

**Being an active member of a Trapper's Association**  
**Article from Sep - Oct 2000 Buckeye Trapper**  
**by Michelle L. Richards**

Editors Note: The OSTA wishes to congratulate Michelle L. Richards, who is this year's winner of the \$500.00 "Charles L. Dobbins Memorial Scholarship"! The following article is her winning essay on the topic of "What are the benefits and advantages of belonging to a Trapper's Association and the importance of being an active member?"

Michelle's grandfather, William E. Frey who is a member of the OSTA, is her sponsor. Michelle is majoring in early childhood education at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio where she is a junior. After graduation her plans are to become a teacher.

It is important for people to participate in what they believe in. Being an active person in our world today is one way to become aware of the activities that are occurring and available about your interests. Many people who are oblivious to the world around them, are unable to understand why things work the way they do. An example of being involved in your community and the activities it supports is belonging to a Trapper's Association. There are many benefits and advantages to becoming an active member to this association.

#### Participation

Being able to participate in your beliefs and interests is an important part of understanding the world today. Trapper's Associations are able to give people that opportunity. You are able to be involved with the other members and major decision-making processes. It also allows you to be up-to-date on many new ideas and equipment. Participating can be as simple as being current on the trends and rules, or as involved as serving on a committee or writing for the magazine. It is your choice for the level of involvement that you would like to participate at. The main point to remember is that participation in what you believe in shows support.

#### Involvement

Many times Trapper's Associations have committees that members can reside on. By doing this, you are able to be involved in decisions that may be made about rules or new regulations for trapping. This is an important and resourceful duty that will enable you to learn more about this sport. Just like any other sport, involvement is one of the main ways that you learn more and increase your ability in the sport. By being involved and residing on the committees you may be able to change some of the things that you do not agree with. You are also able to make some things better. Committee members act on what they experience and feel. This is the main way to making plans go into action and getting tasks accomplished. Being a part of the decision making team is a major benefit to belonging to a Trapper's Association because you are given the inside track to many ideas.

#### New Ideas and Equipment

Trapper's Associations release articles in magazines about new equipment or procedures that are tested to work the best overall. By belonging to a Trapper's Association you are able to gain useful information that you will be able to use to your advantage. This also insures that you are up-to-date in the newest trends to enhance your ability at this sport. Many times you are able to get better deals on equipment and new products by being a member. You are also given the opportunity to share some of your thoughts or ideas with other trappers. This allows the communication between trappers to grow and become strong. It creates a trustworthy group of people with similar interests.

#### Community of Friends

Trapper's Associations allow you to have a community of friends that enjoy the same ideas that you do. This is a way to exchange information about ideas, the best trapping sports, or just friendly thoughts. Information about different contests, activities or shows can also be exchanged through this group so that everyone is given opportunities for involvement and can gain knowledge. Without a Trapper's Association, many people would be left alone to figure out their own techniques and ideas. Through this group people are given more opportunity to collaborate.

The community that is created is a group involved in the same interests, and understands the ways trapping is most beneficial to our society. This community is then able to help the rest of the world understand the many benefits of trapping and belonging to Trapper's Association.

### Education

Educating other people about trapping is a major goal in our world. By belonging to a Trapper's Association you will be able to learn the rules, regulations, rights, and wrongs of trapping. These things will help you understand the benefits of trapping. This will help you educate others about how trapping is good for our economy, food chain, and the general population of people. Being educated allows people to accept different points of view or different ideas that they may not ordinarily support. If they are able to obtain the knowledge about different ideas then they will be more accepting. This is the main reason that educating people about trapping is important.

### Economy

By having an understanding of trapping you can help educate people about how it helps our economy. Trapping helps keep the cost down on furs and animal products that are used around the world. By belonging to a Trapper's Association you are able to be an active member in the stimulation of our economy and help it grow. This is important because we need animals to help our world remain stable. If we have trappers in our country, then we are cutting down on dependence of other countries for furs and animal resources. This helps stimulate our country's economy.

### Food Chain

The food chain is also affected by trapping. Many times there are an abundance of certain kinds of animals in our world. Trapper's Association's are able to help keep the food chain balanced by setting limits on the number of animals you are allowed to catch. This ensures that all animals will be able to have food. This can also work the other way around. Trapper's Associations also help keep the number of animals down when there is abundance. Trapping helps to keep the balance of the food chain.

### Population of People

Population is also affected by trapping. Trapper's Associations set different seasons for trapping. An example of this is during farming seasons. If there are too many raccoons then all of the crops will get destroyed and eaten by them. Trapper's Associations help to keep this from happening. One current event that is occurring is that raccoons are getting rabies. If the raccoons are not kept at low numbers right now, then many other animals will get rabies and other diseases. This will affect farmers, gardeners, and the fur population. It becomes a trickle down effect.

### Conclusion

Belonging to a Trapper's Association has numerous benefits to its members. Participation, community, and

education are not the only benefits to belonging to a Trapper's Association, they are just the ones highlighted in this paper. It is important to be involved in your interests and to share the ideas with other people. This helps you stay current on trends and resources about your interests. It also enables you to feel comfortable in educating others about your beliefs. Most importantly it shows your support for your interests and sport in trapping.