



## WBH President's Message

### Spring 2021

As Mike Brust stated in his last From the President message, Mike decided not to seek re-election to the position of President in 2021. I have been elected to assume the position. I would like to thank the board of directors for their confidence in me. I will work hard to maintain WBH's position as a strong advocate for bowhunters and hunting in general. And I will always remember that in all things, I and the entire board work for you, the valued members of WBH.

My first order of business as your new President is to acknowledge Mike, your former President, and thank him for his many years of leadership. Mike's dedication to preserving, promoting and protecting bowhunting is always foremost in everything he does for the association. While Mike has stepped down from the officer position, I am happy to say that he is far from stepping aside within WBH. Mike has been appointed to the legislative liaison position, where I'm sure he will continue to give his all.

By way of introduction, I reside in La Crosse County and have served in WBH since 2010 as one of the directors in District 6. By the way, District 6 has had an open director position for a couple years now. Just saying...

As a director I have served on the executive committee as secretary, vice president and now, as your president. I've worked with many directors during this period, all of whom bring a different style and perspective to the association. While we don't always agree on everything, it is apparent that each director always has their focus on what they feel is in the best interest of bowhunting, and WBH. You can't ask for much more than that!

I've been retired for a little over 5 years now. As a profession, I highly recommend it! Along with a love of bowhunting, I also enjoy just about anything having to do with the outdoors. Even things like mowing the lawn or gardening are fine with me. I recently got into home brewing and find making different styles of beer to be a lot of fun. And, the fruits of my labor are pretty enjoyable after the lawn mowing or gardening tasks are done for the day. I'm a pretty fair carpenter, but for sure not what you would call a finish carpenter. A good friend and fellow "fair" carpenter always reminds me that there are no errors that you can't fix with a big enough piece of trim. As a bowhunter, I of course focus on deer and turkeys in Wisconsin. I've also taken antelope, moose and

bear with my bow. I co-own a nice piece of hunting property with my brother and find, that for me anyway, the quality of the antlers is secondary to the quality of the experience. I've taken some nice bucks over the years, but it is the overall back story of the hunt that is always the most memorable for me.

Okay, enough about me. As for WBH, we just wrapped up our 80th annual convention. As with everything else these past months, COVID 19 was front and center in our planning. We all felt it was really important to hold our convention, but had to accept that some things just couldn't be done the same as in the past. The Holiday Inn in Stevens Point did a great job of accommodating our needs to the best of their ability within the COVID guidelines which they were required to follow. At any rate, comments from the members in attendance were for the most part very positive. Folks seemed to genuinely like the one-day format for the convention. The Plinko and Spin to Win games were both very well received. And people really liked the shortened, more relaxed format of the awards banquet. Speaking of the awards banquet, our featured speaker Stefanie Muche was very well received. Stefanie gave a very heartfelt, down to earth presentation that everyone could relate to. I would also like to thank Stay Sharp Broadhead Sharpening Guides for sponsoring our 80th convention. Stay Sharp underwrote a significant portion of this year's convention cost, leaving us in a better position financially to carry out our core mission. As for the 81st annual convention in 2022, it is likely that a one-day convention will become our format going forward, with some refinements, of course. One of the last tasks done by the directors after each convention is a de-brief of what went well and what could have gone better. We will work to tweak next year's convention based on that feedback. And you, as members, are always welcome to provide feedback as well. Comments can be sent directly to the office or by contacting a director in your district. After all, this is your convention!

I know this next subject has been touched on before, but growing our membership is an ongoing effort that must be focused on. In terms of protecting the sport we all love, numbers do matter. The reality is that a handful of voices, even with sound reasoning, don't get the attention of our elected officials. They need to hear it from the masses. For WBH, growing our membership means growing our influence, and along with that, our ability to preserve, promote and protect bowhunting far into the future. Growing our membership also helps us to strengthen our financial position, which, you guessed it, improves our ability to preserve, promote and protect bowhunting far into the future. In short, a stable and continually growing membership is the lifeblood of your association. While WBH is always looking for ways to grow our member base, we can't do much without your support. You are our best hope. I was talking to my nephew just a few

days ago about this very thing. In a minute's worth of conversation, he figured he could easily get 3 people he knows to join WBH. Now, I'm counting on him to come through! I'll bet just about any of us knows at least 1 person they could easily convince to join WBH. Just sharing your experiences may be enough to sway them. If not, accompany them on a quick tour of our website to see all that WBH has to offer. By the way, a quick refresh might be an eye opener for you too. It is amazing how many member benefits folks fail to take advantage of. I hope you will consider putting yourself out there as an ambassador for WBH, and bowhunting.

On the legislative front, there are a couple of items in the works in Madison at the moment. Assembly Bill 924 regarding granting trespass access to individuals wishing to cross railroad tracks for the purpose of reaching land/property on the other side is under consideration. In my neck of the woods, along the Mississippi, enforcement of trespass laws along the railroad right of way has greatly reduced access to fishing and hunting areas. Also, there is a potential for legislation to be introduced for full inclusion of crossbows into the archery season, rather than keeping the two seasons separate, as they are now. WBH has taken action to highlight the pitfalls of doing this. Mike Brust will be touching on this in greater detail in his legislative update, also in this issue of The Bowhunter.

Spring is fast approaching and with it a couple things for you to be thinking about. On Monday, April 12 the Conservation Congress Spring Hearings will be held. This is your chance to let your opinions be shared. At this time, it looks like this will be an on-line only event, as it was last year.

Spring is also the time to get back out in the woods to hunt turkeys. From the sound of things, the turkeys in the state wintered pretty well for the most part. Hopefully you will have good opportunities for success this season. I drew the 3rd season this year. Since I'm a terrible caller, and the turkeys have wised up considerably by the 3rd season, I'm not holding my breath this year. But I'll be out there anyway. I'll let you know how it went in my next message! As for you, good luck! If you are successful be sure to send in those photos for the WBH on-line and The Bowhunter success galleries!

Wishing everyone success and happiness in all you do!

Dave Peterson