



Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance

Powhatan, Virginia

November 1, 2014

VOTE TUESDAY NOVEMBER 4th

On next Tuesday, November 4th American will go to the polls to elect their members of the House of Representatives. Virginia will also elect a U. S. Senator. President Obama said that this election was about the policies and actions of his administration. Now is your chance to express your opinion on the issues of the day. We recognize that at the National level there are many issues that maybe more important than Sportsman positions of the various candidates. As a state level political action committee we cannot endorse Federal candidates, but we can give you an idea how other organizations rate or endorse each of the candidates. We chose the NRA and the Sportsmen and Animal Owners Alliance (SAVOA) to give you some insight.

U. S. Senate

Mark Warner voted against a bipartisan Senate amendment rejecting the U.N. Arms Trade Treaty, which could undermine our Second Amendment rights and violate our sovereignty. The NRA rate Warner's support for the Second Amendment a "C". Warner supports requiring Government approval of all firearms sales between private individuals. Warner said "there are responsible steps we can and should take to address the increasing gun violence in our country" that don't infringe on Second Amendment rights. He said he supports a proposal to "strengthen our background check system" aimed at preventing criminals and those with serious mental illnesses from obtaining guns.

SAVOA reports :

U.S. Senate

Incumbent Mark Warner (D) - **Animal Rightist Endorsed and Funded**

IN THIS ISSUE

- VOTE TUESDAY NOVEMBER 4th
- The Latest Internet Chat
- VA Bear Hunters Regulation Requests for 2015-16
- The Latest Internet Chat
- Facebook
- Next VaHDA Board Meeting
- VA Bear Hunters Regulation Requests for 2015-16
- Election of VaHDA Officers
- Baiting Study
- Sunday Hunting Begins
- VaHDA Regulation Requests
- United Eastern VA Coon Hunters
- VaHDA Chapter Reports

Ed Gillespie opposes any such treaty and would vote against it, or any bans on guns and ammunition. He opposes requiring the approval for gun sales between friends and family members. The **NRA ENDORSED Ed Gillespie**. Gillespie has a record of support for hunters and opposes the radical animal rights agenda. Gillespie said he "will oppose efforts to infringe upon our Constitutional right to keep and bear arms, which is an individual right."

U.S House of Representatives

SAVOA offer the following for the Congressional races:

- 1st District Incumbent **Robert Wittman (R) - SAOVA ENDORSED**
- 2nd District Incumbent Edward 'Scott' Rigell (R) - **SAOVA ENDORSED**
- 3rd District Incumbent Bobby Scott (D) - **Animal Rightist Endorsed**
- 4th District Incumbent **Randy Forbes (R) - SAOVA ENDORSED**
- 5th District Incumbent **Robert Hurt (R) - SAOVA ENDORSED**
- 6th District Incumbent **Bob Goodlatte (R) SAOVA ENDORSED**
- 7th District Dave Brat (R)
- 8th District former Lt Governor Don Beyer, Jr. (D) - **Animal Rightist Endorsed and Funded**
- 9th District Incumbent **Morgan Griffith (R) - SAOVA ENDORSED**
- 10th District – **OPEN SEAT Barbara J. Comstock (R) - SAOVA ENDORSED**
- 11th District Incumbent Gerald Connolly (D) - **Animal Rightist Endorsed and Funded**

The NRA-ILA:

- 1st District Incumbent **Robert Wittman (R) - NRA ENDORSED**
- 2nd District Incumbent Edward 'Scott' Rigell (R) – B+Suzanne Patrick ?
- 3rd District Incumbent Bobby Scott (D) - F
- 4th District Incumbent **Randy Forbes (R) - NRA ENDORSED**
- 5th District Incumbent **Robert Hurt (R) - NRA ENDORSED**
- 6th District Incumbent **Bob Goodlatte (R) NRA ENDORSED**
- 7th District Dave Brat (R) **NRA ENDORSED**
- 8th District Micah Edmond – B+Don Beyer, Jr. (D) - F
- 9th District Incumbent **Morgan Griffith (R) - NRA ENDORSED**
- 10th District – **OPEN SEAT Barbara J. Comstock (R) - NRA ENDORSED**
- 11th District Suzanne Scholte (R) - ? Incumbent Gerry Connolly (D) - F

If you don't vote... you have no say in America's future



Ed Gillespie greets a Sportsman at the Virginia Outdoor Sportsman Show in August

The Latest Internet Chat

Some still hunters, principally urban archery hunters, flush with visions of their importance and power after changing the Sunday Hunting law last year, over the resistance of 25-35 rural county Boards of Supervisors, who were expressing the will of their non-hunting citizens, are making plans to further restrict the 180,000 Virginians who hunt with dogs. Their focus, in spite of telling some dog hunters last year that Sunday Hunting was all they wanted, seems to be on the 75,000 who hunt deer with dogs.

Amongst the proposals being seriously discussed by the self-proclaimed bow hunters on some internet sites include importing the so called Georgia Plan requiring hunter's dogs to remain on specific lands on penalty of losing the right to hunt and taking the November time period out of the general hunting season with dogs so that they will have the full period of the rut to themselves.

We must fight this group, since they put 5000 emails, texts, or phone calls to legislators last year in their campaign for Sunday Hunting. They accused the VaHDA of "dividing hunters" last year, now it's becoming obvious that "dividing hunter's is of little importance to them, what's of importance to them is the power to set hunting rules for everyone else, as they move to get all access to the deer and bear resource. Although they have changed the name of the group to **Whitetail Still Hunters** Group, the names of the people are the same as last year's Sunday Hunting group. Making up stories about problems they are having with dogs is one of their tactics and has been very instructive about not only their goals but their willingness to falsely disparage other folks. Several of their stories have been thoroughly investigated and found to be outright fabrication! No basis in fact.

Have you checked on how much feed labeled "Deer Corn" is still available in October in your Wal-Mart? Baiting deer is illegal in Va. Feeding deer is strongly discouraged by DGIF at any time, but it is illegal from September 1 until the end of general firearm season. How much of it is sold to hunters who use hounds, little to none? So where's it going and who's it going to?

Reg Cook

Facebook

The Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance now has a Facebook page. www.Facebook.com/VirginiaHuntingDogAlliance please visit us and like us. We plan enhanced opportunities to keep you informed and involved.

Next VaHDA Board Meeting

The next meeting of the VaHDA Board and Extended Leadership will be on Sunday, January 25th. Bob Ellis, Deputy Director of the Wildlife Bureau, will join us to discuss the staff's position on the regulation proposals that we and others have requested. As always, the General Assembly will be in session and there will be much business to conduct.

VA Bear Hunters Regulation Requests for 2015-16

The Virginia Bear Hunters Association (VBHA) is certainly working hard on behalf of their membership. During the “scoping period”, when DGIF talks with organizations about the next two years of hunting regulations, David Steger and the leadership of the VBHA presented a package of “wants” to the staff. They did far more than that by taking staff out during the Bear Dog Training season and then having their members send more than two hundred letter in support of their proposals.

Their request was far more detailed and thoroughly explained but we summarize here:

1. Extending the Bear Dog Training season in the Southwestern and Southside counties from July 1st until the last Saturday in September citing the lack of conflict with other hunters during this time.
2. The separation of the bear tag from the big game license. One of their most effective arguments is the large number of bear crippled by opportunistic hunters that are not recovered before it spoils.
3. They also asked for an early hunting season two weeks long in late October, “west of the Blue Ridge” on public land only. At the DGIF Board meeting on October 16th, David Steger told the Board that only 1.8 % of deer killed by archers during this time occurred on public land.

They staff had a favorable view of the proposals. Bob Ellis, Deputy Director of the Wildlife Bureau, said that “it looks like his would be the year of the bear.”

We salute the Virginia Bear Hunters Association for their hard work. We urge all bear hunters to join and participate in their association. You can help them shape the future of Bear Hunting in Virginia.



Election of VaHDA Officers

The Board of Directors has made several changes in its officers to facilitate the workload and enhance communication. These changes were voted by the Board of Directors at the October meeting and are effective until the April elections. John Morse of Chesapeake is the Chairman, Chuck Ellsworth of Henrico is Vice Chairman, Robin France of Richmond Co. is Secretary and Wade McClintock of Chesterfield is Treasurer. Kirby Burch will serve a Chief Operating Officer.

Amendments to the Bylaws have been drafted to reflect changes in title and duties and will be discussed at the January meeting when the Board will set a date for a formal vote.

Baiting Study

During the 2014 General Assembly session, State Senator Frank Ruff (R-Mecklenburg) introduced a study resolution which required DGIF to do a study of hunting over bait. While his resolution did not pass, DGIF was asked to do the study and give a report to the Senate Rules Committee. The DGIF staff, in an hour long presentation to the DGIF Board of Directors, presented the findings of that exhaustive study.

The staff of DGIF left NO doubt in the mind of anyone present that they opposed hunting over bait, the feeding of wildlife and commercial hunting. The presentation by Matt Knox, (Deer Project Coordinator) Ryan Brown (Legislative and Policy Manager), Nelson LaFon (Deer Project Coordinator), Jaime Sajecki (Black Bear Project Leader) and Megan Kirchgessner, DVM, PHD (Wildlife Veterinarian) was as professional as any presentation ever made in the agency. The topic was covered from top to bottom from a stand point of sound science, ethics and sportsmanship. Bob Duncan offered the summation. The staff of the sportsmen's agency had declared they were with us!

The draft report was given to the DGIF Board prior to the presentation as the Chairman Davenport did not want to vote on it. He asked what the difference between baiting and feed plots was. Col. Ron Henry replied "If you spread it on the ground it is illegal. If it comes up out of the ground it is legal." Former Lt. Governor Bill Bolling and Leon Turner, both of whom seem ready to vote, deferred to the Chairman and a vote in support or acceptance of the report was delayed until the March meeting.

It has been erroneously reported that the Board voted in favor of the report, such is not the case. See Bill Cochran's article: http://www.roanoke.com/sports/outdoors/game-officials-uphold-year-old-ban-on-hunting-over/article_0c727510-99c8-5d6c-ae1a-9bd0cf7f4e42.html

The final report was published on October 31st. It will be available on the DGIF web site on November 4th.

Sunday Hunting Begins

Sunday Hunting is now the law. You may not hunt deer or bear on Sunday with dogs. You may train bear dogs on Sunday during authorized training seasons. You may hunt coons on Sunday only until 2:00 AM. You may hunt bobcat, coyote, fox, rabbits, squirrels and turkey with dogs on Sunday. If you do hunt with dogs on Sunday, do not have a center fire rifle or buckshot or slugs on your possession or you will probably receive a citation (ticket) and have to explain yourself in court. Hunters who use dogs are extremely law abiding; let's keep it that way!!

VaHDA Regulation Requests

The Virginia Hunting Dog Alliance Board of Directors met on October 12, 2014 and after lengthy discussion voted to request consideration of the following regulation changes:

- 1. The youth day hunt for deer scheduled for the last Saturday in September should include the use of hounds.** The goal of increasing hunter recruitment will never be met if the majority of deer hunters are excluded from having a special day to promote the sport they love. It is felt that interference with other youth who may choose to still hunt will be minimal. We feel those hunt clubs who have only a few eligible youth members will pool resources and land and only hunt one tract of land out many instead of each club trying to put on a hunt for two or three youngsters. It is clear that clubs with few youth will reach out into the community to recruit qualified youth. It is further suggested that some clubs will choose to still hunt in the morning and hunt with dogs in the afternoon
- 2. We support the concept of moving the bear youth day to a later date.** Many of the bear harvested spoiled before they could be brought out of the woods. This is a better lesson in stewardship for the youth.
- 3. A deer dog training or chase only season should be created east of the Blue Ridge on private land during August and September when it will not interfere with other hunters.**
- 4. We support extending Bear Hound Training to include all of July and August in the areas that currently have a training season.** Southside training season should be the same as the western training season.

We support the creation of a separate Bear tag with funds targeted to bear research and habitat management **and a separate Elk tag.** We will support legislation creating a raffle or other special process for elk. The VaHDA Board voted to support the Virginia Bear Hunters Association request for separation of the bear tag. The Board members told of many crippled bear during the first two weeks of archery season. One of the most disturbing stories came from a Board member who met a hunter complaining that he had not seen but one deer that day but had “stuck” two different bear but could find them. Similar stories have been relayed by folks all over the state.

The Bear is a premier trophy that deserves careful preparation, shot planning and full utilization of the hide and meat. Wanton waste is a serious crime in Virginia. Whether or not the Board and staff decide to separate the tag or go to the legislature to amend the cost of the separate Bear tag (which is currently set by law at \$25.00) this is sound policy that will no doubt be a part of the discussion concerning the soon to be needed Elk tag.

Many of you have asked why we can't have a deer dog training season and since deer hunters who use dogs are the majority of deer hunters “East of the Blue Ridge,” why are our children denied a youth day to hunt deer with dogs. Well now you have a chance, but you will have to convince DGIF that you want it, that is good for the dogs, deer and your community. You can do this by sending emails to Bob Ellis (Bob.Ellis@DGIF.Virginia.gov) or by writing him at Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, P.O. Box 11104, Richmond, Virginia 23230.

United Eastern VA Coon Hunters

The United Eastern United Virginia Coon Hunters Association (UEVCHA) officers recently visited Senator Tom Garrett (R–Louisiana) to discuss his intention to again file legislation attacking the Right-to-Retrieve Law. They report that a number of their members were in attendance and that the meeting was productive. They report that the bill was withdrawn and that he would not seek another sponsor for his bill. They believe he will become an ally.

We are cautiously watching this situation, but roundly applaud the UEVCHA for its actions.

Cumberland County Chapter

The Cumberland Chapter participated in a rabies clinic held by the Cumberland Animal Hospital to benefit local High Scholl activity. Chairman Kevin Meadows was interviewed on the local radio station. We want to thank Dr. Elizabeth Hazlegrove, DVM. For including us in this first effort.

Their next meeting is Sunday, November 2nd at the Cumberland Coon Club on Rt. 45.

Essex County Chapter

The Essex County Chapter held a community Skeet Shoot at Dragon Hill Farm on Saturday September 20. Great time was had by all. Sponsors for the event were FASTENAL, Southern States, Dragon Motorsports, Miller's Dog Supplies, My Three Sons Automotive, M. Scott Owen Construction, Barbour Printing, RedNex Sporting Goods, T-Town Tack work & western wear & Davis Woodworks.

The Essex County Chapter will be having a picnic on November 1, 12-3 at Dragon Hunt Club located at 501 Brizendine Lane Dunnsville, Va. 22454 in Essex County. We will be selling hotdogs, hamburgers, VaHDA t-shirts, hats and we will be having a corn hole tournament as well.

Mecklenburg County Chapter

Dr. Jennifer Edens, DVM of the LaCrosse Animal Hospital held a rabies clinic to benefit the VaHDA. Animal Control Officer Doug Blanton was present to assist as were several of the Mecklenburg Chapter leaders. All of the proceeds were donated to the VaHDA. We are very grateful to Dr. Edens for her contribution and support of the hunting community.

Richmond County Chapter

We had our Richmond County Chapter meeting on October 28th. There was a pretty good turnout. Officer Dustin Martin from U.S. Fish and Wildlife, he is the officer at the Rappahannock River Wildlife Refuge. Officer Martin brought the hunting dog permits that must be signed to be allowed to enter the Refuge to pick up our dogs during gun season. Dustin explained the special permit in depth and answered all questions concerning the Refuge policies on hunting and dogs on Refuge.

(Continued from Page 7)

Also we had Captain Steve Smith from the Richmond County Sheriff's Office and Deputy Sheriff - Animal Warden Richard Thomas Jr. The past 2 years we have had 2 incidents where hounds were shot and killed by landowners. Our Sheriff's Department has handled these incidents and has demanded that our Commonwealth Attorney prosecute the people.

We are truly blessed to have Our Sheriff's Department on our side !!!!

Also, we had invited Game Warden Rich Gossage (SP?) to attend but he was NOT available, pretty sad that we reached out and he wasn't able to attend with good notice.

We also will be repeating our fund raiser in April.

Report Feral Swine



**Help Protect Virginia's Agricultural
and Natural Resources**

1 (855) 571-9003



**Please Report
Hog Sightings
Hog Damage**



Feral Hogs

The VaHDA Extended Leadership at its Board meeting in March 2013, voted to oppose the introduction of feral hogs into Virginia.

Know the Law

It is a class one misdemeanor in Virginia to remove a tracking collar (§ 18.2-97.1) (<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+18.2-97.1>). The penalty may be up to a one thousand dollar fine and one year in prison. Obviously, there are other charges that may be filed related to the destruction or attempt to dispose of the collar.

The theft of the dog (§ 18.2-97) (<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+18.2-97>) or killing a dog (§ 18.2-144) (<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+18.2-144>) are both class five felonies with prison time, fines and the loss of citizenship (loss of the right to keep and bear arms) as a consequence.

It is unlawful for any person to deliver or release any animal not owned by that person to a pound, animal shelter or humane society or to pretend to be the agent of the owner (§ 18.2-144.2) (<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+18.2-144.2>).

We can be our own worst enemy or our best advertisement

When people who don't hunt think about hunting with dogs do they think about law-abiding neighbors or outlaws? It is up to every one of us to be ambassadors for the Heritage we love. If you see a law being violated, it is your duty to report that person. Tell your hunting friends that you will not tolerate law breakers in your midst. Statistics prove that hound hunters are among the most law-abiding citizens in the Commonwealth, but there are still "bad actors" in among us. Help protect the future of our sport!

Submit an article

If you would like to submit an article for possible publishing in our newsletter, email us at info@vahda.org or mail it to P.O. Box 657 Powhatan, Virginia 23139.

All VHDA Board members are real hunters who own dogs. The VHDA has no paid staff. We pay our own expenses because "We HAVE a dog in this fight!" If we sometimes sound angry, it is because we are! We would prefer to be hunting, teaching our children about the wonders that God has given us and training our dogs. We know that we must have a strong voice or we will lose to people, who not only disagree with you, but hate and revile you because you hunt.

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