



MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DUCK HUNTERS ASSOCIATION  
A NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATION OF, BY, AND FOR THE DUCK  
HUNTERS.



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### THIS OLD GUN

Decided to take a break from the Widgeon story this month and share a different short story.

Do you remember your first true waterfowl gun? I am not talking about a sub gauge gun that you had when you were a kid, like a 410 or something similar, but like a 12 bore or a 10 gauge (heaven forbid being your first scatter gun). Do you still have it? As I have written you in the past my first duck gun was a trusty Remington single shot 410 that my Dad gave me when I was about 12 years old, but my truly first big time duck hunting gun is a Remington 1100 with a magnum receiver that was given to me when I was about 16 years old. When I got that gun I was on cloud nine, man I had finally arrived in the duck hunting world. No more single chucking of those tiny 410 shells, no more throwing only a little more than a half ounce of shot down range, I got me a true duck hunting shotgun!! But let me tell you about the love hate relationship I had with that gun which served me well for about 40 years until I retired her.

The 1100 was one of the most successful shotguns ever made by Remington, a simple google search will tell you that over 4 million of them were built. It was first introduced in 1963 and discontinued around 2013. It is a gas operated shotgun and not an inertial operated shotgun to cycle shells. There were several configurations of the 1100 made, mine was the magnum, designed to take the hit of heavier magnum loads or 3 inch shells. Don't even try shooting low base trap loads through her, because she will not cycle them and you will have a single shot on your hands. Lead was still legal when I got it and the barrel on her was a 30 inch fixed full choke barrel.

If you have ever owned a 1100 before and had problems with it jamming, or not recycling, then you can relate to the following. My 1100 was very very finicky. It demanded to be cleaned in order for it to operate correctly. You can only shoot magnum shells through her or 3 inch shells. If dirty or shooting trap /low base shells, you basically have a single shot. When cleaning her, there are the gas port rings on the magazine tube. When putting the gun back together and you mistakenly put them in wrong, IE upside down, get the order of which one goes on first and second, you basically rendered your semi into a single shot gun. (I know, missed a fine drake mallard on one occasion for a follow up shot when I first got her)

When steel shot came out, she had a couple of issues. One, the choke was too tight for steel shot and two, the pressures in the new steel shot shell at the time was not enough to cycle the shell. So I took the barrel to a gunsmith and opened up the choke to modified. I put the sure cycle system in her which did not work due to the magnum receiver and got into reloading shells. After several experimental loads, one in which I got the chamber pressure so high on a Remington hull it blew the entire shell (minus the brass) out the barrel! Needless to say, that recipe was scrapped, but I settled on a recipe that generated 1330 fps with a chamber pressure of 10,300 PSI in a 2 3/4 inch Winchester AA hull which my 1100 liked and ejected those shells nicely. (Continued on Page 5)

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## HOLIDAY PARTY

We will be having our end of year holiday party for our December meeting.

We are planning on providing two free drink tickets FOR JUST BEER OR SODA. Now, last year we had a bit of an issue, some members only used one ticket and not two and gave their second ticket to other members. YOUR MVDHA is paying Borgettis for each drink ticket it gets, so this is costing YOUR MVDHA money we cannot afford at this time. So if you are planning on only having one drink, then only take one drink ticket. DO NOT GIVE YOUR DRINK TICKETS AWAY to other members.

We are panning on food to be the same last year, sub sandwich with all the condiments on the side, chips and for desert, cake that Ken Liebel's wife has graciously is making for us which has been a huge hit in previous years.

Each member will be given a free surprise gift that shows up. Similarly as in last year, each member will receive a single ticket to be added to a drawing of individual gifts that you can choose from the table if your ticket is pulled. (not nearly as many as last year though)

Animator Raffle, we will be selling raffle tickets for \$5 each for a chance to win an Animator. We have one Lucky Duck Animator and One Baby Mojo Animator and we have one case we will be raffling off.

We will have three different colored raffle tickets so you will not get stuck if you want a Lucky duck Animator but won a Baby Mojo Animator.

We need a head count of all those planning on attending so we can order enough food to cover all members planning on attending. Please let Jerry know or give him a call 314-603-6548.

## ANNUAL DUES

While you are at this years holiday party bring your annual membership dues with you, it is only \$25 so you can still keep receiving information about your club and the wonderful world of Waterfowling. Please consider renewing your membership dues of \$25 and bring your money to the Holiday party or mail your check to the address on the back.

## TROUT TRIP

MVDHA is planning on our annual Trout Trip this coming year. The dates are going to be 15 March 2024 through 17 March 2024. Coming home on the 17th. We are going back to Trout Hollow Lodge at Taneycomo since there is a question of Blue Haven being sold. The address for Trout Hollow Lodge is: 1500 Acacia Club Rd, Hollister, MO 65672. Jerry Reserved four rooms. To reserve your room call Sam at Trout Hollow at 417-334-2332 and tell them you are part of MVDHA. Don't forget that if you need to reserve a boat or a slip to set that up also. If you are a military veteran they also give discounts for that too.

If you have never gone to one of our annual fishing trips to Taneycomo you are really missing out on one of the best trips or events that we do. It is always a great trip and Trout Hollow is one of the best areas to go to down there. Hopefully we will see you there!

## JANUARY MEETING

As you recall, we got a great deal from Blue Bird Waterfowling with a huge discount for club members for the Animators. Erik Liebel bought a couple of them and when I was delivering them to his house I was met by Kenny at the front door and he had in his hand, which to me, looked like an old flink lock trigger mechanism which I asked him about.

## MVDHA BOARD

**President:** Ken Liebel

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Brad Douglass,

Jerry Mercurio Jr.,

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After discussion, I found out that our very own Kenny Liebel is an re-enactor of, I believe, the Revolutionary War. He has everything needed for this including quite a few flint locks etc. I asked him if he has any muzzle loading shotguns which he has! In our past board meeting I threw Kenny under the bus and asked if he would be willing to give us a discussion of the history of the shotgun muzzle loader and to bring in one of his guns to explain, which he graciously agreed to.

So this is a special treat, which I doubt very few people have seen or heard, so plan now on coming out to our January meeting which will be on 10 January for this fascinating discussion.

## 2024 FUND RAISER

Our coffers are running low and we need to raise money. For a fund raiser this year, Kenny Liebel has offered to design and create a custom made hunting knife.

Until recently, I did not know much about Kenny and his extraordinary talents. I knew he created duck calls and carved decoys, and is a tool and die technician, but until recently, I found out he is an re-enactor and has also been making custom knives for years!

Kenny has graciously volunteered to design and create a custom hunting knife complete with a custom leather sheath!

The design is in it's infancy but here are the preliminary details:

- Made out of 496 Staret Tool Steel
- 5 to 7 inch blade length
- The blade will be buffed out to mirror finish

- It will have a Brass Hilt
- Laminated handle made out of wood that is similar to golf driver handles
- Leather Sheath that will be hand stitched
- The value of the knife is about \$600.00

Once the knife is completed I will be posting pictures of it here. This planning is still in it's infancy and we have not determined what the cost of the raffle tickets will be at this time, so stay tuned!!

## MDC QUESTIONS

As a follow-up from previous newsletter about the MDC questions we sent to the commissioners, we received a letter from them and it states:

Dear Mississippi Valley Duck Hunters Association

Thank you for your letter to Directory Pauley regarding waterfowl and wetlands in Missouri. As Deputy Director— Resource Management I am pleased to respond on her behalf. Sincere apologies for the delayed reply.

At present we are in transition between the Migratory Game Bird Coordinator retiring and in hiring someone new for the position. We will submit your letter to the Migratory Game Bird Working Group to review and answer your questions. I anticipate information from the working group to be available and a detailed response prepared by early December.

Sincerely, Signed

Jason Sumners

Deputy Director — Resource Management

C: Director Sara Parker Pauley  
Migratory Game Bird Working Group

## HOWELL ISLAND

From an MDC email, in short, that Art Wende shared on 30 November:

MDC to remove Howell Island Causeway and convert area to boat-in only access

Increased frequency of high water events and continual repair costs have prompted this course of action.

CHESTERFIELD, Mo.—The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is removing the causeway to Howell Island Conservation Area on the Missouri River in St. Louis County. The causeway currently sits atop a Corps of Engineers' water control structure and spans the Centaur Chute, connecting the island to a parking lot on North Eather-ton Road.

MDC is removing the causeway due to increased flooding over the past 15 years, that has resulted in costly repairs and increased maintenance. The underlying water control structure will remain in place. The removal project is currently underway and being performed by an MDC contractor. Once the causeway is removed, Howell Island will offer boat-in access only from the Missouri River.

## MURPHY'S LAW OF DUCK HUNTING

From the DU website:

If Murphy had been a waterfowler, how might have he applied his famous law to the quirky, ironic, and sometimes absurd principles that seem to govern our experiences in the marsh?

They say the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over while expecting a dif-

ferent result. If I had to guess, I'd say whoever came up with that definition was probably acquainted with at least a few duck hunters—those intrepid outdoorsmen and women who abandon a warm bed on a cold morning to sit over a spread of lifeless decoys, in awful weather, with sometimes only slim chances of bagging a duck. These hapless hunters often go home empty-handed, but they enthusiastically repeat this punishing routine the following morning and on many subsequent mornings over the course of a season. Sound familiar? It certainly does to me. I've performed this curious ritual day in and day out during duck season for over three decades.

Perhaps our crazed pursuit of ducks and geese is a direct result of the unique kind of madness that we encounter in the marsh. Simply put, crazy is as crazy does. Few know that better than the duck hunter. After all, dealing with the illogical is often the norm when it comes to waterfowling. The widely accepted definition of Murphy's Law is "anything that can go wrong will go wrong." After much thought, I've decided that if Murphy had been a duck hunter, he would have discovered that a similar law governs the exploits of those who pursue web-footed creatures: "The thing that you least expect to happen will almost always happen." To support my case, I've compiled five examples of this law in action. I'm confident that any duck hunter worth his or her honey buns will back me up on the validity, and absurdity, of each of them.

1. When you leave the blind to change your spread, ducks will show up overhead.

We all know what it's like to sit in the blind, stare at our decoys,

and decide that one or more need to be moved to create a more realistic deception. We often hesitate to do this, knowing full well that if any ducks fly by while we're tending to the spread, they'll certainly keep on flying. But when you have convinced yourself that a change in decoy management will tilt the odds in your favor, and you just can't sit still for another moment, you trudge into the marsh and start rearranging. About this time, of course, you'll spot some ducks that had been intent on landing among your perfectly positioned decoys. And, of course, they will spot you as well, quickly turning tail and flying off to find another slough with a more patient hunter in it. (Note: This rule also applies to answering nature's call or picking up decoys at the end of a hunt.)

2. If you bring lots of ammo expecting some luck, chances are good that you won't see a duck.

The world of waterfowl hunting is filled with curses, omens, ill fortune, and superstition. Some hunters are just plain lucky, some make their own luck, and some are always a day late and a dollar short. Many duck hunters can tell you about the curse of showing up to the hunt with a blind bag full of shotgun shells. For some reason, on those days when we expect and come prepared for fantastic shooting, we all too often head home with the same number of shells that we started with. On the other hand, if we hit the marsh with only a handful of shells, or forget to bring any at all, we're virtually guaranteed to be deluged with ducks that are eager to join our decoys. These are the days when duck hunters become bird-watchers.

3. If you always set up with the wind at your back, your spread

will look great, but success you may lack.

A cardinal rule for duck hunters is to set up with the wind at your back, because we all know that ducks like to land into the wind. On some occasions, however, just when you think you have the perfect setup, the ducks ignore it and land where they're not supposed to. A few years ago I was keeping an eye on an expansive marsh that was known for attracting late-season mallards. For three consecutive days, a large flock of ducks had been hanging around in a very specific area of the marsh. When a day came that my father and I could get out and hunt, the wind shifted and blew a hearty stew of green muck into the corner where the mallards had been sitting. My dad wanted to set up by the muck, but I pointed out that such an arrangement would mean that the wind would be blowing into our faces. He said, "That's where they're feeding, so that's where we should sit." I thought differently and wanted to set up in the clear water with the wind at our backs.

We did it my way, and all morning we watched big northern mallards landing and hanging out in that green muck. I learned a valuable lesson. Yes, it's important to try and set up with the wind at your back, but if the ducks are coming to a body of water specifically to feed, you should set up where the food is, regardless of the wind direction. Also, listen to those old-timers; sometimes they know a thing or two.

4. You sit and shiver on the coldest day, wrongly assuming that others want to stay.

It's safe to say that most ardent duck hunters have been frequent

victims of frozen feet, numb fingers, and burning ears while watching a duckless sky. It's times like these that we question our sanity and wonder if enduring these inhumane conditions is really worth it. When hunting with others, however, we tend to assume that our partners probably want to continue hunting, despite the conditions. So we stick it out and try desperately to wiggle our toes and hunker down in our coat collars to find some warmth. Ironically, and I know this from experience, our partners are usually just as cold as we are, but they are sticking it out for our sake. Next time, instead of being the tough hunter, just be the warm hunter.

5. That fateful day you decide to sleep late, your buddies will tell you the hunting was great.

We've been dutifully hunting ducks all season. Opening weekend was a great success, but every day since has been marginal at best. Then, in late fall, a day comes when the leaves are gone, the north wind blows, most of the water is frozen, and the cold chills you to the bone. These are the mornings when some hunters give in to temptation and say, "The heck with it; sleeping in sounds like a better option." If we choose to stay in bed, we are sure to hear from other hunters that northern ducks were passing through, that the shooting was phenomenal, and that, in fact, it was the best hunt of the season. So we wake up early the following morning and head to the marsh, filled with high expectations and a blind bag full of shells (see #2), only to find that the great flights of ducks have moved on.

## THIS OLD GUN CONT

I must have hunted with those

reloads for over ten years.

About ten years ago while attending a Delta Waterfowl banquet I was fortunate enough to win a Franchi 12 gauge inertial driven shotgun, which basically changed my world in shot gunning for ducks. With that new gun, I put my old 1100 in the safe and there she sat after being my less than trusty companion for over forty years.

After hunting that first Franchi for a few years I noticed that the bluing on it was not all that great and it easily rusted, but I loved the sure cycle inertial system and how it fit me to the shoulder so I went out and bought another one that was camouflaged, which to this day is still my primary gun.

Recently I had a birthday and decided to break out that old 1100, now over fifty years old, to have a nostalgia hunt. Knowing the history of that gun I made sure she immaculately cleaned, even took her out to the range to make sure she would cycle the shells I was planning on using, which she did. On the day of the hunt it looked like it was going to be a great day, winds picked up to 15 mph out of the NW, it was cloudy and the ceiling was dropping. I was in a good blind with the wind to my back, all was in place, but the ducks never showed. I sat there looking at that 1100, reflecting back over all the memories that that gun brought me, incredible shoots I had with her, the cussing at her (due to no fault of her, but mine, since I either did not clean her correctly or I shouldered her wrong, and she would let me know every time), the faded cracked wooden forearm which most of the lacquered was gone from year after year of being hunted in wet weather. The banged up wooden stock from being used as a paddle or walking stick over the years. No wonder

she would give me problems after all the abuse I gave her over the years, but she was always there. Do you still have yours?

## 2023-2024 SEASON

### Ducks Season:

North Zone: Oct. 28 - Dec. 26

Middle Zone: Nov. 4 - 12 and Nov. 18 through Jan. 7, 2024

South Zone: Nov. 23 - 26 and Dec. 7 through Jan. 31, 2024

Bag Limit: 6 ducks daily with species restrictions of:

4 mallards (2 hens)

2 scaup for first 45 days and 1 scaup for last 15 days

3 wood ducks, 2 redheads, 2 hooded mergansers, 1 pintail, 2 canvasbacks, 2 black ducks, 1 mottled duck

### Goose Season

Nov. 11, 2023– Feb. 6, 2024

### Limits

20 light geese (snow, blue, and Ross's geese), Three Canada geese and brant (combined total of both species), Two white-fronted geese

Possession limits are three times the daily bag limits for Canada geese, brant, and white-fronted geese. Light geese have no possession limit.

### Light Goose Conserv Order

Feb. 7–April 30, 2024

### Limits

During the Conservation Order there is no daily bag or possession limit for light geese (snow, blue, and Ross's geese).

## Up Coming Events

**Dec 13 :** Holiday Party

**Jan 10:** Muzzle Shotgun

### General Information

This newsletter is distributed to our active members. For non-active members check the website for the current newsletter. We have our general meeting the second Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM and our Board of Directors' Meeting every fourth Monday at 7 PM. Members meetings are held at Borgettis Bar & Grill 1667 South Old Hwy 141 Fenton MO. Board Meetings are held at various locations, contact Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548 for this month's location. In case of bad weather call Ken Liebel at 314-822-8030 or Jerry Mercurio at 314-603-6548.

Visit YOUR web site at <https://mvdha.com> to get the most recent news, events and updates. There you will find this newsletter and other helpful information concerning conservation and the great outdoors that we love. If you would like to be added to the email listing of important news and updates you can do that through the web site through the contact us link, fill out the form and make sure you add your email address.

Any comments or suggestions concerning the newsletter or the website can be sent to [mvdha@mvdha.com](mailto:mvdha@mvdha.com). I am always looking forwards to suggestions concerning content and what you would like to see or be presented in these publications.

**Next members meeting: DECEMBER 13, 2023**

**Next Board Meeting: NO BOARD MEETING**

**Members are invited to the Board Meeting**

**Member's meeting start at 7:30, Board meeting starts at 7:00**

### MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DUCK HUNTERS ASSN. INC.

*"A Nonprofit Association of, by, and for the Duck Hunters"*

"ST. LOUIS' NONPROFIT ASSOCIATION"

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