis, spoke on behalf of trapping and the NTA at Real Tree Farms.

Myself and FTA president, Jason Wisniewski, recently had a conference call with a representative of the NWTF and hopefully the three associations will be signing an MOU and will soon be working together to promote trapping as a necessary tool in habitat health.

I recently had a conference call with the president of Whitetails Unlimited, Jeff Schinckten, and began communications for the possibility of projects that we can partner on. Hopefully building a strong alliance between our two organizations.

NTA is still very involved with the Outdoor Heritage Coalition. This is a very active coalition that meets very regular via conference call which are on western time. I tasked General Organizer, Rusty Kramer to be the NTA representative on those calls.

Just recently our attorney Gary Leistico appeared in court in Bozeman on behalf of the Outdoor Heritage Coalition, which the NTA is a member of, and feels we had a favorable outcome with the judge there in Montana.

We are also still involved and working with the Oregon Sportsmen's Conservation Partnership coalition. I tasked, half of our National and International Affairs Team, Karen Stewart Linkhart to represent the NTA with that coalition.

I recently asked Mattea Smith of Texas to help represent the NTA with that coalition, as well. Mattea will be working with Karen to learn the in's and out's and increase NTA involvement in that coalition.

✱ Earlier this spring Michigan's NTA director, Ken "Bernie" Burzynski, reached out to me and asked for assistance in the lawsuit that Michigan has filed against their DNR. I called a conference call with the Executive Council to address this request as well as the Vermont Trappers Association. The Executive Council voted to give financial assistance to both Michigan and Vermont, as well as to offer legal advice to Michigan and legal assistance if they needed it.

Obviously, these are not the only things that the NTA has accomplished this year. But I felt like highlighting several things was important to bring to this board that you can take back to your state and give your reports on this convention.

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IN closing we are beginning the trapping season and enjoy be safe,  
mentor someone about trapping. Our heritage is at risk every season to  
join a trapping organization. Be safe out there.

NTA Director for MTPCA.

Ken Burzynski (Bernie)

***FTA Report/Secretary Report Craig Schafer***

MTPCA Secretary/FTA Report

Meeting minutes are my priority.

The MTPCA Board has a busy year ahead of us. Hopefully the MTPCA will be able to be present at more  
shows, working for the Trappers and Predator Callers of the state.

FTA 57th Annual Rendezvous

July 25-27. 2025

Spencer, Iowa

<https://www.furtakersofamerica.com/index.html> Visit the FTA Web site.

The FTA will once again have its Sports Calendar, this makes a nice Christmas present, with a prize a day.

Justin Tomei attended the FTA Fur Takers College. MTPCA sponsored him.

Jim Tate Zone 3 Regional Director attended the FTA Fur Taker College also. Congratulations to both  
individuals.

Fur Sale Dates and Times

December 21, 2024 10 AM

Jay's Sporting Goods

Clare,MI. 48617

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February 8, 2025, 10 AM

Battle Creek Sportsman Club

Battle Creek, MI. 49015

April 12, 2025, 10 AM

Gaylord Conservation Club

Gaylord , MI. 49735

Trapper of the Year–Jeff Hagerty

Predator Caller of the Year–Merle Jones

Hall of Fame–Bernie Bursynski

Benefactor of the Year–J3 Outdoors/Trapline Coffee

Spouse of the Year–Tammy Longstreet.

JR Trapper of the Year–Charlie Tompace & Joyclin Burden

JR Predator Caller of the Year–Glenn Logan Johnson & Adian Hammond

President's Award–Alyssa Campbell

Trapper of the Decade–Goerge Cullers

Board Award–Mark Spencer

MICHIGAN TRAPPERS & PREDATOR CALLERS ASSOCIATION RAFFLE

Drawing at 4 PM , August 17-2024

Osceola Co. Fairgrounds, Evart, MI.

License C31540

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6 Tickets for \$20

Ticket # Name

1. \$2000 Shopping Spree at Jay's	0624 Deb Barnes
2. Ruger American 450 Bushmaster	0173 Brian Maine
3. ICOTec Nomad+	1465 Joan Babbitt
4. Shootergirl Ammunition Package	2637 George Cullers
5. Rapid River Knife	1087 Steve Sovey
6. F & T \$100 Gift Card	0195 Micheal Stout
7. Henry Lever Action 22LR	1627 Carl Meissner
8. Dunlap Lures \$50 Gift Card	0246 Tom Wiley
9. Lynx - Tanned	3292 Lukas Schafer
10. ICOTec 320+	0795 Ray Andrus
11. Beaver Hat & Mittens	2806 Nathan Shue
12. F & T \$100 Gift Card	0093 Steven Pounders
13. Lucky's Deer Blind	3316 Karl Lindquist
14. Savage 22-250	3044 Rockey
15. Rapid River Knife	1592 Steve Baker
16. Tasco Trail Camera	1580 Allen Wright
17. She Traps Sarah Gomez \$50 Gift Card	2538 Jeff Whipple
18. J3 Outdoors Package	3508 Lee Ann Smith
19. Michigan Outdoor News Subscription	2085 Chad T
20. TC 243 Win	4672 Jack Longstreet
21. Master Trapper Book & DVD's	2722 Jesse Melton

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22. F & T \$50 Gift Card	3193 Lukas S
23. Tasco Trail Cam	0217 Rick Gibson
24. ICOTec 320+	3087 Ken Curtis
25. Tanned Wolverine	3390 Cody Grimm
26. Predator Control Group \$50 Gift Card	0502 Jason Wescott
27. F & T \$50 Gift Card	3258 Lukus Schafer
28. Savage 223	4743 Steve Baker
29. F & T \$50 Gift Card	2959 Dan Faber
30. Michigan Outdoor News Subscription	0302 Luke Ledoux
31. Savage 12Ga	3228 Wyatt Schafer
32. F & T \$50 Gift Card	2061 Chad T
33. 1 Dz Duke #2	1587 Terry Learn
34. Remington 870 12Ga	3315 Karl Lindquest

All winners have received their prizes.

" Prime fur is key. Do not rush to set traps out simply because trapping season is open. In these years of struggling fur prices, the best we can do to help things out is to catch fur when it is prime, and to not flood the market with junk goods. Nobody makes money handling two dollar coons, but prime fur almost always finds a market."

Fur Market Report-Serge Lariviere. THE TRAPPER Magazine, October 2024

MTPCA Secretary

FTA Rep

Craig Schafer



**MUCC Director Report**-Mark Earl

It isn't easy taking an offensive stance to protect proposal G and the best interest of the Sportsmen and Sportswomen of Michigan. Still the actions were taken and now The MUCC is playing the waiting game just like the MTPCA. A lot of people are waiting for news of progress and hoping the news is good.

The MUCC policy year is more than half way through. There are only a few more months until the next Convention. Once the policy resolutions are finished and approved by the policy board, they will be presented to the voting delegates on the floor of the convention. They will be debated robustly and eventually voted on. If a resolution is passed, it will become MUCC's policy and they will begin working on them.

Below is the MUCC webpage if you want to learn more about it.

[About - Michigan United Conservation Clubs \(mucc.org\)](https://mucc.org)

One of the MUCC programs that I have enjoyed is called "On the Ground". This is an award-winning volunteer wildlife habitat improvement program. Volunteers work hands on with the MUCC and the DNR to do habitat restoration and other great things like improving public access to lands of the state. I have had a great time when I have volunteered met some amazing people. Make sure to check the program out on the link below and if you can spare a half day, make sure you give it shot.

[On the Ground - Michigan United Conservation Clubs \(mucc.org\)](https://mucc.org)



**Mark Earl MUCC Director**

**Region 1 Vice President Ed Kramer**

***Editors Note: Any questions comments or concerns about Region 1 the Upper Peninsula please reach out to Ed Kramer. The whole MTPCA board is active in working together with both the NGLFH and the UPTA.***

**Region 2 Vice President Dale Thorne**

***Editors Note: Any questions, comments or concerns about Region 2 , the northern Lower Peninsula please reach out to Dale Thorne. Dale is very active and does a great job at getting back with people and leading them to the correct person on the board if need be.***

**Region 3 Vice President Vacant**

***Editors Note: We are currently looking for a member in good standing that has felt the call to serve his/her fellow predator callers and trappers by sitting on the board as the Region 3 Vice President. You must be a member in good standing and must live within Region 3 the Lower Peninsula. Jack Longstreet Region 3 Regional Director has provided 2 articles that will follow this note.***

**Regional Director Zone 3- Jack Longstreet**

Trapping season is upon us already. Now is the time to think outside the box about how you can make more money from your catch. This year as you get to skinning your catch think about all the parts and pieces on the animals that can make you some extra cash. The skulls, meat, glands, tails, urine, teeth, baculum, and stool all have their own markets out there. Ask your fur buyer, local taxidermist or lure maker if their looking for anything specific. Just drop them in the freezer until you can meet up.

**Barry County Youth Day- Jack Longstreet**

My wife and I had an opportunity to have a booth at the Barry County Youth Outdoors Day. This is an event that was started years ago by George Cullers to get youth in the outdoors with hands on experience. Youth had a chance to learn about fly fishing, shooting bows and multiple other outdoor activities. The young people loved all the fur, skulls, wide variety of trap's including my #16 bear trap. I brought a beaver hide to put up. They were amazed about how it was done. I had my predator caller playing most of the day. Young people were very interested, as was most of the adults. I also gave some young people traps from my collection. It was a very positive day and a lot of fun. If you ever get a chance to do something like this, do it. You don't have to be a well-known trapper. Just get a little of everything you have and set it up. The young people will do the rest with all their questions.

**Public Relations Director Merle Jones**

The fun never ends! For those not aware, and even those that are, I encourage you to go to Project Coyote, <https://projectcoyote.org/michigan-wkcs/> and educate yourself on their goals to ban all "killing contests". For whatever reason they decided to start their campaign now, it's definitely here. For our members not interested in predator calling, or tournament hunting, who might believe this won't affect them, think again. Contest bans, with their associated fine print, are just stepping stones of incrementalism toward a radical goal. The groups, and people, pushing these agendas will not be satisfied until they have reached their ultimate goal of ZERO HARVEST. Their emotional rhetoric and "social science" is designed to jerk at the heartstrings of the uninformed while simultaneously vilifying us, the very people who carry the load of managing our natural resources.

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The legal appeal of the NRC's coyote season decision is on track and doing well. Justin Tomei did such an outstanding job of reporting this, as you can see below, that I won't even bother trying to reinvent that wheel. If the links in his report below do not work, go to MUCC's site to access the actual legal briefs if you would like to read them.

(<https://mucc.org/mucc-mtpca-file-briefs-in-lawsuit-against-the-nrc/#comments>)

MUCC & MTPCA File Briefs in Lawsuit Against the NRC

By Justin Tomei | September 20, 2024 | 1

On September 6, Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) and the Michigan Trappers and Predator Callers Association (MTPCA) filed legal briefs in their lawsuits against the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC).

MUCC's brief, which can be read [HERE](#), argues that the NRC illegally closed Michigan's coyote season for a quarter of the year in March of 2024 by failing to use the best available science, and focusing instead on unsubstantiated claims of negative public perception.

MUCC's brief highlights the statements of the commissioners who voted in support of the closure, and those of the exceptionally few hunters who joined the commission in disregarding the principles of sound scientific management. The statements from the commissioners clearly show that sound scientific management was not a consideration in the decision-making process.

MUCC Chief Executive Officer Amy Trotter says that the public record is clear, the commission's decision failed to abide by their legal charge and responsibility to keep game management decisions based in science.

"The voters of Michigan were clear when they overwhelmingly passed Proposal G: scientific data needs to drive our game management decisions," said Trotter. "After reviewing the public record, it is abundantly clear the commission failed in following their legal charge. By relying on social pressures, real or perceived, the commission set a dangerous precedent where our outdoor heritage is threatened based on the social and political winds of the day."

MUCC is joined in the lawsuit by MTPCA who filed a separate brief, found [HERE](#). MTPCA's brief highlights how commissioners trusted the instincts of one individual supporting the closure to appease anti-hunting interests, rather than

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the proven record of sound scientific management as dictated by Proposal G.

MTPCA President Joe Velchansky says this issue is larger than coyotes, and the future of Michigan's outdoor heritage is at stake.

"This issue is so much bigger than coyotes, the very foundation of Michigan's game management is at stake," Velchansky said. "The minute we as conservationists compromise our principles is the minute we lose the whole thing, and that is not something we are prepared to do."

The NRC will now file a response brief, due to the court in mid-October.

Along with President Velchansky and VP Roeller I attended the 2024 Furtaker User Group Meeting in St. Ignace on August 23rd . The two-year furtaker regulatory cycle is on even years so the next changes will be in 2026, after next years meeting. If anyone has anything they believe needs addressed do not hesitate to reach out to myself or any of the board members. I also stayed to observe the Bear Forum on the 24th which was a very educational experience.

We, as an organization, and as a community, have a lot of work to do. This work takes resources. Most people typically go straight to thinking about MONEY, which is understandable, but the real challenge at our level is TIME. If you are reading this it's because you're already a member of, or have an interest in, MTPCA. Paraphrasing a great quote; "Ask not what MTPCA can do for YOU, ask what YOU can do for our Natural Resources".

**And please remember....**

***"The cruelest thing we can do to wildlife is fail to manage it."***

Merle Jones

Public Relations Director

MTPCA

**Fur Sale Director Report Calvin Miller**

Good morning, Trappers! As the weather cools, we get excited to hit the swamps and woods! We all know that fur prices are down and have been for several years. Our fur sales have reflected that as well, with the sales being smaller than past years. Our sales this year will be December 21, 2024, at Jay's Sporting Goods in Clare. Jay's is a huge supporter of our association, so if you come to the sale, check out their store and show them some support as well. February sale will be at the Battle Creek Sportsman's Club, on February 8, 2025. They have just started getting involved with us and we appreciate the support. April sale will be at the Northland Sportsman's Club, in Gaylord. This sale has been a great sale for us in the past two years. If you saw the flyer at the convention concerning fur sale dates, the December date was

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wrong on that flyer. I double checked the dates, and the correct one is here. If anyone has ideas to improve our sales, please reach out to me and I will see if we can implement it.

Fur Sale Director,

Calvin Miller

**Membership Secretary Report Steve Campbell**

Hello,

Trapping and hunting season has officially begun for the 2024/2025 Season. I hope that all of our members find success, have fun and make memories out in the field doing what we all love. I also hope for the future generations to come that they can have the same opportunities afforded to us now. In order to help ensure that this is the case we need a strong, active base of members that are willing to go out and get more people who are involved in the traditions we share to become members. The more people we have behind us the stronger our voice will be. If you're not already a member please do become a member. If you're a member of the MTPCA but not the NTA or FTA please also consider becoming a member of both of those National Associations. It is only through combined efforts at a local, state and national level that we can truly be successful in securing the rights we hold dear to be guaranteed for those that will come after us.

I attended the Woods-n-Water show in Imlay City the weekend after Labor Day representing the MTPCA. I was there Friday evening, Saturday Afternoon and all-day Sunday. I spoke with several members, the general public and even may have cracked through the armor of an anti-trapper to understand why we trap and how far off the public image of inhumane traps actually is. This event is a great time for me as I grew up in Imlay City and love interacting with the 1000s of people that come through over the weekend. We need more events like this one for the MTPCA to attend so if any member knows of an event in their area please let any of the board members know so we can try to man it with volunteers to continue to get our name out there. With a more active membership base we can get new ideas, iron out kinks in the plans for our association and get a true understanding of what the membership wants, expects and asks from its board members. As always if there are any questions about memberships or magazine subscriptions feel free to reach out to me.

TIGHT CHAINS AND STRAIGHT SHOOTING,

Steve Campbell

MTPCA MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

## MICHIGAN TRAPPERS & PREDATOR CALLERS ASSOCIATION

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW       RENEWAL W/O CHANGE       RENEWAL WITH CHANGE

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 YEAR -Regular Membership      \* Memberships Run from Jan 1<sup>st</sup> to Dec 31<sup>st</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ \$250- Senior Lifetime Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$850- Lifetime Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 – Junior (age 15 and younger)

*All adult memberships receive Trap Line (email newsletter quarterly), Online Michigan Out of Doors, Fur Sale and Voting Privileges*

### OPTIONAL MAGAZINES OFFERED AT DISCOUNT

\_\_\_\_\_ \$12- Trapper and Predator Caller (10 issues Per Year)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$18- Trappers World (6 issues per Year)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$14- Trapper's Post ( 6 issues per Year)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Woods-n-Water News (12 issues per Year)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total** (Make Checks Payable to **MTPCA**)

***\*New This Year Please Reference Member That Signed You Up\****

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Email Address\* All Email Info Remains Private** We utilize email to communicate with members about pertinent info regarding our heritage, bills that will impact our sport and to email Trap Line via Constant Contact

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Residency Zone

Zone 1 (Upper Peninsula)     Zone 2 (Northern Lower)     Zone 3 (Lower Mich)

Zone 4 (Out of State)

**PLEASE FILL OUT AND MAIL TO STEVE CAMPELL**  
**4322 HURON ST NORTH BRANCH, MI 48461**

**Convention Coordinator Report Jon Southworth & Jocelyn Southworth**

MTPCA Convention Follow-Up:

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the members and vendors for your unwavering support. I hope you enjoyed the convention this past August. Jocelyn and I put a lot of effort into making it a success. We hope next year's event will be even better with your continued support.

For the upcoming year, we kindly request your help distributing flyers and convention reminders that we prepare to invite trappers and other sportsmen to the 2025 convention. Please consider placing them at your preferred locations, such as sporting goods stores, sportsmen's clubs, and any other places frequented by sportsmen or trappers. Your support in spreading the word will be greatly appreciated!

We are looking for someone to step up to take on the responsibility of the Convention Coordinator for 2026. I have enjoyed my time but I cannot devote the time it deserves. Please reach out if you are interested so we can make sure you are properly prepared come August 2025.

Jon Southworth

517-285-4596

[Jonsouthworth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Jonsouthworth@sbcglobal.net)

**Landowner Assistance Director Matt Johnson**

***Editors Note:*** *If you are a landowner in need of assistance please reach out to Matt Johnson, if you are trapper that is willing and able to cover a certain area for landowner assistance please also reach out to Matt Johnson to be put on the list.*

**Predator Caller Outreach Mitchell McEachern**

***Editors Note:*** *Mitch is hard at work working on getting the PayPal Link up on our Website for the Donation Fund to the Legal Defense Fund as well as putting in a link to pay for memberships with an automatic renewal system on our website as well. Mitch is also running point on the **Meet Me Monday** section of our Facebook Page so that our members can put faces to the names of the board.*

**Envy, Passion, Burn-Out and Service**

The past few months have been long, summer seemed to drag on longer than normal and as always I did not accomplish all that I set out to do. But that is okay, because it's now time to get ready for the trapline. As in the past few *Traplines* this article is an editorial piece about stuff larger than just trapping and hunting but with a skew toward those two things. The following articles after this one are from members who have graciously donated time to writing pieces for our members to glean knowledge from and I take a second now to thank them for their efforts and also to acknowledge that Rebecca Darling has also offered to do a series of articles on fur sewing for our members, so thank you Rebecca.

Sitting on a board of a non-profit as a volunteer takes time, patience, passion, tact, and many other things. It should not be something taken on lightly, as it can consume even the strongest of us with the demands of the aforementioned skills. I say this not as a warning, but rather as a plea to our members. We need more volunteers!!!! The saying goes many hands make the work lite, and in times of great need (convention, National Conventions) the membership base stands up and amazes me with their efforts. But I'm left feeling **envious** of that vigor and spirit after that great immediate need

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subsides. Where is that **passion** for our tradition when the convention is over and the time comes for the every-day mundane tasks come back. That is where we need the help the most. The *MTPCA* is only as strong as our membership base. We want to grow, we want to provide more services to our community, we want to garner more relationships within the greater hunting/outdoors groups but in order to do so we need you! If you've read all the reports above, we are down several key positions within the organization and we have more that will need to be filled in soon as well. **Burn-Out** is a real threat to those that are serving if we don't get more volunteers to take over the empty roles, because those roles still have to be filled and the work still has to be done. So, if like me you feel a call to **serve**, please reach out to any of the board members with that information.

The following is a list of Vacant Postions

Inventory Director

Zone 3 Regional Director

Zone 3 Regional Vice President

Zone 1 Regional Director x 2

Vacant after August 2025 Convention Coordinator

We are also looking at adding a director at large for a position based toward IT/Technical Support, so if any member has a background in that field, please reach out to any of the board.

THANK YOU STEVE CAMPBELL *TRAPLINE EDITOR*

**Fur Sewing** Rebecca Darling 2024 (*Editors Note: Rebecca Darling is owner of Darling Leather and Fur LLC*)

With fur prices down, there is a growing interest in learning how to make your own fur garments. Unfortunately, little information is available on sewing fur, and how to work through the process from start to finish. I'm hoping to pass on some knowledge so that you can begin sewing your own fur garments and have a finished product you can be proud of!

**Tanning**: Successful fur sewing starts with good tanning; pelts need to be soft, pliable, and stretchy and

have all grease and debris removed during the tanning process. I recommend using a professional

tannery that offers garment tanning (often called "intact fur dressing") for consistent, predictable results.

Garment tanning produces a hide that is usually softer and stretchier than taxidermy tanning. Home

tanned hides are usually not pliable enough for quality garment work. Well-tanned pelts make the rest of



the process easier.

**Opening the Pelt:** If your pelt is cased, you will need to open it. With most species, the pelt is cut up the belly from bottom to top so that the back fur can be used for the garment (*bobcat is opened on the back*). After you open the pelt, split open the front legs so the pelt can lay as flat as possible. The tail and face are also removed.

**Repairs:** After you open the pelt, you can begin to repair any holes. Most holes nickel-size or smaller are repaired by cutting out a football shape around the hole and sewing the football shape closed. The repairs will appear puckered, but they will flatten after blocking. Larger holes require a different technique called a "drop," which is difficult to describe without a visual.

**Blocking:** Blocking is an important step in making great-looking fur products. It increases a tanned pelt's surface area by about 15% (restoring it to pre-tanned size) so that fewer pelts are needed for each product. It removes the stretch from the pelt, making it easier to cut and sew. Blocking removes all the wrinkles and puckers from the pelt, making the fur lay smoothly on the finished garment.

After you successfully open and repair the pelt, dampen the hide side with water (usually a spray bottle is used), then allow it to soak in for 10-30 minutes, and repeat the process 1-2 times, until the hide is moist and pliable. Once the water has been absorbed, stretch the pelt by hand width-wise and length-wise. Then staple the pelt to a board, stretching the pelt as you go to increase the pelt's surface area. You want to stretch the pelt enough so the surface is taut, and place staples about every 2 inches around the perimeter of the pelt, alternating sides as you staple - very similar to how a beaver is boarded. Leave the pelt to dry overnight. Note: Homasote Board is the preferred blocking board for furriers, it is lightweight and the staples pull out easily. Plywood works as well, and you can use nails if you don't have

a staple gun. If your plywood is greasy from boarding beavers, you can cover it with paper (a roll of contractor's paper works great).

**Patterns:** A pattern can make or break your sewing experience. Patterns made for sewing fabric are time consuming to alter for use with fur, as the seam allowance must be changed and the sewing technique is different, leading to frustration and often poor results. Patterns determine the shape and fit of your finished garment and should be clearly marked, easy to follow and include multiple sizes. When I started sewing fur about 8 years ago, fur-specific patterns were very difficult to find, and when I could find them, the instructions were very vague, difficult to follow and the finished product did not fit well. Eventually, I connected with some professional furriers who taught me the trade, and over the years I created my own patterns.

**Cutting:** Once the pelt is dry, remove it from the board. Place your pattern pieces on the hide and trace them using a ballpoint pen or permanent marker. Keep in mind the fur grain direction, fur markings, and how they will look on your final garment. After tracing your pattern pieces onto the pelt, use a sharp blade to cut them out. While holding the pelt slightly off the table, use the blade to make a shallow cut only through the hide to minimize how many hairs get cut. You can use a fresh razor blade, scalpel, or a furrier knife (the best!). NEVER use scissors to cut the hide; you will cut off the hair and have an ugly finished product.

**Sewing:** Sewing can be done by hand or using a fur sewing machine. ***Trying to sew fur with a home sewing machine is an exercise in frustration!*** If sewing by hand, you will need Glover's Needles (glover's needles have a triangular point for slicing through leather easily, size 3 is my preference) and upholstery

weight thread (polyester or nylon, but avoid cotton). Artificial sinew can be used, but I find it too thick and difficult to pull through while sewing. A Speedy Stitcher Awl is another option, though I prefer glovers needles. While holding the pattern pieces fur-side to fur-side, tuck the fur down and sew the hides together using a whip stitch (like a spiral binding on a notebook). You'll need to knot your thread at the beginning and end of each seam. Like all garments, fur garments are sewn inside-out, so the stitches are hidden inside once the garment is turned right-side out.

If you don't like hand sewing, fur sewing machines are available. They are specifically designed for sewing fur, are very different from traditional sewing machines, and have a bit of a learning curve. Techsew sells new machines (I have a Techsew 202), and Bonis is the most common brand of vintage machines.

**Lining:** Lining is the most complicated part of sewing any garment, and is difficult to describe, but here are the basics: You can use many types of fabric to line fur garments - polyester fleece, faux shearling, quilted cotton, and wool, to name a few. If you are sewing a hat, the lining can be sewn directly to the hide while the hat is inside-out (make sure the right-side of the lining is facing towards the fur). You must leave an opening in the lining to turn the hat right-side out, and then sew the opening closed. When lining mittens, the lining is attached after the mittens are turned right-side-out, and a binding is used along the bottom edge to attach them.

Those are the basic steps to get started sewing your harvested furs. I hope you give it a try, sewing fur garments yourself is a lot of fun and very rewarding! If you want to learn the process in greater detail, I sell my fur sewing patterns with detailed video tutorials where you can learn how to make fur hats and mittens from start to finish; no previous experience is needed. You can purchase these

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from my website, darlingleatherandfur.com. I also have helpful information on my blog page, and I continue to add new patterns & tutorials. I also offer occasional classes if you prefer in-person learning.

Happy Sewing!

***Wilderness Trapline Necessities***-Anthony Satkowiak

*(Editor's Note: Anthony runs a UP trapline in winter, has done demos at MTPCA Convention and Sat on a board of another States Trapping Association when work took him away from his Home State of Michigan)*

Hello trappers! By the time you are reading this the leaves will be changing and with all luck we will be feeling a chill in the air. By this time, I'm sure we've all done all of our prep work from boiling, waxing and dyeing to organizing our tools and lures. But the one thing I feel we fail to prepare for the most is preparing for the unexpected. We live in a very diverse state, while some of us may never find ourselves more than a mile from the nearest residence while running our trapline there is a group of us that run in the remote reaches of our state. When operating several miles off of the road system and sometimes a mile off of the main trail things can happen. I like to carry with me, in my truck; a chainsaw, some way to make a fire, a change of clothes, a little food and a blanket. I carry the chainsaw for the main purpose of keeping the trail clear. I've had too many times, on a windy day, where, I've found my trail blocked by a tree and without a chainsaw I would have been struck. Trapping around water and on ice you're bound to get wet. I have gas for my saw in the truck and a lighter. Dry pine and spruce bows are never hard to find in my area. A small fire can turn a dangerous situation of being wet into just a inconvenience. And that change of clothes in the truck is sure going to make the rest of the day or the drive home a lot more enjoyable. I've been in situations, where, after becoming stuck or a vehicle issue staying in the woods for the night was a real possibility. Having a little food, a way to make a fire and a warm blanket will make a nights stay in the truck a funny story you can tell at the campfire and not a disastrous experience. So, when packing your truck up this fall getting ready to run your line give a little thought to preparedness and be ready for those unexpected situations. Have a great season trappers, get out and enjoy our beautiful state and keep our tradition alive!

# MICHIGAN TRAPPER AND PREDATOR CALLERS ASSOCIATION

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS-MEMBER OR IMMEDIATE FAMILY MEMBER OF MICHIGAN TRAPPER AND PREDATOR CALLERS ASSOCIATION AND MAJORING IN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT OR CLOSELY RELATED FIELD.

### I. PERSONAL DATA

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PERMANENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

### II. EDUCATIONAL RECORD

HIGH SCHOOL ATTENDED \_\_\_\_\_ GRADUATION DATE \_\_\_\_\_

COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY YOU ARE ATTENDING/PLANNING TO ATTEND \_\_\_\_\_

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CLASS STATUS NEXT FALL (CIRCLE ONE) FRESHMAN SOPHOMORE JUNIOR SENIOR GRADUATE STUDENT

EXPECTED GRADUATION DATE \_\_\_\_\_ CURRENT GPA \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR \_\_\_\_\_ MINOR \_\_\_\_\_

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III. BACKGROUND

ARE YOU A CURRENT MEMBER OF A STATE TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION? \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE NTA OR FTA? \_\_\_\_\_

IS A MEMBER OF YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY A MEMBER OF NTA OR FTA \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_ RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

IV. ANSWER THE FOLLOWING ON SEPARATE PAGES;

1. DESCRIBE 3 THINGS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE CHANGED IN THE WAY THE STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MANAGES WILDLIFE.

2. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MORE RESTRICTIVE GUN CONTROL REGULATIONS?

3. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO EDUCATE THE GENERAL PUBLIC ON THE BENEFITS OF WILDLIFE  
MANAGEMENT?

4. DESCRIBE YOUR SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM GOALS AND EXPLAIN WHY YOU HAVE MADE THESE  
DECISIONS.

ATTACH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPTS, WORK HISTORY AND ANY OTHER INFORMATION YOU WISH.

**SEND COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND ATTACHMENTS TO:**

**Mark Spencer, N4552 Spencer Lane, Moran, MI 49760**

**ANNUAL DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: JULY 1 ST, 2024**

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**A WORD FROM THE EDITOR**

Hello, if you are interested in entering in an article to be a part of the next *Trapline* please do so by reaching out to me at [scampbell@mtpca.com](mailto:scampbell@mtpca.com) The more the better, I am currently going to work on getting more articles and would love the memberships input into what they want to see out of the *Trapline*. Be it tips and tricks, product reviews, stories of hunts and traplines of yesteryear, bait and lure recipes, or hidden gems of the trapping world. With an engaged membership both the *Trapline* and the MTPCA will be better off for it.

**Vote this upcoming election as if your traditions, morals and lifestyle depends on it!**

**HAPPY TRAPPING AND PREDATOR CALLING SEASON, MAY YOUR SIGHTS BE TRUE, YOUR TRAPS FIRE  
FAST AND YOUR FUR SHED BE FULL THIS YEAR!**

STEVE CAMPBELL

TRAPLINE EDITOR