

# News

## Students still have plenty of deer hunting options

**Ashby Kee**

Guest Writer

The opening day of deer season for archery kicked off Sept. 28, and the muzzleloader and gun opening days are quickly approaching.

Some students at UTM have a hard time adjusting to the lack of hunting while in college. Little do they realize, however, that they do not have to give up their passion for hunting while being away from home.

As a hunter, being away from the land that is regularly hunted during deer seasons can be very frustrating, but it does not mean that hunting isn't possible.

So what is a poor college student to do? The answer starts with the gear. A student can visit many different places in and around Martin to help gear them up for the big hunting trip.

Final Flight in Union City, the local Wal-Mart and even Rural King can be great places to start. Regardless of what store is chosen, each one offers a wide variety of sporting goods.

Each store sells different arrays of both rifle and bow hunting gear



Photo Credit / TWRA

that can be used. Hunters can also save money by bringing pre-owned gear from home.

Hunting clothing is even sold at the stores, and one can be decked out from head to toe in camouflage for very little money. Guns and bows can be bought at Wal-Mart or Final Flight.

Students need to remember that

weapons aren't allowed on the UTM campus. If a weapon needs to be stored, it must be checked in and out of Public Safety in Crisp Hall.

Once students have their own gear and weapons, they must decide on where to hunt.

"The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) manages a large number of areas across the state that are open to the public for hunting. TWRA also has information on U.S. Fish and Wildlife areas that are open for hunting," said Dr. Philip Smartt, an Associate Professor of Natural Resources Management.

"Public hunting is also available at Land Between the Lakes (LBL) and the Milan Arsenal. All these areas do have special requirements. Before going out, those interested should go to the web pages for TWRA, LBL and/or the Milan Arsenal and research the location they are interested in and what is required to hunt on these sites."

He also stresses exercising safety when hunting on public lands.

"Hunting on public lands requires you to be extra cautious. You will be sharing the woods with

other folks, and ignoring safety rules can bring tragedy. If it is your first time into a particular area, I strongly recommend going with someone who knows it and who is safe. They can help you have a positive experience and hopefully, a successful hunt," Smartt said.

Once a deer is harvested, it must be checked in. The TWRA now offers online tagging options at [www.twracheckin.com](http://www.twracheckin.com).

They also have a mobile site available, [gotwra.org](http://gotwra.org). If all else fails, game can always be checked in at a traditional check-in station. After checking in the harvest, a hunting college student faces another problem: processing. What can a student do with the harvested meat?

There are many processors around Martin, such as Kauffman's Processing and Birdwell Deer Processing. Yoder Brother's Processing also processes deer, and they are located between Martin and Paris. Birdwell's, Yoder Brothers and Kauffman's all accept Hunters for the Hungry Donations. The Tennessee Wildlife Federation's Hunters for the Hungry program connects

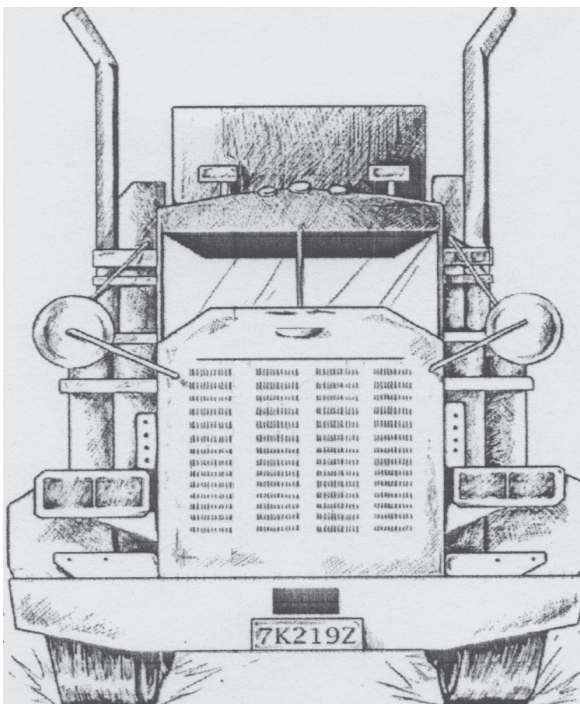
deer hunters and deer processors to help address the ever-increasing problem of hunger in Tennessee.

Hunters donate properly field-dressed deer at a processor who participates in Hunters for the Hungry. The donated venison is then prepared, packaged and distributed to food banks and soup kitchens to be disbursed to people in need.

This can be beneficial if there is no area to store harvested meat, or even if student hunters just want to give a helping hand. Ultimately, beginning a public hunting experience in Martin starts with being prepared and doing research. Gather all of the gear, research the land that is being hunted, and be prepared to bag a trophy deer and process the meat.

Make sure to hunt with caution, and always follow the state laws.

*Editor's Note: Because of the federal governmental shutdown on Oct. 1, several public lands in Tennessee have been affected. For more information, please visit [www.doi.gov/shutdown](http://www.doi.gov/shutdown).*



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