

PRAIRIE NEWS

<http://SD-PheasantHunting.com>

July 2014

1-855-SD Lodge

35451 253rd Street

Kimball, SD 57355

Independence Day:

Happy 4th of July! As we celebrate our nation's independence, we should also take a moment to appreciate the tremendous sacrifices that individuals have made to secure our liberty and many freedoms. Whatever your position on the current political issues, Independence Day is a reminder of the vast potential of America and the citizens who make up our great country. Constantly evolving over the past 238 years, the United States is still a testament to the power of devotees to freedom.



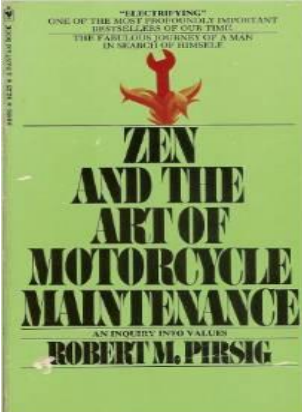
One of the tenets of farming is that corn should be knee-high by the 4th of July. We are happy to report that our food plots are indeed of the proper height and growing rapidly. June was an exceptionally wet month, with the rainstorms interspersed with hot, humid weather that was perfect for growth of all our vegetation. In addition to the lush food plots, other areas are covered with dense alfalfa, wildflowers, and various grass species in which our young pheasant families are thriving. As we continue to combat Canadian thistles, we are frequently driving around our fields and often encounter broods. The number of chicks with each hen seems to be about 8 to 10.

Lodge Update:

In addition to planting food plots and developing the land immediately surrounding the Lodge into prime pheasant habitat, we are constructing a storage shed for our buses and other vehicles. This structure will also have space for on-site bird cleaning. Landscaping efforts continue as well, with patios and sidewalks constructed around the Lodge to facilitate traffic flow and enjoyment of outdoor spaces. The target stand now has a well-designed course with 13 stations, each with a different throwing pattern intended to replicate shots that a hunter might encounter in the field. Inside, we have partnered with Pete's Taxidermy of Burke, South Dakota to provide pheasant décor on consignment. We look forward to sharing all of these improvements with our hunters this fall. As always, we invite you to stop in off-season as well if you find yourself in South Dakota.

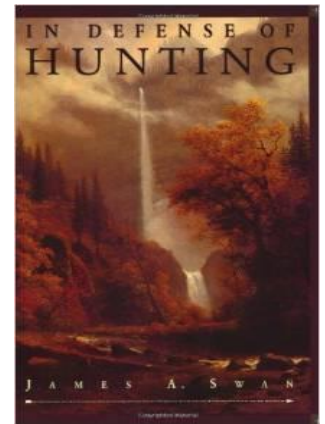
Zen of Hunting:

What brings hunters back to South Dakota year after year to pursue a multi-colored, long-tailed bird? Is it the unstructured time they spend with their friends, the competitive thrill of outwitting prey and bagging it, the peacefulness of walking through fields without the distractions of technology, or all of these factors?



In the 1970s, there was a popular book called *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* that explored the compromises between the burgeoning technology explosion and the satisfaction of self-reliance and independence. These principles still apply today, perhaps even more so, and hunting in South Dakota illustrates the possibilities inherent in spending a day in the field with your cell phone turned off, giving yourself the opportunity to experience nature with both its challenges and strengthening aspects. Even when our hunters take advantage of wireless internet and digital television service back at the Lodge, the serenity of their time spent hunting is not lost.

There are a host of other books and noted writers that provide similar enlightenment about the aesthetic qualities of hunting. James Swan wrote *In Defense of Hunting*, in which hunters describe the experience as lending emotional clarity, fully immersed and participating in nature, not just observing it. For athletes, it's like being in the zone. For artists and writers, they're caught in the muse. Swan called it the "Zen of hunting" where one is "in a state of awe and reverence which is the emotional state of transcendence." One has only to see the smiles on the faces of our returning hunters to know that they have experienced exactly this feeling.



Perhaps Ted Nugent's comment to CNN about hunting is worth repeating: "Zen meditation in its definitive form, plus you get meat out of it."

Prairie Puzzle:

The answer to last month's question about the total small game hunting licenses sold annually in South Dakota was 165,000. Congratulations to our winner: Mr. Cluchey from South Carolina.

July question: ***In South Dakota, open carry of firearms is permitted. Which other states have similar open carry laws?***

- a) Vermont, Illinois, North Carolina b) South Carolina, Idaho, Kentucky c) Utah, Alaska, North Carolina d) Kentucky, Utah, Illinois

Please submit your answer by July 15, 2014 to be included in the prize drawing for a free Dakota Prairie Lodge & Resort hunting hat. Responses will be accepted via mail, phone, or email. Good luck!