

# CORA

ELEVENTH EDITION  
DECEMBER 1995



CAMPBELL OUTDOOR RECREATION ASSOCIATION

## From The President

### Tennessee Game and Fish Programs

By Lee Asbury

Where do the best interests of the public at large and the future of Tennessee's game and fish programs really lie?

Our present system of an autonomous Commission, appointed by the Governor and Speakers of the House and Senate, making policy and political decisions and

overseeing the daily activities of a full-time professional staff is being attacked in some quarters. Charges of arrogance, lack of communication, failure to provide avenues for citizen input, excessive and rude application of authority in the field, outright incompetence and other allegations too numerous to mention are being circulated.

Some of those who feel aggrieved are looking at various remedies such as private acts, general bills of local application, triggering or failing to forestall "Sunset Law" application and other drastic measures to replace or modify the existing game and fish programs.

Many, especially those whose own particular program or interest is presently being well served, advocate a "no need to change anything" policy.

Not too many years ago, hunters and fishermen in large numbers belonged to rod and gun clubs, sportsman's associations, and various other all inclusive groups who generally loved the outdoors, hunted and fished in season and tolerated each other reasonably well.

The Tennessee Conservation League, the patron saint of our present model fish and game system, served as a forum for discussion and a clearing house for ideas from its affiliate clubs and members. TCL meetings and conventions presented opportunity for local groups to get together, cuss and discuss situations, with each other and with

TWRA, commissioners and staff, reach consensus, and pass resolutions which reflected wide public support and carried weight with TWRA.

As TCL evolved, and, in keeping with the times, became more and more involved in environmental and lobbying issues, and as game populations increased, these sportsmen's associations became less interested and began to disband. The resulting loss of affiliates whose concerns were primarily related to hunting and fishing deprived the league of membership and created an impression in some people's minds that hunting and fishing issues were not at the top of the TCL agenda.

What had really happened was that through the TCL efforts and the resulting model fish and game programs, the situation in Tennessee improved to the point that a lot of people saw no need to continue an activist role and sort of set back and let TWRA and the TCL staff mind the store.

When a dramatic upsurge in hunting, fishing and all other forms of outdoor recreation came about and as problem areas developed, organizations began to spring up to address the needs of specific groups.

Today, almost all organized groups fall into a single interest category, such as Ducks Unlimited, Quail Unlimited, Wild Turkey Federation, Trout Unlimited, Striped Bass Association, anti-striped

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# Diminishing Returns

By Bob Ripley  
TWRA Region Manager

"The unthinkable has come to pass—the wealth of oceans, once deemed inexhaustible, has proven finite, and fish, once dubbed "the poor man's protein," has become a resource coveted—and fought over—by nations. This quote and story are taken from the November, 1995, National Geographic magazine, but what bearing does it have to readers of the CORA newsletter? Just as ocean managers have realized their resources are not inex-

haustible, TWRA has come to similar realizations on our inland lakes. For the past few years, restrictive size limits and creel limits on game fish have become the norm across Tennessee.

Because game fish populations are not what they once were on Norris Lake, everyone is looking for a reason. Some people have decided that a "reason" on Norris Lake is the introduction of striped bass by TWRA in 1966. Studies conducted by TWRA on Norris, across Tennessee and across the country, confirm that striped bass feed predominantly on shad. This is why they were

brought to Tennessee originally in 1958, to feed on the over abundance of shad that occupy open water in Tennessee Reservoirs and provide a large sport fish for Tennessee fishermen.

Concern for Norris Lake fishing led to the formation of the Norris Lake Task Force in January, 1992. This Task Force, established by TWRA Director Gary Myers, consists of biologists from TWRA and TVA, University of Tennessee and Tennessee Tech, a boat dock operator and fishermen from Norris Lake. After three years of field work and research, the Task Force presented a plan to the public and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission. The Norris Task Force has coordinated thousands of hours of volunteer effort to improve habitat on Norris. The Plan focused on four species—black bass, crappie, walleye and striped bass. Recommendations included alternate year stockings of striped bass which will result in 28% fewer fingerlings for Norris over five years and stocking of walleye and crappie. Largemouth bass have been stocked experimentally as well.

The Task Force's recommendations appear to be on the right track to improved fishing on Norris Lake.

There is a "cloud on the horizon" in the form of the Tennessee Sportsman Associations (TSA). TSA plans to pass a private act to manage fishing on Norris. This group formed in late 1994, when the Norris Task Force did not recommend a moratorium on striped bass stocking.

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#### C.O.R.A.

#### Campbell Outdoor Recreation Association

3409 Henson Road  
Knoxville, TN 37921  
Telephone: (423) 584-1825  
FAX: (423) 588-7028

#### Newsletter Co editors:

Frank LaGreca 977-0645  
Terry Lewis 584-1825

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Lee Asbury 562-5886  
Frank LaGreca 977-0645  
Terry Lewis 584-1825  
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## First Impressions

Dear C.O.R.A.,

I am a fifty year old male, whom for the better part of my life have lived in the Smokey Mountains mostly from Blount County south to Hiwassee river. As service manager of a local Ford dealership in Monroe County I deal with the public five days a week and live for the weekend, when my wife and I can four wheel, camp, fish, and plain old admire God's creation.

Due to my age and physical condition I gave up dirt bikes and hard riding five years ago, and all my nature outings are on a four wheeler or big Bronco. The U.S. Forest Division has banned all four wheelers or ATV's and shut down about 90% of the forest except to horses, which I refuse to ride. Now need I say more as to why I am gratefully impressed with what I see in C.O.R.A.?

On August 12th, I made my fourth ride, with friends to Royal Blue Area and on this trip met several local folks on four wheelers who for the first time explained what C.O.R.A. was about. I was also given a business card (Windrock ATV Club) and still I was unimpressed with the thirty miles of trails from Perkins to the lake and dam. (I thought that was all there was to Royal Blue). Friday night September 29th I dug out the card and called Mr. Ernest Lester and invited myself and a fourteen year old friend to ride with him and his son. (I would have begged if needed). On Saturday morning I met him at Shoney's at the Caryville exit at 7:00 a.m. From 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. we covered sixty miles of trails and sights I

will not forget. We saw Red Ash Creek, bluffs over the roads, mines, oil wells, civil war grave sites, wild life, and nice folks helping each other if needed. Even the Game Wardens were friendly.

I am not saying the Cherokee National Forest or Smokey Mountains don't have this, but I will probably never get to see and visit the places I enjoyed as a young man. Had it not been for Ernie Lester and that card I probably would never have driven another 120 mile trip to ride the small area I called Royal Blue. Mr. Lester gave me a copy of September's C.O.R.A. newsletter and after reading it I can see how much people care for what they believe in and all agree the land must be cared for and as far as the rules and regulations go, anyone who can't live with them, should visit my home turf where the only rule is "Keep Out" or "Posted U.S. Forest."

I am enclosing my membership to C.O.R.A. and will continue to support C.O.R.A. in any way I possibly can, again many thanks to Ernie Lester and Windrock ATV club. (Which we joined).

Very Impressed,

Jim Rodgers

Greenback, Tennessee

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bass groups, ATV and motorcycle clubs, etc.

While many of these groups pay lip service to umbrella organizations like TCL, most of them try to go it alone with the Wildlife Commission and staff. Many of these groups, only beholden to a single interest, pay little heed to the resource base, the needs of other groups, or the overall public good.

The single interest group that raises the most money and whose members have the most spare time to attend Commission meetings is perceived by the public as having the most influence.

A Wildlife Commission and staff attempting to service the needs of the various groups, many of which are at cross purposes with each other, face a herculean task. As time goes on in an atmosphere where a victory by one group is perceived as a defeat for another group, resentments build up, cooperation and tolerance virtually disappear and all groups adopt a win-at-all-costs attitude.

Elected officials complain of a lack of control over the agency while at the same time confiding that they don't really want to get involved in day to day fish and game management. In many instances, they feel obliged to advocate what they believe to be the sentiments of a majority of their constituents, whether right or wrong. This approach to hard decisions is known as politics.

Our present Governor, Hon. Don Sunquist, has not, to my knowledge, weighed in publicly on the degree of his support for the present system. It is my personal hope that when he does he will come down, as have his predecessors of the last 50 years, squarely on the side of the system we now have with such modifications or alterations as might make it better and improve its standing with all Tennesseans.

The obvious success of our game and fish programs of the last half century is abundantly clear from the Mississippi River bottoms to the mile-high peaks of East Tennessee. Today's Tennesseans can enjoy herds of deer, flocks of turkeys, black bear populations, abundant lowland and upland small game species, any kind of fishing experience an angler could want, more publicly owned and

controlled land and many other advantages than our own grandparents would have ever dreamed possible.

On past performance alone, our Wildlife Commission system has earned our gratitude and respect and deserves our continued support.

When we look around us today and boast of what we have, we also need to remember those brave men, women and elected officials who did what it took to take fish and game out of politics and set us on the right road.

Going back toward the system that gave us politically appointed, largely incompetent administrators, outright political hacks for enforcement officers, a hodge-podge of statutes and private acts that made practically every county have its own set of laws, and the general chaos we have only recently escaped from, is unthinkable.

If serious problems exist, and we all know that some do exist; and if going backward is unacceptable, what then needs to be done. The obvious answer is to make the modifications and changes needed to correct present problems and to insure future generations that there will be avenues of communication both to and from the Commission and staff which the public can readily utilize.

The Wildlife Commission and staff, with the assistance of all interested citizens of goodwill, must conduct the kind of critical review that pinpoints problem areas. As soon as legitimate areas of concern are identified and acknowledged, all interested parties can shift their attention to corrective measures and to quote a well known cliché "stop being part of the problem and start being part of the solution."

We live in an information age. Today computers, faxes, telephone, the media and other information outlets bombard us with facts. Experts, many of whom are perfectly willing to tell us what we want to hear for a fee, abound. No matter how well intentioned a person may be, he or she can only make decisions based on the information available. The agency needs to utilize every outlet at its disposal to get accurate information to Tennessee's hunters and fishermen.

Professional staff should never be put out front to make political decisions. The Commission should make these calls and

leave staff free to get the work done.

A certain level of autonomy must be granted to the fish and game commission if it is to do its job. It is elementary that the agency is most likely to lose its autonomy if they abuse it. Any hint of arrogance or failure to treat citizens with the respect properly due them must be eliminated. Enforcement officers should be ambassadors of goodwill and only get hard-nosed with deliberate violators.

As time goes on, more and more people with more and more time and money to spend on outdoor recreation will be out there using Tennessee's woods and waters. Competing interests will be vying for space and time. Hunters, fishermen and all outdoor recreation lovers must learn to cooperate in protecting our natural resources, learning to tolerate each other and accept a level of discipline that will allow the whole system to work.

I personally would love to see the Tennessee Conservation League reassume its historic role as an umbrella organization for the hunters and fishermen of our State. It is a certainty that some organization is going to step into that role. TCL is uniquely qualified by history and by its structure of regional representation with statewide oversight. It would take years for any other organization to attain the structure and respect that TCL already enjoys. Some forum for discussion that presents an avenue of communication to and from the Wildlife Commission is in the best interest of all concerned.

As far as I know, CORA may be the only organization in Tennessee that is truly broad based and open to memberships for all outdoor recreation lovers. We have some lively discussions, argue with each other and with local Wildlife Agency personnel over uses and rules, but we have learned that long-term survival depends on accurate information, open mindedness, tolerance and respect for each other, and a willingness to accept the necessary levels of discipline.

The sooner all of those now vying with each other, vying with the system and expending negative energy, start looking for common ground, seeking avenues of communication and

The following news release outlines attempts by CORA, TWRA and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission to reach a compromise at Norris.

## Wildlife Commission Responds to Striper Controversy

If a group of East Tennessee anglers had agreed to the proposal, striper stocking would have been discontinued for two years on Norris Reservoir while researchers determined whether stripers caused declines in native fish populations, according to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA).

A group calling itself the "Tennessee Sportsmen's Association" has complained publicly since 1984 that stripers are eating crappie and other popular species, causing declines in their populations. Although the TWRA studies have shown scientifically that stripers do not have a negative impact on other sport fish, the TSA has insisted the Agency stop stocking them in Norris.

"The Commission made a proposal that I believe would have resolved this ongoing issue," said Gary Myers, executive director of the TWRA. "The TSA members feel as though the TWRA has conducted biased research on Norris, so the Commission offered to bring in researchers from elsewhere to study the reservoir, but this offer was refused."

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission, the governing body of the TWRA, endorsed a proposal November 14 that it hoped would show anglers that Norris Reservoir is important and that resolving the lingering dispute is a top priority.

Members of the TSA attended the meeting on November 14, but said they are not interested in further study.

To help remove doubts about study results, the Commission offered to obtain a list of researchers from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, present that list to the TSA and to the Striper Association, and let those parties agree on which research group would conduct the inquiry. Once an independent research group was agreed upon, the TWRA would cover the cost of the two-

year study. In addition, all striper stocking would cease on Norris during the course of the investigation. The Agency would also continue stocking the reservoir with game fish such as crappie and largemouth bass, as previously planned.

"Despite the proposal, which I think is extremely fair, the TSA has refused to go along with it," noted Myers. "The scientific data of our studies and the results of research performed across the country, indicate that stripers do not have a negative impact on game fish populations, but we are willing to go along with the Commission's proposal for an 'unbiased' study and then abide by what the outside researchers say. It has always been the intention of the TWRA to improve the fishing on Norris and all the lakes in Tennessee," said Myers.

An important stipulation of the proposal would be that all parties—the TWRA, the Stripers Association, and the Tennessee Sportsmen's Association—agree in advance of the study, in writing, to abide by the recommendations made by researchers who would be sanctioned by a body such as the National Academy of Sciences.

"If a study showed that stripers are hurting the fisheries on Norris Reservoir, we would do whatever necessary to solve the problem. If it meant never stocking another striper that is what we would do. However, if the study showed that stripers don't hurt populations, I think everyone should be willing to accept that finding. We must remember that there are fishermen on Norris who like to catch stripers, as well as other species."

Myers noted that the TWRA manages both the state's fish and wildlife based on scientific information, not emotion. Some anglers blame stripers for depriving them of the good fishing they experienced years ago; the TWRA believes Norris Reservoir is losing fertility as it ages, causing some fish populations to decline, in addition to the over-harvesting of some species.

Ideas for the striper proposal were agreed upon during a meeting sponsored by CORA held on October 2 in Caryville, a community near Norris Reservoir. Members of the Wildlife Commission; professionals from the

TWRA; and members of two sportsmen's groups, the Tennessee Conservation League and the Stripers Association, attended. The Tennessee Sportsmen's Association was invited, but declined the invitation to attend.

"We are serious about getting this issue resolved," noted Bill Hatfield, chairman of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission. "We had people take off from work and drive hours to East Tennessee so we could talk about this with everyone interested in the issue. I wish someone had shown up from the TSA."

The Wildlife Commission and the TWRA will continue to leave the doors open for further discussion, comments, and suggestions to resolve this issue.

"Our mission is to manage our resources for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the sportsmen in our state. Our Commission has proposed a fair, unbiased solution. I hope the anglers interested in resolving the 'Norris Lake Striper' issue will give our Commission and its proposal their support," said Myers.

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## PRESIDENT, continued from page 4

cooperation, the sooner our already great situation can shift to passing gear for the run into the future.

If you have read to the end of this article, I commend you for your patience but also suggest that you read it again. I think it is that important.

**C.O.R.A. Meeting**  
**Dec. 5, 1995, 7:00 P.M.**  
**Regular meetings**  
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# Hunters—Another Endangered Species?

By Mike McAfee

For those of you that did not read Tennessee Conservation League (TCL) President, Rosemary McGregor's article, "TCL President Takes Stand To Defend Hunting," (Oct.-Nov. *Tennessee Out-of-Doors*), you should have. The article really is a calibration point for the sad state of affairs for the hunter. Perhaps McGregor's most important point is that hunters will be the downfall of hunting, not the anti-hunting movement. Why? Apathy and the feeling that hunting is our right, instead of a privilege. Unfortunately, CORA is an example, a microcosm, that proves McGregor's statements. Some CORA members feel when they have paid their CORA membership it is a yearly installment, an insurance policy if you will, for securing their hunting future. Wrong! In truth becoming or continuing as a CORA member is certainly a step in the right direction, but only represents the beginning of a commitment necessary to secure our hunting future in Campbell County and across this nation.

Hunting in this country is near a crossroads. Will it survive? What can we do individually or collectively as hunters? The answer, at least in part, lies in technology as a means to easily distribute information (fact or fiction) to large segments of the population. So technology is both friend and foe to the hunter. Anti-hunters use technology effectively to further their agenda and increase membership. The problem with information from anti-hunters is that in many cases it is not based on scientific

fact, but purely preys on emotion. Anti-hunters are gaining influence, in many cases, simply because another view is not as readily accessible. Hunters, if they choose, can use technology just as effectively to get out the facts and gain influence.

Many Tennesseans have a clear advantage over much of urban America. We have experience and knowledge gained from a rural America. Many of us grew up "close to the land." We have knowledge of the true cycles of our existence; plants and animals, growing and harvesting. How many people in urban America connect meat neatly packaged in a grocery store, a hamburger in a fast food restaurant or vegetables on a plate, with the "food chain?" Man is at the top of the "food chain." When you strip away all the emotional arguments from the anti-hunters, that is what we are left with fundamentally. Man survives at the expense of other plants and animals. Our very survival individually and collectively depends on the availability of plants and animals for consumption. Somehow the anti-hunters want to deny this undeniable fact.

Perhaps it is because we as a society have become so good at growing and harvesting, proven by the small number of individuals in this day and age that actually produce food for the masses, that many within the population just have no clue of the reality of food production. For many the path to a full stomach is simple, just add money. No

planting, no plowing, no harvesting, no dirty hands, no involvement.

Harvesting of animals is only one small facet of the complex issue of hunting. It is a topic area that continues to be fruitful for the anti-hunters. The public is easy prey, especially when the emotions are provoked by an ad campaign by anti-hunters that graphically displays Bambi with big brown eyes being bagged by big bad Bubba with a bazooka. How long are we going to let crazed hunters kill and actually eat animals, ask the anti-hunters? I could never do that, many remark. My counter question to hunters is, how long are we going to allow many in our population to go uninformed and ultimately unaccountable for their actions? Anti-hunters harvest at the grocery store or restaurant, hunters choose on occasion to harvest in the woods. For anti-hunters to think they are somehow different from hunters as consumers of plants and animals is absolutely absurd. The point is, CORA can and should make a difference by getting out facts about hunters, sportsmen, and outdoorsmen.

Recently, I had a conversation with a non-hunter who had been converted to an anti-hunter. As with any recent convert, this person was eager to blast the first hunter in sight, who in this case was me. During the somewhat intense discussion that ensued, the anti-hunter remarked, "I no longer eat meat, I only eat fish and chicken." I rest my case with this example, as a calibration point, for the work that needs to be done.

# CORA Minutes

## MEETING MINUTES OF SEPT. 5, 1995.

The Board meeting commenced at 7:15 PM at the Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN. with 17 Board and 34 members attending.

**Invocation:** by Jim Shetterly

**Board Roll Call:** Absent....Hubert Rollen

August Minutes, General and Newsletter Treasury Accounts were approved as read.

Publicity Chairman, Mike McAfee, reported that an article on our Newsletter was sent to the local newspaper and did appear. He also reported that he would request some publicity for our up-coming HOG ROAST Saturday, September 23rd at the COAL TOWN PAVILION.

Bill Bruce reported that he had the cooker. Tom Conner said, "he and Bill would purchase the hog and all the "fixins" and have everything ready to eat at 2 PM." The Board voted to have them spend what ever was reasonably necessary to have a good roast.

Board member and partner of the COAL TOWN property, Charles Vincent declared, that the owners were concerned about liability at such a gathering. They requested that CORA take out a protection policy before they would allow our using the property, President Lee Asbury said he would look into the matter. With this concern in mind, alternate sites were discussed and the Royal Blue Rifle Range site was selected. All agreed that a tent with tables and chairs would be needed. Lee agreed to coordinate petitioning the site if necessary.

Frank LaGreca reported on the availability and cost of renting tables and chairs from a local Lafollette store. All agreed that if we were unable to find somebody or organization who would donate our needs, then we would rent.

Our local COON HUNTERS organization agreed to put on a demonstration at the roast, using a protected live raccoon.

Terry Lewis thanked everyone who helped put the 10th issue of the NEWSLETTER together. Advertising chairman, Ernie Lester, also expressed his appreciation to all who helped get

the ads and NEWSLETTER distributed.

The ROADS AND TRAILS chairman, Ted Fields, reported that, in his estimation, BRAEDEN MOUNTAIN needed seeding and some TLC. Ted's comment did not appear to generate any further discussion at this time.

Jack Ethridge expressed concern regarding a serious passage problem he and his ATV crew would have getting to the picnic. He said, according to the authorities, who cited State, County and local regulations, that a parade permit would be required to ride on the roads leading to the picnic area. After a brief discussion, Lee said he would investigate the problem and get back to him if it could be resolved.

Membership Drive Chairman, Robert Burden, indicated that he had no particular plan at this time for recruiting any new members. He said he would be available after the meeting for anyone wishing to pay their dues.

The volunteer "fire fighting program," according to Terry Lewis, is still alive and well. He expects to have some information to present at the next CORA meeting.

Meet adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Frank LaGreca, Secretary

## MEETING MINUTES OF OCT. 3, 1995

The Board meeting commenced at 7:20 PM at the Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN. with 12 Board and 12 members attending.

**Invocation:** by Jim Shetterly.

**Board Roll Call:** Excused

Absence....Frank LaGreca, Hubert Rollen. Absent...Bill Bruce, Tom Conner, Mike McAfee, Don Shelton & Charles Vincent.

September Minutes, as taken by Secretary Frank LaGreca, were read in his absence by Terry Lewis, who also gave the General and Newsletter Treasury reports. All were approved as read.

**Activity Reports:**

**Publicity:** Mike McAfee....absent, no report.

**Activities:** Chairmen, Tom Conner and Bill Bruce....Absent.

**Newsletter Editor:** Terry Lewis, reported that articles were needed for

the next issue. Anyone with an article, please contact him as soon as possible.

**Newsletter Distribution and Advertising Chairman:** Ernie Lester, reported on the efforts of the men and thanked them for helping him deliver the last issue. Lester also reported on his most recent efforts to acquire new Advertisers. A brief discussion followed regarding collected and uncollected accounts.

**Roads and Trails Co-Chairmen:** Ted Fields and Jack Ethridge. Ethridge asked to step down as Co-Chairman and requested that Ernie Lester take his place. Jack felt that Ernie traveled and was more in touch with the property than he was and could better serve the positions' duties. The Board approved his request.

Ted Fields reported that Chestnut Ridge Rd. is now open. Horsbone Ridge was closed by digging a ditch across it. Ted found that many roads were closed with signs saying; "NO MOTOR VEHICLES ALLOWED." A discussion followed Ted's disclosure. It is quite apparent that TWRA is not living up to their earlier agreement. It is the CORA Board and members understanding, that TWRA would consult with us through Area Manager Stan Stooksbury, before, closing any roads. Since that has not been the case, the Board concluded that Mr. Stooksbury has either forgotten the agreement or has no intention of honoring it.

President Asbury concluded the discussion by asking Ted to make a list of the items to discuss with Stan. Lee said he would call Stan upon receipt of the list to ask that he meet with he and Ted to discuss the problem.

**Membership Chairman:** Robert Burden....no report.

**Old Business:**

Lee reported that the pig roast was successful in spite of our, just about, breaking even. "There was plenty to eat and everyone seemed to have had enough," said Asbury.

Ernie Lester asked about riding on the road in front of Perkins. Lee said he talked to the Commissioner about TWRA's self-imposed policing of this

Please see MINUTES, page 9

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### MINUTES, continued from page 7

road. The Commissioner stated that TWRA had no jurisdiction on the roads around Perkins. An in depth discussion followed.

### New Business:

President Asbury reported on the meeting hosted by CORA and held at the Holiday Inn in Caryville. The meeting was arranged in an effort to bring all the parties involved in the NORRIS LAKE Striper/Crappie conflict together to

express their concerns. Those attending were: TWRA Commissioners, TWRA supervisory personnel, TCL representatives and Striper representatives. The most vocal in the controversy...The Tennessee Sportsman Association elected to abstain and did not attend. The Association's absence severely limited the progress the group had hoped to gain toward arriving at a mutual understanding or resolution of the problem.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM. Minutes were taken by Terry Lewis and respectfully edited for presentation by Frank LaGreca, Secretary.

*CORA, its Publishers or Editors  
are not responsible for the accuracy  
of facts surrounding the articles  
published in this Newsletter.*



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## Deer Tick - No Such Animal

By Frank LaGreca

Lyme disease has received quite a bit of attention over the past several years. We know it may result when a person is bitten by a certain kind of tick that we call the "deer tick." Everything about the statement is true, except, there is no such animal (insect) as a "deer tick!"

The following will serve to clarify the above. It is taken from information provided by the University of Georgia, College of Veterinary Medicine:

Lyme disease was first recognized as a human health problem in 1975. Research revealed the causative agent, a spiral-shaped bacterium named (*Borrelia burgdorferi*), was transmitted by ticks. In 1979 (*Ixodes dammini*) was described as a new tick species and later showed to be the vector of Lyme disease in the northeastern and Midwestern United States. It was, unfairly, given the common name "deer tick."

Before 1979, the "deer tick" had not been recognized as distinct from (*Ixodes*

scapularis), the "black legged tick," which is widely distributed in the Eastern United States.

The "deer tick" was reported to occur in the Northeast and Midwest, whereas the "black-legged tick" was considered restricted to the Southeastern United States. However, recent studies by scientist at Georgia Southern University, have shown conclusively, that both ticks are the same species and, consequently, the name *Ixodes dammini* is no longer valid nor is the common name "deer tick."

The name "deer tick" was an unfortunate choice anyway. It seems to imply that the white-tailed deer are the reservoirs of the Lyme disease organism when actually, they are simply one of the hosts for the adult ticks. Many other wild mammals, birds and even reptiles are involved in the tick's life cycle; and wild animals other than deer, especially rodents, are vertebrate reservoirs of the bacterium.

So far only a relative few specimens of the black-legged tick have been

collected in Tennessee and the incidence of Lyme disease is not high. Still we all need to be vigilant. The common dog tick is capable of causing a few health problems for us, including the transmittal of the organism which causes Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

Much has been written or is available about protecting ourselves from tick bites, and we should always be vigilant where they are concerned. If we are bitten by a tick and notice any rash, blotches or illness soon after, we should meet with a doctor immediately, and be sure to mention that a tick may be involved.

Fortunately, tick-transmitted diseases can be successfully treated with antibiotics...if caught in time.

By the way, animals such as dogs, cats, horses and cows can contract diseases from a tick bite. If they exhibit lameness or a change in behavior, a veterinarian should be consulted.