

## President's Report –

As mentioned in the last issue, our fall rendezvous will be Saturday, September 19, 2020 in Sherwood, North Dakota. A current list of education seminars includes beaver, coyote, and raccoon trapping, with a seminar on handling skunks. I know Garrett is looking at a few more to include for the day, so stay tuned to the website for the most current information ([www.ndfhfa.com](http://www.ndfhfa.com)). We'll have lunch on the grounds, a BB gun range for the young folks, raffles, and our fundraising auction (all donations welcome). Vendors will be available for supplies – which by the way is free if you'd like to set-up or tailgate. If you have any questions, you can contact Garrett at (701) 833-7373. Bring your family, bring your friends, and introduce someone new to all that we do!

The raffle drawing was held on July 1st. Many thanks to those who sold tickets, purchased tickets, Steve Takacs for handling the firearms, and the fundraising committee for all their work. The winners were Steve Takacs of Bismarck (custom made 6.5 Creedmore); Wayne Mattoon of Underwood (Remington Model 7 .223); and David Rolffrud of Keane (Glock 9mm). Again, thank you for making the raffle a success and supporting the association.

The next couple of months will be busy for the association. We have multiple education classes being held as well as several public education opportunities at youth outdoor events. If you would like to help, please contact your district director. If you have an opportunity in your local area, speak up. We have plenty of resources and educational material that will help.

Use the waning days of summer to plan your strategy for this season, make plenty of waxed dirt, get your equipment ready, and practice bedding traps. Preparation will make you more successful and your outdoor activities more enjoyable. Take a good read of the proclamation so there are no surprises.

For this fur segment, we'll talk about coyotes. I am an advocate for trapping and fur hunting when you have the time to do so. Knowing when pelts may be better than other times is key to helping you make an educated decision about when to go. Photo-period is the phrase used to describe the amount of light an animal receives during the day. As we approach fall, the days become shorter and animals are subject to less light. This reduced amount of light triggers the transition from summer pelt to winter pelt. Current or future weather conditions have nothing to do with this transition – regardless of which furbearer we are talking about.

A coyotes age has much to do with how fast this transition occurs. Two or three year old coyotes will transition much quicker than a pup of the year. As a general rule, a majority of coyotes in North Dakota are prime by mid-December. The key word here is general - you may find prime pelts earlier and later. I see thousands of coyote pelts each year, and I have what I call the 60/40 rule that goes into effect right around January 15<sup>th</sup>. In general terms and prior to that date, 60% of the coyotes handled will be in good condition; 40% not so good condition. After January 15<sup>th</sup>, these percentages change places – 40% in good condition and 60% in not so good condition. Exceptions will occur and hopefully always in your favor. The coyotes age, health, habitat, behavior, activity, and weather all play a role in how well the pelt fares throughout winter. In most cases, we do not get to

pick and choose which coyote we catch or shoot. In all cases, it is our responsibility to care for what we do catch or shoot as best we can.

In closing, remember to keep your membership current so you stay informed. We hope to see you in Sherwood on September 19th and be sure to bring the family and friends. Until next time, take care, be safe and responsible, and enjoy what Mother Nature and North Dakota have to offer. Catch 'ya, Rick