

## Vertical Response May 18 2020

Hopefully this finds everyone well throughout the crazy last few months and weeks. Everyone in Alberta has been affected in one way or another with the Covid-19 virus, the tumbling price of oil and the related job losses in so many industries. If those two issues were not enough, we have had an unprecedented spring with lots of flooding and some very, very serious ones at that. Farmers who have crops from last fall to get off before they can get this year's seed in the ground. Producers who have little or no market for their products. Strains of all types on so many people. The ABA would like to wish everyone the best in these tough times and like all of you, hope for sunnier days ahead.

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, we sent a mail out to all of our 2019 membership as well as any new people who just joined the ABA in 2020. That mail out went to 1192 addresses. It is the first time we have ever done something like this but the executive felt that we had some very important information to share to the membership about some of the changes that will be coming as well as important information/announcements. These include changing to a digital/electronic newsletter from the printed/mailed copy. The change in our banquet format. The creation of a "Regulation Change/Bowhunting Opportunity Committee".

Below is the content from that mail out – many of you on this email list will have seen this. 95% of the current membership are on this email list.

In addition to the information from the mail out below:

- we are launching an online Facebook auction of some items (lots) that we would have had at the banquet. The thought is to raise some funds and move these items out of our personal storage LOL. The auction will be advertised starting May 25<sup>th</sup> and bidding starts for two one week periods June 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Make sure you check out our Facebook page – some awesome items up for bid!!!

- we were part of an online conference call May 1<sup>st</sup> with senior F&W staff and other stakeholders regarding the current CWD situation. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) continues to spread west and north in Alberta with prevalence rates increasing significantly in Mule Deer in many Wildlife Management Units (WMU's). F&W tested app 10,000 heads in 2019. Found positives in 10 NEW WMUs. Not good news. Look for some new management strategies for this fall. F&W will be providing the stakeholders with a summary of the meeting and we will circulate that to everyone, have on our website, Facebook page etc as it is made available.

*From the mail out:*

*This is the time of year that we ask everyone to **renew their membership** to the ABA. Check the mailing label of your last newsletter to see your expiry date. Your membership is very important to us as we not only offer unbelievable value for the dues you pay but we need your support to have the numbers that help make the ABA relevant when we attend the various government and stakeholder meetings defending and trying to expand bowhunting opportunities. Because of the struggles many people are having, we thought we would **offer a discount** on our one year adult single and one year family rates. If you are a member of one of our affiliated clubs, you are aware that you get a discounted rate for your ABA membership. We would like to offer that same discounted rate to "anyone" - \$26 for a one year adult (usually \$35) and \$60 for a one year family (usually \$70). **This discount is valid from May 1 to May 31, for any new members or ones who have to renew, not valid if you already are a 2020 ABA member.** We have never offered up a member discount before but we have never had times like these in Alberta's history.*

*For those of you who got the letter in the mail. Your expiry date is on the mailing label as well as your membership number (that never changes). That information is also on the last mailing label of the printed newsletter. If you have additional members in your household and are not sure when their membership expires, contact our membership chair Mike at [Mike@albertabowhunters.ca](mailto:Mike@albertabowhunters.ca).*

*It is very easy to take advantage of. Just go to our website [albertabowhunters.ca](http://albertabowhunters.ca) and click on membership to the online store. After a few quick easy steps you will get immediate email confirmation and have your membership. We hope this small token in some way eases the pain so many are suffering in these tough times.*

*The ABA has also experienced some difficulties during these times. We had to cancel our annual banquet due to the Covid Virus. We have had to delay our next Outdoor Adventures Raffle – only because we thought in these difficult and uncertain times that people have a lot more on their minds and bigger strain on their finances than buying a raffle ticket. The revenue we generate from the banquet and this raffle put a huge hole in our operating budget.*

*Over the last two years, we have debated at great lengths the “**Quarterly Newsletter**”. We recognize the value of this communication tool and what it means to the members. After a lot of consideration we decided at our Executive meeting April 22 to do the **newsletter “electronically”** and end the printed version. The biggest reason is strictly economics – the printed newsletter costs app \$4000-\$5000 per issue. It is a huge cost. We feel that going electronically (it will be available on the ABA Website and we will advertise that through our various communication tools (mass email list, Facebook, website announcements)) it will save the ABA huge dollars, allow us to maintain membership dues at the current rate (there has been no increase in dues for 20+ years) and use those dollars more efficiently and effectively in promoting bowhunting, archery and increasing opportunity. The next edition will be coming out very soon – look in your email Inbox for notification through “ABA News” (95% of our current membership are on our mass email list), our Facebook page, our website. Give us your thoughts on content – **we need your stories and pictures**. A concept we have thought of and asked for feedback on through a survey, was a printed “Yearbook” and we will certainly entertain that going forward. Your newsletter contact is [Gord@albertabowhunters.com](mailto:Gord@albertabowhunters.com). We hope everyone understands.*

*The Virus and cancellation of so many outdoor events that have people gathering has also affected the 3D archery circuit with most planned shoots being cancelled. The ABA has a “**3D Sponsorship Program**” whereby we donate money to our affiliated clubs to buy prizes and award them at their “bowhunting” themed shoot. With all the cancellations we have decided to cancel this program for this year and hope for better things in 2021.*

*We are once again changing up the **annual Banquet** format. We have struggled with volunteers for a bunch of years to put together and operate the banquet. Is a huge amount of work. We offered up a free banquet ticket and free banquet shirt for volunteers and we had a super response. But that really cuts into the profits – money that helps run the association. At the April 22 executive meeting, after lots of discussion we have decided to change things up.*

*A seminar(s) in the afternoon after the AGM. At the banquet we will offer up 4-5 prizes of a bigger nature thru card raffles. A 50/50 cash draw. Simple and easy. No silent auction. No bucket raffles. It took a huge amount of effort in shopping for the prizes (we bought 80%), the set up, the running of these auction formats, the cashing out etc etc and we make very little if any money. Feedback from the membership has been “the more time for visiting the better”. We have supper and then do our 3D and Game Award Presentations. After that, we open up for the “Social” which has been a huge success. We will still pass out Goodie Bags to the youngsters and do the draw for the Youth Bow. This format will take way less volunteer effort, we drop the free ticket/shirt promo, generate some more profit, and everyone (even those who still will work the banquet) will have more fun!!*

*Trying to **expand bowhunting opportunities** has always been a key component of the ABA. Since 2009 the ABA has been a key part of the now named Alberta Game Policy Advisory Council that is made up of stakeholder groups and senior wildlife managers. We meet a minimum of two times a year but communicate regularly. We have put a new mechanism in place to hopefully increase the number of ideas we get about regulation change and how to improve or increase bowhunting opportunity. To that end, we have put together a “Committee” under the Regulations Chairman whose main goal is to generate ideas for regulation change, anything that increases bowhunting opportunities and the focus of this committee is to action those ideas and keep the process moving. We are looking for ideas and help on this committee from the general membership – contact the Committee chair Cam Foss [Camf@albertabowhunters.com](mailto:Camf@albertabowhunters.com) if you would like to help out. Very important stuff.*

*One piece of good news is that the Alberta Government has deemed that anyone with a valid/current bear hunting license will be **exempt from any quad bans**. That means we will be allowed to use a quad while hunting bears just like outfitters, trappers, First Nations people are allowed if any such ban is put in place. Make sure you do your due diligence and be extra careful. We do not want to have government change their mind because of some incident caused by a bear hunter.*

*We are continually working on **updating the ABA Bylaws and Policy**. To make it current and efficient and effective. These documents are what guide the executive in making decisions – without them the Association cannot function. We will be having more change proposals to be voted on by the membership at the 2021 AGM (which will be in Nisku March 27<sup>th</sup>).*

*Along the same lines, we are currently drafting up our own “ABA Rules of Fair Chase” and “ABA Game Award Entry Requirements” – just so that everything that we have now is all in one specific document that everyone can easily access and understand.*

On behalf of your ABA Executive, we thank you for your past support and hope for the best for everyone out there in these trying times. If anyone has any questions or comments do not hesitate to contact me.

[Brent@albertabowhunters.com](mailto:Brent@albertabowhunters.com)

780-978-1195

Brent

2020 ABA President