



# Frank Barnitz

State Senator — District 16



Column For Week of: April 6, 2009

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## Youth Turkey Hunting Season Marked by Special Event

With the legislative session in full swing, it is certainly a busy time here in Jefferson City. This is why it was so enjoyable last weekend when I had the opportunity to change focus slightly and spend time with some first-time youth turkey hunters. These youngsters were invited to attend the first Governor's Invitational Youth Turkey Hunt. As one of the chairs of the Missouri Legislative Sportsman's Caucus, I was pleased to participate in and coordinate the successful event.

In Missouri, we are blessed with a variety of sporting opportunities, and citizens in this state, including our youth, are enthusiastic in taking advantage of these many resources. Missouri leads the nation in hunter recruitment with an average 1.6 new hunters for every one lost, and events like the Invitational Youth Turkey Hunt foster this growth.

The hunt took place from April 4-6 and started on Friday afternoon with a special seminar to introduce the participants to their guides and to demonstrate shotgun patterning, discuss hunting regulations and provide hunter safety instruction. The kids, their guides and family members began at 4 a.m., Saturday morning, with individual hunts throughout the region.

On Saturday evening, the Sportsman's Caucus joined several other organizations in sponsoring a banquet to celebrate the event and congratulate the young hunters on their first day out. The event was attended by Missouri conservation officials, the families of the hunters, other members of the Sportsman's Caucus and the governor. We also had the opportunity to meet and hear from Alex Rutledge, an accomplished turkey, deer, elk, and predator caller from Birch Tree.



*Sen. Barnitz talks with Alex Rutledge at the event.*

Participating youth hunters visited Jefferson City from throughout the state and were selected by their local National Wild Turkey Federation chapters and the Missouri Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus. The hunters were: Charlie Boschert, age 11, and Jack Boschert, age 10, of Florissant; Levi Chew, age 11, of Fulton; Thomas Copeland, age 11, of



Kirkville; Garrett Jazenboski, age 15, of Chillicothe; Tori McAfee, age 11, of Winona; Chris Payeur, age 11, of Florissant; Cade Pendergraft, age 12, of Cassville; Laura Richards, age 10, of Columbia; and Morgan Robb, age 12, of Warrenton. Tori McAfee was successful in harvesting a jake in Miller County on Sunday morning.

*The governor, youth hunters, Sportsman's caucus leadership, and other officials at the banquet on Saturday evening.*

As an avid sportsman myself, I really enjoyed seeing these young hunters enjoy the trip, and I hope it

becomes an annual event. For all the adults out there, I want to remind you that the regular spring turkey season runs April 20-May 10. More information can be obtained online at [www.mdc.mo.gov](http://www.mdc.mo.gov) or by contacting your local conservation office. For Osage, Maries, Montgomery, and Gasconade counties the number is (573) 884-6861; for Dent, Phelps, and Pulaski the number is (417) 256-7161 and hunters in Crawford County can call (636) 441-4554.

For more pictures of the event, visit my website to view a slideshow of images from the banquet on Saturday night. This is located at [www.senate.mo.gov/barnitz](http://www.senate.mo.gov/barnitz).

## **Contact Me**

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to call me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2108. You can also write to the address listed below.

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