

Vertical Response Mass Email June 23 2021

Bear season is over and there has been an incredible number of big bears (those over 20") taken this year. Reasons?? Could be the fact that resident bear license sales jumped substantially from 4744 in 2019 to 6018 in 2020 – a 26% increase!! For 2021 the number dropped slightly to 5853 but still well above the 2019 totals. More hunters in the field usually means more success. Because outfitters have not had non-resident clients for two years and resident bear hunters have taken advantage of their services likely influenced the number of big bears taken. COVID created a great deal of free time for many people and outdoor activities saw a huge increase in participation – many for the first time. Meat shortages and the fact people were wanting to get their own meat saw a huge number of people hunting bears for their meat. That trend has been happening for several years and will see a change in the hunting regulations whereby bear hunters will now be required to take the hide OR the meat OR both. Should be interesting to see how many bears are entered into the ABA Game Awards Program this coming year!!

The draws need to be in by June 24 – don't forget!!!! Lots of great opportunities and we are the envy of most jurisdictions in North America for the number of different species we can hunt and the length of many of our seasons. Take advantage of that!!

In your mailbox (for the current 2020 and 2021 members only) by the end of June, you will be getting the very first **"ABA Yearbook"**. We had gone to electronic newsletters to save considerable costs but thought an annual printed Yearbook would be worth doing to get a physical product into our member's hands. Gord Nuttall led the way with this project from the preliminary draft idea, working with our printer, contacting potential advertisers, doing all the layout and design. The Yearbook is 96 pages! In full Color!! Has member profiles, the ABA year in review, lots of features, the complete Game Awards entries from this past year and TONS of pictures!!! Just an incredible product and we are sure you will be very impressed.

Put pen to paper and send in your stories to Gord (Gord@albertabowhunters.com) for the next edition in the spring of 2022!!

To make sure you get the second Yearbook, join the ABA today. Very easy to do on the website (albertabowhunters.ca). Additional benefits are insurance coverage, eligibility into the Game Awards Program, our ABA 3D Sponsorship Program, a voice in meetings with other stakeholders and government, our annual banquet!! Extremely good value for \$35 a year – the cost of a single adult membership.

Our latest raffle offering the opportunity to **"Build Your BC Dream Hunt"** with Compass Mountain Outfitters is nearing the draw date (July 7) and we are at 57% sold for tickets. This is a very unique raffle in that you have a \$10000 credit towards a variety of packages that they offer. You can pick an archery moose hunt, an elk hunt, a cougar/lynx hunt, a trip for two people to hunt black bears or a group of four people can enjoy an eco-tourism trip (fishing, kayaking, hiking etc). The \$10000 will cover all expenses for those trips. OR you can take that credit and put it towards a mountain goat hunt, an elk/moose combo trip, anything else that suits your fancy. All you have to do is cover the difference.

We have had several other "hunt" raffles and this may be the last one we will do for a while. With COVID restrictions relaxing and the international borders re-opening, every outfitter we have had talks with indicate that because of having to move already booked clients to future years and with the high demand for their services from people not being able to do international hunts the last few years, that they are booked up for 2-3-4 years out already. There likely will not be open spots to fit in a raffle winner if we do another raffle of this type. Will take some years to create a spot that will make it attractive for people to buy raffle tickets. *This is your chance to go on a great outfitted trip!!* Great odds!!

Tickets are only \$20 each. Available online at albertabowhunters.ca (follow the link on the homepage – buy in our online store and receive immediate email confirmation with your ticket stubs mailed out the same day) or by contacting Brent at Brent@albertabowhunters.com or calling 780-978-1195.

Proceeds from our raffles offset the costs of our Game Awards Program, the Yearbook, our 3D Sponsorship Program, youth initiatives and help keep our membership dues very, very affordable.

This raffle is open to any Canadian resident – ONLY those living in Alberta can purchase tickets online. If you live outside of Alberta you have to physically buy your ticket when in Alberta. For complete raffle rules see our website or contact Brent.

The **presentation our Game Awards** Chair Kyle Sinclair-Smith put together to showcase the winners of last year's program was outstanding and we got a great deal of positive feedback. We also had people joining the ABA once they seen what this program offered. Great job Kyle!!

When you are thinking of entering anything into the program whether it is for one of your achievement levels or for the annual awards, look at using the **online submission forms** (for big game or small game). It is extremely easy – asks for the same info that is on the “paper” entry form. If the entry has an official “score” attached to it, you must upload the required ABA form, completed B&C or P&Y scoresheet. Attach some pictures. Hit “submit” and it is done. Makes for much less work on our end and is much easier to add to the database.

We have been extremely lucky in having such great **sponsors for our Game Awards Program**. The sponsorship started in 2013 – is a five year term at \$200 a year (or lump sum of \$1000). Existing sponsors are given first dibs on renewing their sponsorship at the end of the term. We have 18 awards sponsored thru 2013 and have two remaining sponsorship openings (the Big Game Award (bowhunters take 3 big game species/receive a certificate) and the Game Management Award (a draw made from all antlerless entries/receive a custom hat). If you are interested or know of anyone who would like to sponsor one of the open awards, let Kyle (gameawards@albertabowhunters.com) or Brent (Brent@albertabowhunters.com) know.

We have made arrangements with an Edmonton based company (Scatched It) that will offer to members whisky glasses, beer-steins and other **glassware for people who want them in recognition for any of their award entries**. Just email Jen at: scratched-it@shaw.ca.

She has the ABA logo and would just need the Hunters name, species and score. All purchases are direct between scratched-it and members.

The idea is to commemorate game award entries and build a glassware set over the years. A member could even build the set on their own using each P&Y entry towards their Grande Master!

Beer steins are \$25 and all other glass wear is \$20.

Please Note: The fees and arrangements are between the person ordering and the business only. The ABA is not responsible for anything regarding this offer.

We have been working on some **Regulation Change** ideas and have three completed and ready to take to government/stakeholder meetings for consideration.

They include an early start to archery seasons, allow Sunday hunting in the 100 WMU series and an adjustment (upward) to the bowhunter harvest share. If you want further details, have any questions, want to make a suggestion or have an idea about other regulation changes or increasing bowhunting opportunities, contact our committee chair Cam Foss at CamF@albertabowhunters.com.

We are looking for a few more volunteers to serve on a **committee that will help revise the Bowhunting component of Alberta Hunter Education Instructors Association's Hunter Ed manual**. AHEIA is undertaking a total update/revision of their manual and we have offered our services on the Bowhunting section. Once AHEIA gets to that point they will contact us and we will get involved. Contact Brent (Brent@albertabowhunters.com) if you would like to help out.

In the last mass email I sent out, I missed mentioning when talking about the elections that **Cam Johnson is our new Secretary**. Cam has been on the executive for a few years as one of our Directors at Large. At our next AGM in 2022 in Calgary (and because of COVID not allowing us to have elections) we will be having a full slate of elections to catch up with our Bylaw requirements. If you would like to get involved on the ABA Executive, that would be a great time to step up.

Good luck in the draws!! Pick up a few raffle tickets!! Let us know what you think of the Yearbook – or anything else about the ABA.