

training on how to trap. It focuses on the methods of humane trapping, the code for responsible trapping which involves primarily Fish and Wildlife regulations and standards for respecting private property, furs (grades, colours, damages and more), traps and trap setting, furbearer biology and management, fur handling equipment, pelt preparation, and diseases and parasites of fur bearing mammals. Survival in the bush is considered an important skill, should trappers become stuck in a trap or if their snowmachine breaks down, so tips on orientation and building a lean-to, are presented in the course.

They're all topics, still fresh in Shaun's mind. With his newly acquired trapper's license and his trapper's helper designation, Shaun traverses Jack's large trapline from the former Highway 69 to Blackstone Lake following the hydro line onto Healey Lake Road east back onto Highway 69, earning points to qualify for the line.

To get a registered trapline, trappers work on a point system, where factors such as proximity of residence to the trapline, and number of years experience are taken into consideration.

Shaun merits one point per year, up to ten years, as a helper, and needs 12 points to qualify to take over Mr. Johnson's line. The pair anticipate the transfer will transpire in less than ten years.

Traplines, unless located in isolated areas, are not easy to come by.

Without a line, trappers can trap on their own property or with written permission, on a friend's farm, which Mr. Johnson says, is pretty much how they all started out at one time.

No fee is charged for the line, as trappers are assisting the province in controlling species on the property, as well as providing useful information to the Ministry of Natural Resources about the health of fur bearing species under concern.

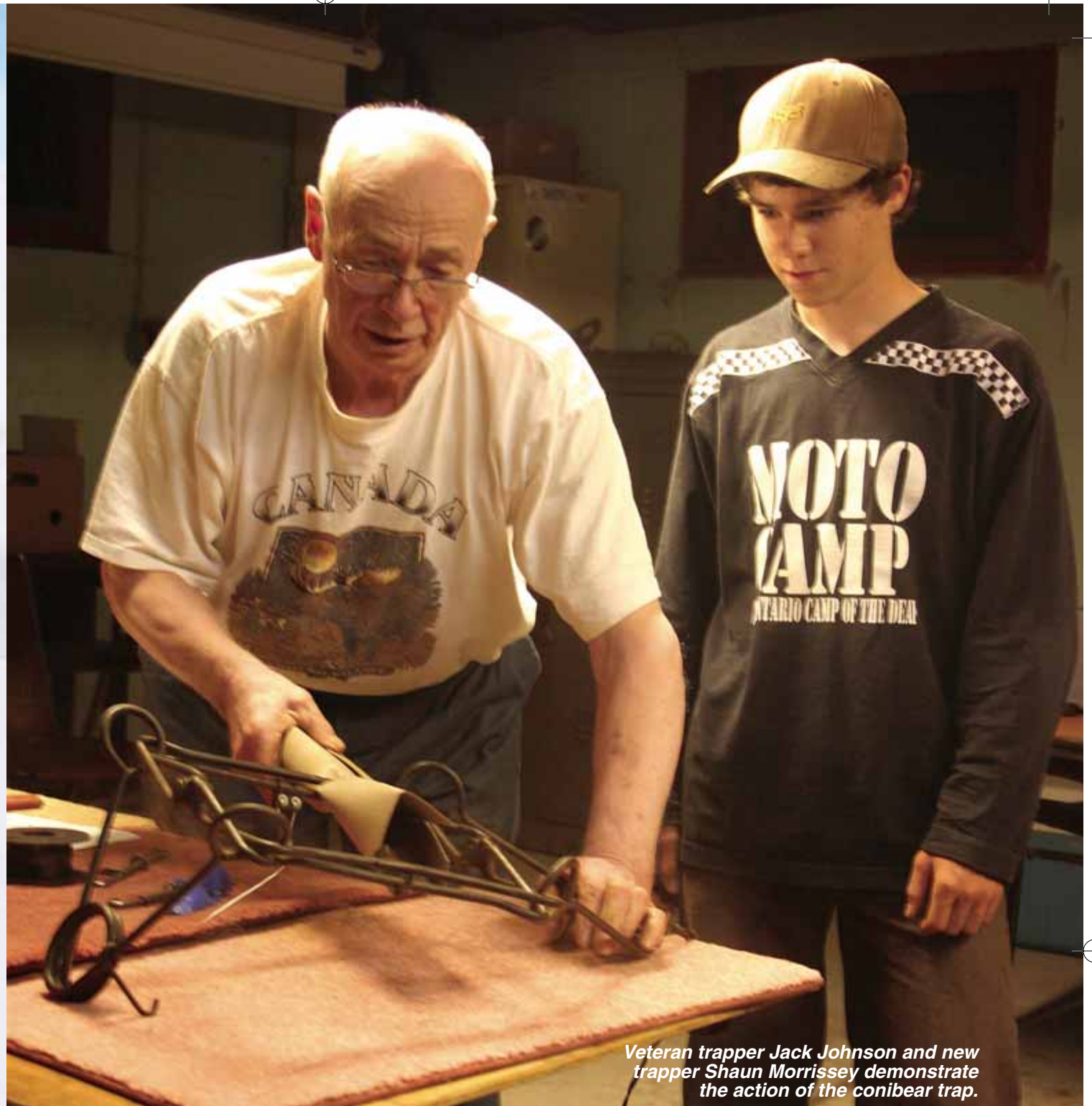
"But when you do get a trapline, you have a quota system - like my beaver quota on my trapline is 40 and I have

to take 75 per cent or otherwise, come up with a real good reason why I didn't take 75 per cent of that quota - because they've got to be controlled - beaver can be very devastating," says Mr. Johnson. "It's quite a process."

Shaun, who resides in the town of Parry Sound, feels fortunate to have access to a trapline for trapping, while his mentor anticipates a peace of mind in passing his trapline to him.

Mr. Johnson figures that even after handing the line over to Shaun, he'll be welcome on it for as long as he's around. And without a doubt, much sentimental significance is being transferred with it.

"I have the peace of mind knowing my line is in good hands," he says.



Veteran trapper Jack Johnson and new trapper Shaun Morrissey demonstrate the action of the conibear trap.

"As long as I'm still able to move I can come up with a lot of advice and help."

"I'll need it" notes Shaun.

Actually, they expect they'll make quite a team with Shaun gathering and Jack skinning the pelts.

"I want to show Shaun the

good spots on the trapline this winter, and once he starts bringing the beaver in, I can skin them - nothing says I have to go out there all the time."

So this winter, they'll be out as much as they can - the slow mentoring veteran, full of wisdom - and his eager protégé. ❄️

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