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THE WILD TIMES

Official Newsletter of wildHERness



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ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER ADVENTURE

Jess Rice, President

When wildHERness was founded, we obviously had hopes of impacting women in a way that could be described as "empowering." Never did we realize that the impact could, or would be, described as "life-changing". So, if you're wondering why our quarterly newsletter hasn't been in your inbox with our proclaimed regularity, it's because we have been out here changing lives. It's not something we set out to do, but the experiences we have had in 2021 have changed the lives of so many, for the better....ours included! Moving forward, you can expect *The Wild Times* just once a year, as an annual summary. We hope that you read on to see all they ways we spent 2021 helping you to explore *your wild*. Happy New Year!



MAIDENS, MALLARDS & MARSHES: A WOMEN'S WATERFOWL EXPERIENCE

In December, wildHERness partnered with [Sky Panda Outdoors](#) and [Butler County Delta Waterfowl](#) to put on the very first Maidens, Mallards and Marshes: Women's Waterfowl Experience. The four wildHERness founders packed their waders and headed to Eldorado, KS to meet 22 other attendees who ranged in experience from first timers to intermediate waterfowlers. One attendee, Raylene Proto, CEO and founder of Ditale Outdoor Apparel, even came all the way from California for her first duck hunting experience!

Saturday dawned, a chilly but sunny start to the educational segment of the workshop. Participants began with a morning group session provided by local Game Warden, Lt. Jake Speer, who led an open discussion about rules, regulations, and best practices as new waterfowl hunters. Our favorite part was the portion on species identification, as Lt. Speer passed around wings from recent harvests to illustrate morphological differences between species that are commonly used characteristics for identification in the field.

The education and discussion continued as Founders Jess Rice and Jess Banes reviewed ethics, the importance of conservation, how hunting contributes to habitat and species conservation funding, and firearm safety.

During the event the attendees were also able to participate in a silent auction to purchase gear from [The Duck Huntress](#) and shop for gear from a fellow attendee and CEO of [On the Edge Outdoor Apparel Co.](#), Dawn Ledebor.

Jess Banes, VP



After a warm chili lunch sponsored by Delta County Waterfowl, we split into groups to observe a waterfowl dog demonstration and get hands-on experience with decoy placement, calling instruction and feedback while using our new calls (provided by Butler Co. DW), setting up blinds, and more firearm safety. We ended the day with some clay target practice, where participants practiced shooting from standing positions and while sitting in layout blinds.

Continued below

“

THERE'S ONLY TWO
KINDS OF PEOPLE
IN THE WORLD.
THOSE WHO LOVE
TO HUNT DUCKS
AND THOSE THAT
NEVER HAVE.

- RYAN GINGERICH

”





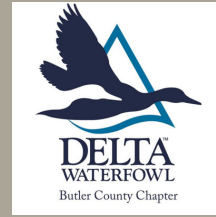
**MAIDENS, MALLARDS & MARSHES:
A WOMEN'S WATERFOWL EXPERIENCE**

Jess Banes, VP

Continued!

On Sunday it was time for our hunters to put their new knowledge into practice and hit the marsh. The crew fought absolute frigid temperatures, breaking ice to set decoys. Finally, we climbed into blinds and waited for that magical hour. Unfortunately, the waterfowl didn't cooperate on this particular morning, but the experience was amazing. No amount of duck limits could replace the camaraderie and companionship from this weekend. This outing taught everyone the very important lesson: that not every hunt is about the harvest; hunting is always about the memories you make along the way. This experience was truly about the bonds created between women who love the outdoors.

If you want to hear more about this amazing event, tune into the [Flatlander Podcast](#), recorded on site by KDWP R3 Coordinator, Tanna Fanshier.



**CHECK OUT OUR LATEST GEAR REVIEWS OVER AT
WOMEN'S OUTDOOR NEWS!**

JUL: GTM CC TOTE

AUG: CHAMA CHAIR

SEPT: BUSHNELL OUTDOORSMAN

OCT: ZEBCO 33 COMBO

NOV: SOUNDGEAR EAR PROTECTION

DEC: TIMBERHAWK BOW



Community Service Highlights

Several of the founders of wildHERness were recently accepted as volunteer Hunter Education Instructors in Kansas.

We are committed to the development of safe and ethical hunters, and are proud to report that in 2021 we contributed to the certification of nearly 45 women and youth in Kansas!

For more information on Hunter Education courses near you, click [here](#).



In September, we were honored to partner with [Artemis Sportswomen of Missouri](#), [Missouri Stream Team](#), and [Little Blue River Watershed Coalition](#) to help clean up a section of the Little Blue River in Kansas City, MO. This particular area is near a former racetrack. We pulled over 90 tires out of the Little Blue!



While much work remains to be done to restore the area, we made a significant dent in cleaning up a watershed that reaches most people residing in western Missouri. Thank you to all who volunteered to help strengthen our local waterways!



THE WOMEN OF WILDHERNESS BELIEVE IN CONTRIBUTING TO & STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES.

WE BELIEVE IN GIVING MORE THAN WE TAKE.

WE BELIEVE THAT BONDS ARE FORGED WHILE GIVING ENERGY TO A CAUSE GREATER THAN ONESELF.

WE BELIEVE THAT YOU MUST GIVE KNOWLEDGE AWAY. BECAUSE IT'S BETTER WHEN SHARED.

WE BELIEVE IN RESPECTING ALL BOUNTY THAT THE GREAT OUTDOORS OFFERS.

WE BELIEVE IN LEAVING WILD PLACES BETTER THAN WE FOUND THEM.



WHAT GOOD IS KNOWLEDGE IF NOT SHARED?

by Jenny Anderson

Imagine creating a world centered around offering educational outdoor opportunities you always wished you had learned earlier on in life, and making it accessible to the next generation!

What a world that would be – fortunately it's not just an idea! wildHERness is making that world real for all of us and the HuntHER Youth Whitetail Hunt is just one example of how! In partnership with Johnson County Pheasants Forever, a group of wildHERness mentors set out to teach two youth girls how to hunt Missouri Whitetail deer on youth weekend in November. In an effort to involve the whole family unit and effect longterm lifestyle changes, we included a parent of each hunter to teach them and set them up for success in fostering a love for the outdoors.

During our time at Deer Camp we learned about ground blind placement, scent control, deer movement, shot placement, refocusing after a missed shot, and luckily enough, one of our hunters was successful in harvesting a deer, so we had a hands-on opportunity to learn about whitetail deer anatomy through field dressing and quartering!

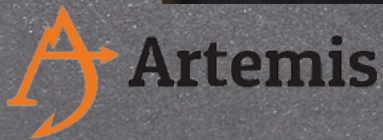
It's so rewarding to watch a first-time hunter go through each stage of the learning process – which for one hunter meant making a decision that she wasn't prepared to take a shot and to decide to watch a deer walk a feeding pattern rather than shoot and potentially wound the animal. Inevitably, with patience and trust in the process, another deer presented himself along the same feeding pattern and she was able to take that shot that we talked about and prepared for the day before. Although this wasn't a "textbook" hunt – she missed her first shot – this was a perfect first hunt, because she had two wildly supportive and capable mentors whispering to take a deep breath, reset in the scope, and pull the trigger again. This moment is not an experience I had as a young adult learning to hunt; while it wasn't intentional, it was pivotal in showing her how to reset in a moment and I hope a moment that lives with her forever as a reminder to simply try again!

Whether you're looking for an event geared towards a goal you set for yourself or something you want help teaching your child – wildHERness has the same desire to pass on a love for the outdoors – no experience needed!

Anyway, what good is knowledge if not shared?



Conservation Conversations



JOIN US

January 18

FOR THE NEXT
INSTALLMENT OF

*Conservation
Conversations*

AT TRANSPARENT
BREWING COMPANY
GRANDVIEW, MO

Featuring



Conservation Federation
MISSOURI

We can't think of a way to be better stewards to the natural world than to be engaged in and aware of local issues. The only legacy we can collectively pass on to future generations, the wild places, wild spaces, and wild things of the Great Outdoors are absolutely worth conserving.

To honor this belief, we created "Conservation Conversations: A Pint Night Series", in partnership with Artemis Sportswomen in Missouri. The bi-monthly series alternates between local breweries in Kansas and Missouri, giving women a chance to socialize, enjoy a craft brew (or not) and discuss new topics.

Discussion leaders will come from a variety of sources: state and local government organizations, conservation organization leaders, commissioners, legislators. Topics will range from policy updates, public lands management, wildlife biology, to local conservation efforts, resource awareness, ethics and regulations.

MEET OUR *Featured*

OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATE

DAN PARK

Scheels
Overland Park, KS

Dan works Scheels' hardline area (guns, hunting, fishing, archery, dog supplies and grills). He likes helping people find what they need so they can enjoy the outdoors as much as he does, and be able to share their success stories. "I am excited to see more women enjoying the outdoors. Women coming into Scheels for the first time should not be afraid to share their experience level so we can focus on their needs," he said.

Several of our wildHERness participants are familiar with Dan. Our first encounter was the day Sharenda decided she wanted waterfowl waders. Dan happened to be working that department and Sharenda advised that she was not purchasing that day, just researching to see what fit before she committed. Dan not only assisted her with the options in store, but also asked if he could have a new employee come assist for training purposes. He provided both Sharenda and the employee with very helpful options to consider, and she walked away happy. Several weeks later, she returned to the store to purchase her waders from Dan.

Many women in the area are familiar with "Dan at Scheels", and when asked about him, they always have smiles on their faces as they comment on his helpfulness. We see him involved with several outdoor events in the area, where he is usually smiling and partnered up with his wife, who is an active sporting shooter.

One thing we've noticed, no matter where our experiences take us, is that most women across the US have a story of a time where they walked into an outdoor retailer and were ignored, belittled, or intimidated. Or, even more degrading....asked if they were there to buy something for their husband.

Our new column is dedicated to those outdoor industry customer service associates that make sure you leave with a positive experience, and will highlight retail workers that share knowledge and respect us simply as outdoorswomen.



Thank you Dan!! You are a representative that leads by example and we hope Scheels knows just how much the women in your community appreciate the friendly, non-intimidating, and wildly informative customer service you provide.

huntHER

Our female youth mentored hunting program

In 2021, we were fortunate to mentor a LOT. We hosted youth at waterfowl, pheasant, and deer hunts. In the first year of HuntHER, wildHERness was able to connect with 12 first-time youth hunters.



HuntHER was made possible by three generous donors: Johnson County Pheasants Forever, TriStar Arms and Protect & Provide Coaching. We are proud to report that, with their support, we doubled our expected reach for the first year!





Observations of An Archery Instructor

By Marsha Riley

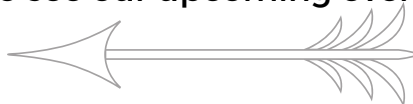
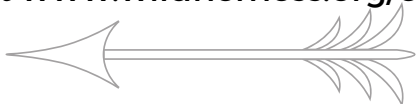
I love most things outdoors and attempt to spend as much time as possible there. As people who know me can attest, one of my deepest loves is teaching archery. I love to get people involved in this great sport. Over the years I have observed the following misconceptions that needed clarification for new sisters of the bow.



- You do not need the latest and greatest (and most expensive) equipment to learn and enjoy archery. Used gear is just fine if it has been inspected and is in good condition. You do need equipment that fits you and you should work with someone who knows what they are talking about when you gear up. If you want to hunt, and for most of us that means whitetails and turkeys, you do not need a 70 lb. bow to hunt. Nothing ruins the process faster than trying to manage a bow that you physically cannot handle. Bows that are too heavy can cause many bad habits.
- Work with an instructor that loves to teach. Find an instructor that is patient and understands new archers.
- Practice, practice, practice. Learn how to practice!! This is important!
- You do not have to be a hunter to enjoy archery. 3D shoots, various competitions, and archery as a social activity are other ways.
- Plan to fall in love with this ancient sport.

If you want to give archery a try, I would love to see you at one of our future classes!

Visit www.wildherness.org/events to see our upcoming events.





**Say
Hello!**



As we await the award of our federal 501(c)3 nonprofit status from the IRS, we are slowly building our board of directors. We are proud to introduce you to our first two board members, Marsha & Jess. The women of wildHERness are excited and thankful that they have embarked on this adventure with us!

"Marsha is an outdoorswoman from the Kansas City area. She has hunted and shot traditional archery for over 50 years, hunting everything from elk to rabbits with her longbows and recurves. She has been fortunate to have taken quite a few of those species of game with those "old fashioned" bows and is blessed to have had the ability to chase those species in many states and international locations.

Marsha enjoys camping, hiking and fly fishing with her partner Suzanne. Keeping up with their 8 children and 7 grandbabies as well as chasing their little dog Raggs and cat Floyd keeps them busy in their spare time. She also enjoys shooting shotguns, especially Sporting Clays with her girlfriends. Upland game hunting is another love, and she has been involved with that aspect of hunting since she was in high school.

Marsha has a degree in Forestry and Industrial Engineering from Iowa State University – class of 1973! She retired in 2015 although she still consults. Marsha Riley serves as the Director of Strategic Planning for wildHERness and uses her experience to help bring along the next generation of archers."



**Say
Hello!**



"Growing up in Minnesota I spent plenty of time outdoors, but had only fished occasionally and never opted to join my dad on a hunt. After college I began my career in public accounting and spent long hours during tax season inside an office. I craved more time in the outdoors and started making the effort to get outside to hike, paddle a canoe or snowshoe. I grew to love those activities, the change in seasons and how it made me feel."

I started to seek more outdoor opportunities, but my friends had other interests and my outdoorsy husband and I were working opposite shifts so I found it difficult and discouraging to do on my own. I thought there was too much to learn, too much gear and equipment needed and too much money to spend on something I wasn't sure I would even enjoy. Then I stumbled on the power of women helping other women! Meeting a group of women with shared passions was incredibly inspiring and gave me the confidence to continue pursuing outdoor adventures."

I currently reside in Northern Minnesota near the shores of Lake Superior with my husband and our dog Winston. I am a Certified Public Accountant working for a local non-profit. Prior to this I worked in public accounting for eight years and specialized in non-profits. I look forward to combining my professional knowledge and personal passions with wildHERness to provide outdoor experiences for women allowing them to see the possibilities and their own potential."

Upcoming Events 2022



2022 Lineup

INTRO TO BACKPACKING

FLY FISHING

PACK & PADDLE

SHOOTING SPORTS WEEKEND

BLACKSMITHING

GO WYLD

BOWFISHING

LEARN TO HUNT CAMPS

TENTS, TREKKING & TROUT

DUCK BANDING