



N.I.C.C.

May 2014 Newsletter

Editor: Bonnie Letich

While walking through the woods at N.I.C.C. on a spring day in 2002, I came upon the idea for an article for the newsletter. I wrote an article “Called to the Woodlands”. With the warmer weather here I wanted to repeat it.

Leaving a note on the table, I walk out my back door and escape onto N.I.C.C.’s trails for another learning experience. As I slowly and quietly walk, I am aware of a feeling that I am being observed. Just as I turn onto the new trail, I see a doe on the knoll, stomping her hoof on the ground. Having recently read Erwin A. Bauer’s book “Whitetails”, I realize she is expressing her concern over my presence and is trying to identify whether or not I am a danger to her. I speak softly to her thanking her for letting me observe her and then continue my walk. When I look back over my shoulder, she has vanished. Was she really there?

As I follow along the path, I look for telltale hoof prints and find tiny prints leading off into the woods. Could these be from the offspring of the pregnant doe I watched in my backyard this spring? Mr. Bauer tells us in his book that during a severe winter, a pregnant doe, weakened by malnutrition has been known to reabsorb the embryo she carries and not give birth to new fawns that spring. Fortunately, our grounds must have provided enough food for this baby to survive. Will this fawn venture into my yard with its mother like a mother and baby did last year - investigating the bird feeder?

Did you know that a fawn can weigh up to seven pounds at birth and that its hoofs are yellowish, but darken within a few minutes? Babies do not move from where they are left by their mother, while the mother goes off to forage for food, This is a period during which most fawns are picked up by well-meaning humans who believe the fawns are lost or abandoned. Several years ago, one of our members, while mowing around the pond, came upon such a fawn. Not wanting to disturb the fawn, did not mow in that area.

Back in 1995, Ray Eisbdrener, a private land biologist from the DNR, was invited to do a walk through the club grounds. While on the walk, he found an antler laying along the trail. M. Bauer in his book tells us that whitetail bucks are programmed to develop antlers even before they are born. Pedicle (tiny antler bases) begin to develop on the tiny skull while the buck is still warm in its mother’s womb. The growth of the antler is triggered by increasing daylight hours of springtime. Antlers are covered with a network of blood vessels and nerve endings known as “velvet”. Once they are injured, not only will an antler be deformed in the injured place, but it may “remember” that injury and each succeeding annual rack will be similarly deformed as long as the deer lives. By late January, most buck have discarded their antlers. They are eaten by small rodents and other animals that share the whitetails range.

As I reach the edge of the woods, I realize the spiritual feelings that I felt during this learning experience I can only recapture by returning another day. I find that each time I walk through the woods, no two days are the same.

I put the key in my door lock, and find myself wondering how many other members have left their footprints on our “woodland pathways”.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 3	Adopt-A-Highway-----	10 am	Meet at Triangle Sports at Grass Lake Rd. & Rt.83
May 10	Grounds Clean-up-----	10 a.m. -- ?	Lunch will be served
May 19	Board//Elections-----	7 pm	
June 9	Board/General Meeting-----	7 pm	
July 14	Board/General Meeting-----	7 pm	
Aug 9	Youth Event-----	9 am – 3 pm	
Aug 11	Board/General Meeting-----	7 pm	
Sept 8	Board/General Meeting-----	7 pm	
Sept 14	Trap Shoot-----	10 am – 2 pm	

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY MAY 3

This is our 13th year to volunteer for Adopt-A-Highway in Lake County. We have been assigned the stretch of road between Rts 59 and 83 on Grass Lake Road. Come on out and join us to see who collects the most unusual item. All volunteers are asked to meet at 10 am at Triangle Sports & Marine just west of Rt. 83.

GROUNDS CLEAN-UP - MAY 10

With the harsh winter this past year, the club grounds are in need of some sprucing up. Basically it's general maintenance. Many of you are busy with other commitments on weekends. If you can at least give NICC an hour of your time on Saturday, May 10 that would be terrific. When you joined NICC, the application requested only 5 hours of service time each year for you to lend a helping hand. Give it some thought and come on out and meet some of the members. Lunch will be served.

CANS FOR CONSERVATION

Remember to save your aluminum cans for our Cans for Conservation bin. Cans are to be put into tightly secured plastic bags. Please do not put smaller plastic bags of cans into a larger one. You will find the bin next to the barn. Place the bags into the containers making sure the door is locked so woodland critters can't get in. When enough cans are collected, they will be taken to the recycle center. Money received will be used to maintain our pond.

*"You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world,
but if they don't work together, the club won't be worth a dime."*

Babe Ruth (1895-1948)

