

WOODS 'N WATER™

SEPTEMBER 2024

47TH YEAR 2ND ISSUE

\$3.99

BUCK
OF THE
YEAR
EDITION

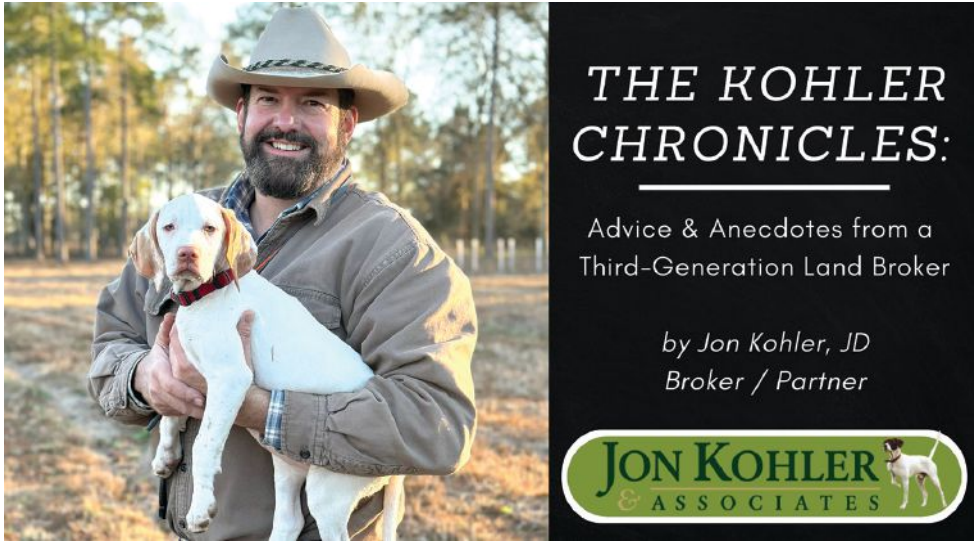
200-Inch
Volusia Co.
Monster

Gulf Gag
Grouper
Opens

The Right
to Hunt

Fishing
Reports





Hunters and other ‘One Percenters?’

by Jon Kohler

Lately, it seems that in the increasing craziness of today’s world, I have been spending time refocusing on core beliefs. The reason is because they are under attack or called into question daily. Anything that has its basis in the Bible is the common denominator.

Back in law school, we would debate like it was a sport. It was akin to arguing but with a common set of rules or ethics that we all understood and followed. We used logic, not feelings. There was one “truth,” not everyone’s individual changing “truth,” and facts couldn’t randomly be changed either. Lying or being deceptive meant you in-

stantly lost. That’s not how it works today.

One of the things I am having issues with is finding the “good” that has become the new “green” movement. Landowners, managers and hunters are America’s true conservation heroes. They are the “boots on the ground” spending their own time and money and loving what they do. Everything they do matters. Logically, one would think their input would carry the most weight. It doesn’t. The Environmental Industrial Complex does.

I’ve had the benefit of solar at Lick Skillet for over a decade and love it. With that being said, it’s on a roof or two. It’s

not covering thousands of acres of habitat or fertile farmland. I just read about a new solar power “farm” covering 10,000 contiguous acres!

In my business, we have a saying that if we can’t point out someone being dishonest, they lose. To me, I can’t in good conscience call it an industrial solar farm. These solar “farms” are no more a “farm” than the Nevada “Bunny Ranch” is a ranch.

By the way, I have clients that have sold to them. Once encumbered, the title of these “farms” is like a hot potato. Few want to own the dirt underneath them as it’s widely believed they will be a toxic cleanup debacle. What they will be in 30 years when they reach the end of their life cycle out is anybody’s guess. I am told the industrial clean-up and chemical pollution is going to yet again spawn an entirely new industry, certainly one at the taxpayers’ expense.

It seems like if God did it, there are a lot of people that have issues with it. Despite modern discoveries and improved science, only about 30% of Americans today believe the Great Flood. To me, finding oyster fossils at an elevation of 5,300 feet at our old ranch at Fishtail, Montana only reconfirms climate change as mentioned in the Bible.

Speaking of oysters, I am quite confident that the mullet, oysters, crabs, catfish, wild hogs and a lot of other things I was raised to eat as a Florida Cracker wouldn’t be found on any Biblical menu despite how long anyone wondered around in the wilderness.

That being said, I am not ready to stop frying my fresh mullet with a propane burner to save the planet as my friends on the left side of the aisle are now very concerned about.

I am 100% sure that cooking using natural gas and banning it isn’t America’s biggest problem right now. It doesn’t surprise me the current presi-



ASHTON PROUDLY DISPLAYS A TILAPIA, the fish believed by many scholars to be the same type that Jesus used to feed the 5,000, as recounted in all four Gospels.

dent is mumbling about banning cooking with natural gas as well as banning my gas-driven AR-15s.

I have had cattle for a good part of my life. Florida has had cattle for over 500 years, and it is ingrained in our culture. Prior to that, we had bison, mammoths and a host of other grazing creatures. Today, despite these other animals being mostly gone, the gas from the cattle that expels naturally is also increasingly alarming. Enough so, that an old-fashioned “gas tax” is being considered to rein and save the environment from “climate change.”

The biggest problem I have with cows came from an SRWMD board meeting. The chairman of the board was none other than Don Quincey, who is

(Continued on next page)

L&W Venison

Alligator & Deer Processing

We Process, Buy and Sell Alligator
Also Offering Domestic Slaughter Services
(Hogs • Cow • Sheep)

Hamburger • Smoked Sausage • Summer Sausage
Cubing • Steaks • Trophy Caping
Vacuum Packaging (for added freshness & freezer life)
Processing for Hunters by Hunters
Taxidermy Dropoff & Pickup

Bow Season Hours: Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm & 7pm-9pm
Saturday & Sunday, 9am-12pm & 7pm-9pm.
Muzzleloading/General Gun Hours: 8am-8pm
After Hours Dropoff Call Trent, 850-253-5525

Located at 592 Harvey Green Dr. - Jesse Hughey Industrial Park
MADISON, FL • 850-973-3655

Cracker Sawmill and D & J Lumber

Rough and Milled Lumber

**Buy Direct
and Save!**

352-529-2070

**Cypress & Pine
Tongue & Groove
Siding**

Old Growth Reclaimed

'It's a strange world we live in... and getting stranger'

(Continued from previous page)
now in the Agricultural Hall of Fame.

I was representing a landowner who had a cattle ranch with a conservation easement on it. Completely out of decorum and without being recognized by the chair, a lady stood up and started railing on about how "cows were individually drinking 700 gallons of spring water a day" and destroying the conservation lands. Don was a gentleman, let her yell her peace, and after a time, she finally quit interrupting others.

That's when it struck me that perhaps God made a huge mistake. The first one I had ever noticed. What if she was right? Instead of designing an animal that drinks 23-30 gallons of infertile spring water, then by miraculous design distributes nutrients plants need and waters them at the same time, they should be redeploying 700 gallons!

I don't think this was the point the crazy lady was trying to make. By burning only a little "natural gas," they both irrigated and fertilized H₂O making them better than any mobile pivots! To me, that would be the perfect "Six-minute abs" moment.

She was in the minority here, and God didn't make a mistake. The mistake I used to make was thinking hunters were in the majority. It seemed to me that everyone hunts, many to an almost professional level. I remember one of my clients telling me he was "taking the day off." What he really meant was that he wasn't going hunting that day.

My core business is based on advising those who buy hunting lands. Few people know that in Florida, hunters don't even amount to 1% of the population. Now that's a minority. In fact, it's only 0.9%.

As a hunting advocate for the 1%, I was thinking wouldn't it be nice if we had an opportunity to open the Olympics our way? Give us a chance like other minorities. Heck, I thought archery and shooting are actually events. The "James Bond" guy from Turkey, who shoots like Ian Flemming himself taught him, seems pretty cool.

I envisioned a committee well represented by Perry and Thomasville. Perhaps we could shoot the doves at the opening ceremony with our diverse set of retrievers at our side. We have "English" pointers, "German" shorthairs, "French" Brittanys, all of which sound like they would be inclusive for both the DEI and the NRA crowd.

I sent the article in to the editors, late. Then I woke up. Could I be dream-

ing? The first thing I saw posted on Facebook was the past Olympic sport of "100-meter running deer!" Yes, shooting offhand at both a 100-meter and 50-meter running deer target used to be a sport. Maybe there is hope.

I will dare go here, swallow my pride, and compare Florida to California and New Jersey, both of which only have 0.7%. I sell a lot of hunting land in Alabama, and thank goodness, they are at 9%, Georgia is at 6.7% and South Carolina is at 4%.

One place where Florida really outperformed California is its ability to prevent wildfires, and that means restoring fire to its natural place. This is because between the state and a private volunteer army, Florida annually burns more land than anywhere in the world at 2,000,000 acres or about 5% of its land mass. Georgia is a close second.

Some folks, a lot of them Californians, can't get past the fact that fire is as natural as rain. Few people know that right now, in Washington, DC, many are doing everything they can to stop us from using prescribed fire because of concern that smoke causes "global warming or climate change."

To me, this is just as crazy as getting mad at a cow drinking water. California actually has the same type of pyrogenic communities as Florida.

However, unlike here, they tried to subdue, not work with nature and failed miserably. Natural communities, like what's found in most of Florida's uplands, actually expect and require fire to be healthy as much as other places look forward to urinating cows. Smoke is just as natural a byproduct of a living healthy ecosystem the same as mist and wet grass after a summer rain.

Sometimes, I have buyers who have never been around fire, and they just don't understand. The analogy I found that makes the most impact is I tell them that all living things have a bowel movement. The land too is alive, unless it's turned into a parking lot. It's best to be regular. You can artificially hold it back, but if you're alive, you're going to have one, there are no exceptions. You might as well do it in a consistent and natural manner and not artificially try to hold it back lest it turn into an uncontrolled, explosive event that makes a mess everywhere.

Even the Californians quickly get this analogy. What I didn't know until recently, is that like our flood and hurricane insurance, there, lenders require wildfire insurance. I serve on the board



"GAS-POWERED COWS" - Cows are like nature's mobile irrigation and fertilization system, proving that The Creator's designs are always right on the money.

of Landleader and see firsthand how expensive it is, and getting fire insurance is turning into a big problem for landowners in other areas of the country.

We don't have that problem here in the South thanks to our private "army" of well-trained and heavily-regulated landowners and managers who work and take risks on their own dime to make both their lands and all of our cities and

towns safe. These are the true green heroes.

It's a strange world we live in and getting stranger by the day. The Bible says this will happen. The debating rules we played by back in law school are long gone now. Something else took its place. It's hard to imagine the intense pressure to make Florida California or to make the rest of America California.

2 Guys

Gun & Knife Shows



**FREE PARKING!
CWP CLASSES!**

**No Loaded
Firearms Allowed!**

Sept. 7-8 • Port Charlotte, FL
Charlotte Co. Fairgrounds
2333 El Jobean Rd.
2.5 mile West of US 41 off Hwy 776
Sat. 9-5, Sun 9-3

Sept. 21-22 • Sarasota, FL
Robarts Arena Building
3000 Ringling Blvd.
Sat. 9-5, Sun 9-3 • 4 miles west of I-75
(Exit 210) off Fruitville Rd.

October 12-13 • Largo, FL
Largo Event Center (Minnreg Bldg)
6340 126th Ave.
Sat. 9-5, Sun 9-3 • .5 mile South of
Ulmerton Rd., Just East of 66th St.



**Concealed Weapons Classes held
Saturday at 2pm & Sunday at 1pm**



Call for Vendor Rates or More Information
Guy Lemakos, 727-776-3442
www.2GuysShows.com