

Official Publication for the members of the Professional Bowhunters Society

THE PROFESSIONAL BOWHUNTER MAGAZINE

**UNITED WE ACT FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BOWHUNTING
THE GREATEST OF SPORTS**

PBS Young Bowhunters Program Announcement and outline for general membership.



Promotion and Perpetuation

I can't think of many things that I have done within the scope of my involvement in bowhunting that have been more important, or rewarding, for that matter, than being the mentor that took a youngster from the realm of being an archer to becoming a bowhunter.

The PBS, understanding the importance of promoting and perpetuating the values that we carry, has committed to an ongoing program called the ***Young Bowhunters Program***.

What is the *Young Bowhunters Program*?

The *YBP* is an organization that is dedicated to preserving bowhunting's traditional values and heritage through introducing youth to the enriching experiences, wonders, and adventures of bowhunting.

- The *YBP* is committed to the strongest sense of ethics in all bowhunting endeavors.
- The *YBP* is determined that all members will learn, understand, and follow all game laws.
- The *YBP* will teach and practice safety first: from handling bowhunting weapons and in all facets of the bowhunting experience.
- The *YBP* will stress respect for all game and non-game animals.
- The *YBP* will emphasize the joy of sharing knowledge, experience, and opportunities with others who appreciate bowhunting.
- The *YBP* is dedicated to having its members provide the most positive image possible as role models for peers, both non-hunters and hunters.

What kind of activities will there be for members of the *Young Bowhunters Program*?

The *YBP* will have a place for the young hunters to voice themselves in the *YBP* section of the PBS Magazine. This section of the magazine will have stories by *YBP* members, "how to" from us "Old Timers", photo wall, archery and bowhunting history section, a youth profile, as well as a calendar of events.

YBP will host state, local, and regional activities as well from 3-D shoots, *YBP* Camps, youth hunts, Bowhunter Ed classes, and the expansion of our current Leadership training. A day camp is in the works for this year's "ETAR".

Who can be a *Young Bowhunter's Program* member?

The *YBP* is open to any young person who has an interest in bowhunting and vows to uphold the purpose and objective of the society.

However, the *YBP* mission is not limited to young bowhunters, as many of our objectives and activities compliment young archers who are actively building their skills until they can meet their state's legal hunting age.

What can I do to help?

They *YBP* needs much help with getting this great and valuable program off the ground. Please contact us and join the *YBP* Committee. Mentors fuel the promotion and perpetuation of bowhunting.

How can one sign up or help?

To get involved please contact
Patrick Petiniot
flatrock@cinergymetro.net
765-720-7857

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THE GREATEST OF SPORTS



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Rob Burnham
Virginia

THE PROFESSIONAL BOWHUNTER MAGAZINE

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President's Message

by Jim Akenson

micaake@yahoo.com

Involvement...Steady As We Go

For starters, I want to thank the Regular members of PBS for re-electing me to be your President. I consider it a humbling experience to get your nod of confidence, and I take on the task of leading Council for two more years with complete seriousness and optimism. I feel that PBS has gained positive momentum recently and now we need to maintain the forward progress. We just came off of an invigorating election with some very close races and a strong statement of support on three important ballot items. Without question, I received more calls and emails prior to this election than any since I've been on Council. I gathered from these inquiries that our membership cares strongly about the future of PBS. All indications are that members want to give new focus to our identity, and gain some knowledge and enjoyment in the process.

Interestingly, one of the most frequent questions I received during the recent election and ballot voting period was in regards to getting ballot initiative items onto the ballot. So how does this happen? The process is as follows, and it can be initiated from two sources: 1) from the voting membership, and 2) from Council deliberation. Of the three items voted on last month, one came from the membership; on eliminating the 50# rule. The other two were generated from within Council, and they were considered in the interest of important "house-keeping," which included better investing of Life Member funds, and having consistent dates on vote-counting. So, on the 50# rule, a Regular member in good standing contacted five other regular members and got their signed endorsement of a proposal, in this case, to eliminate the By-Law addressing bow poundage requirements for regular members. It is important to recognize that all proposals for ballot initiatives have to meet Council approval via vote. Also, we need to prioritize these items, or issues up for vote, so we

don't swamp our capability to implement, or exceed our desire for change. In other words, steady as we go! We are not trying to throw out the old PBS, but instead make sensible changes that are in keeping with the current make-up of PBS and the bowhunting world of 2015 and beyond.

By the time you receive this, Council will have met in St. Augustine, the site of the 2016 Biennial Gathering. We will have crammed a lot of business into a long weekend. Besides getting plans established on site for the Gathering, we also do our annual in-person Council meeting. You will see a summary of this meeting in the 2nd Quarter 2015, magazine. There will also be a list of "who's responsible for what" as we move towards the Gathering. If you have specific ideas or suggestions for the St Augustine Gathering agenda this is the time to submit them. We have already had input that there needs to be more time to mingle with fellow members, and maybe fewer seminars. Just let Council know...and the sooner the better!

In reflecting on 2014 and accomplishments for PBS I think we, as an organization, have taken big steps forward. To me a couple of important indicators of this are the increasing numbers of Associate members applying for Regular membership, and the profusion of hunts and events offered through the rapidly growing Regional Program. It seems that membership momentum directly relates to involvement opportunities. Please take a careful look at this issue's summary of regional activities and think about where you might be able to participate, or even help organize.

In closing I want to extend both welcomes and thanks to incoming Council members, out-going Council, and those who recently ran for office. The new Council members coming on board are Matt Schuster and Norm Johnson. They both will be very valuable additions to Council!

Cory Mattson will be moving into the Vice President position and also will be the Chairperson of the upcoming St. Augustine Gathering. I'm certain that Cory will handle those challenges with great effectiveness. As Cory moved up, and vacated his 3-Year Council position, we needed to backfill this position. Council in turn deliberated on options and voted to offer Norm Johnson to fill the remaining 2 years of his term, which Norm accepted. Since I was re-elected as President, Bob Seltzer will remain as Councilman At Large, and Bob's continued willingness to serve is very much appreciated! Steve Osminski will continue his dedicated service as Senior Councilman for another year. Steve Hohensee has completed his term as Vice President but will be assuming Co-Chair responsibilities with the Regional Program. Thank you Steve H. for all of your past, current, and future contributions to PBS! I also want to give special thanks to John Vargo and Terry Receveur for being willing to run for their respective Council position's, you guys are truly great supporters of PBS!

Enjoy the spring weather and bowhunting opportunities of the season, and please take the time to engage in at least one of the upcoming PBS activities in your region. Be safe and shoot straight!

~ Jim A.

14 Day Ontario Black Bear Hunt \$2,795

Hunt Dates: Aug. 22 - Sept. 5, 2015

Only 1 opening left for 2015, don't miss this Special opportunity to bow hunt in virgin, fly-in only, Ojibway tribal territory (the Northern most camp in Ontario.) The camp is relatively new (4 1/2 years old) and takes a maximum of six black bear hunters PER YEAR. Price includes hunting license, float plane transportation from Nakina, Ontario and all meals. Although remote, the camp has free satellite telephone, TV and internet service.

**Contact PBS member Ron Tandy at
ronsantandy@gmail.com or call 941-697-8719 EST**

Vice President's Message

by Steve Hohensee

steveh.alaska@gmail.com • 907-362-3676

Please Read Last

This will be my last column as Vice President and I ask that you please read my column after the other Council comments. During the past two years as Vice President I have increasingly been later and later in submission of my Council Report. I love the Professional Bowhunter Magazine but strongly feel we have taken an awesome potential recruitment tool and nullified that use with the persistence of internal business talk in the Councilman columns, enough so to dissuade many prospective members from joining. I'm sure this issue will be no different. I hope the next Council will consider continuing to search for a way to present internal PBS business without cluttering the Magazine with words that don't directly promote, encourage, and foster bowhunting.

Because my column is the last to be submitted for this issue I have had the opportunity to see the other three reports, from the Council left standing, ahead of penning my first word. The most important points from President Jim are that we have momentum and we need to retain that momentum and highlights of the initial successes of the Regional Program. Last year's defining election to count only returned ballots has bought PBS time to

get caught up to the 21st Century in business dealings, but that time is finite and we cannot get lackadaisical again.

I fear we have gotten the cart ahead of the horse on the Regional Program. It's true we have had great reception to the program and it has been a real boost to many members' vigor and enthusiasm and has provided new or increased opportunities for the membership which is a good thing for PBS.

Now, I thank you for reading all the other Councilman reports first before mine. Did anyone notice a disparity, or maybe I should say a steel wall between messages in the other Councilman reports? The steel wall is persistent and will not just go away after most of two decades and looking away isn't making that wall go away. The "who are we" question raises its head again and will continually do so until it is answered and this strongly relates to, who do we recruit and tailor to in the Regional Program? The Society's ability to effectively recruit new members has been crippled by this very situation and the time that we have purchased by our 2014 ballot count initiative having passed, must be settled definitively.

I lay witness to what I consider indoctrination and cringe every time I hear, "it's what in your heart not what's in your hand" and I won't subscribe to that philosophy. The Article of Incorporation was filed in West Virginia on September 17, 1963 and is the Society's defining document. Who of us actually believes that our founding mem-



ber's intentions were to perpetuate bowhunting in a manner that resembles today's typical "bowhunter"? I know I don't.

Please, don't take my word for it, go research it yourself but it is clear that our founders had two primary tenets in mind: 1). promote bowhunting with emphasis on equipment; and 2). Ethics and sportsmanship mattered. It is apparent to me that our founders had BOTH what's in the hand and what's in the heart in mind, not just selectively one without the other.

As a Society we need to fully come to the understanding that many-many prospective members do not condone the antics associated with the "modern bowhunter" and will not join an organization that seemingly condones, promotes, or at least doesn't take a stand against that behavior. We also need to realize that there is a huge portion of our current membership that feels/felt the same way. We have purchased time but the clock is ticking for a defining action, will PBS take the path defined by our founders or a path defined by popular culture?

Now before ANY of you start misrepresenting that "Hohensee wants to kick people out of PBS", know that is not fact. I believe we should fully promote what our founding fathers envisioned, promoting ethical bowhunting, a joining of the heart and the hand. I ask each and every one of you to place their hand over their heart and pledge in promoting bowhunting as our founders intended.

Steve H.

Regular Membership Candidate

We list the following names of members who have applied for regular membership in PBS. These individuals have completed a lengthy application and are currently under review by the Executive Council.

If you are a regular member and see any reason why any of these applicants should not be accepted, please send a signed letter stating your reasons to PBS Senior Councilman Steve Osminski, 7473 Marsack Dr., Swartz Creek, MI 48473.

Please note, the Council can only take into consideration statements that can be defended. FACTUAL STATEMENTS ONLY, not hearsay or personal unfounded opinions, can be considered as reasons to reject any of these applicants.

PBS Officers and Council

Associates applying for Regular status:

Nathan Yazel – Indiana • Kurt Hovanec – Colorado

Jim Domaskin – North Dakota



Senior Council's Report

by Steve Osminski

steveosminski@yahoo.com

Starting the year off right

By the time you read this column, the 2015 Council meeting in St. Augustine will be history and the wheels will be well in motion for the 2016 Gathering. I am looking forward to a great time in some warm weather March 3-6 2016 at Renaissance World Golf Village. Maybe I will figure out a way to work an Osceola turkey hunt in before or after.

What an amazing election we just finished. We had great candidates and an excellent turnout. Everybody's vote does count as we could see with a separation of two votes electing Matt Schuster over Terry Receveur and just 6 votes separating Cory Mattson and Norm Johnson for VP. I look forward to working with the new Council members and thank all who ran. We were in good shape here no matter how the vote turned out. All the Bylaw proposals had record returns. It is great to see the members are voting in

force and the members that vote are the ones setting the course of the PBS.

The year also started off well with the approval of our newest Regular Member, Tim Denial. Congratulations Tim! I know there are quite a few Regular applications in process—why not use the last slow days of winter finishing those up ladies and gentlemen? I believe Tim could vouch that once the application gets into my hands, the process is now quick and painless. Tim's only delay came because he sent his application in just after Christmas while I was in Arizona on the Membership hunt with spotty internet.

I will say hunting deer and javelina with a group of PBS members in Arizona is about as good of a way to start the year off as I can think of. I can't thank Rick Wildermuth enough for setting up this hunt. We had a great camp, great location, and saw plenty of game. Coues deer are tough for sure but I will be back in the future. I see from the website Rick has offered to host another AZ member hunt in 2016. Information can be found here:

<http://www.probowsociety.net/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=2637>

And to see how things went on the 2015 AZ member hunt, take a look here:

<http://www.probowsociety.net/forum/>

[viewtopic.php?f=7&t=2114](http://www.probowsociety.net/forum/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=2114)

If you have not been to the website, you are missing out...take a look.

One thing I did notice on the member hunt, with all the rumblings of the PBS being all "stickbow"...many of our members have hunted with a compound, even some of the most vocal "traditionalists". That seems quite hypocritical to me. You had the opportunity to join the PBS when you were shooting a compound; why now deny someone with the same ethics and values that same opportunity now? Odds are, if one is serious enough about bowhunting to find the PBS, they are going to migrate to the stickbow—it is quite contagious! I mention this now because on the member hunt I was privileged to spend quite a bit of time with one of the most traveled and experienced longbow hunters in the world today; Associate Mel Toponce. Mel has hunted with his longbow in countries many of us did not even know existed. He spent quite a bit of his early years in archery with a compound; he migrated to the longbow. Remember, there is knowledge gained in the journey.

Steve O.

Professional Bowhunters Society® Council

President

Jim Akenson
72531 Farmer's Lane
Enterprise, OR 97828
Phone: 1-541-398-2636
Email: micaake@yahoo.com

Vice President

Cory Mattson
1719 Wilkins Dr.
Sanford, NC 27330
Phone: 1-919-895-8106
Email: corymattson@windstream.net

Senior Council

Steve Osminski
7473 Marsack Drive
Swartz Creek, MI 48473
Phone: 1-810-875-4100
Email: steveosminski@yahoo.com

Secretary/Treasurer/PBS Magazine Editor

Jack Smith
P.O. Box 246
Terrell, NC 28682
Phone 1-704-664-2534
Fax 1-704-664-7471
email probowhunters@roadrunner.com

PBS Office

Brenda Kisner
Phone 1-704-664-2534 Fax 1-704-664-7471
Mon.-Fri. 10:00 AM-2:00 PM EST
email probowhunters@roadrunner.com
PBS Website: www.probowsociety.net

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April 20th for 2nd Qtr. 2015 issue
July 20th for 3rd Qtr. 2015 issue
Oct. 20th for 4th Qtr 2015 issue
Jan. 20th for 1st Qtr. 2016 issue

Councilman

Norm Johnson
1545 Decker PT Rd.
Reedsport, OR 97467
Phone: 541-271-2585
Email: norm@blacktailbows.com

Councilman

Matt Schuster
1663 Ivey Road
Warrenton, GA 30828
Phone: 404-386-2229
Email: matt@easterndynamicsinc.com

Councilman At Large

Bob Seltzer
8926 Jameson Street
Lorton, VA 22079
Phone: 1-703-493-8705
Email: bob.seltzer@hotmail.com

Council's Report

by Cory Mattson

corymattson@windstream.net

Thanks very much to John Vargo, Norm Johnson, and Terry Receveur for participating in our PBS election. We are fortunate to have you dedicated members that put PBS in a situation of a win either way for our organization. Congratulations Matt Schuster on your win of the 3 year Council seat. I know you will do well and appreciate your long standing dedication and hard work promoting traditional bowhunting. Congratulations to Norm on his appointment to Council. Congratulations also to Jim Akenson on a second term as our President. Jim has done an outstanding job leading through difficult times. Jim's steady demeanor and organized leadership, has helped our organization greatly. We look forward to this next two years. Steve Osminski we appreciate you holding steady and continuing to serve.

Let's get started on what is happening today; bow only seasons under attack from outside and inside. I am opposed to any archery only days being stolen from us and used to allow children to blast wildlife with a gun. So called "Youth" gun hunting days should be days already inside gun season dates and allocated accordingly. I 100% support making opening day of gun season a "youth" day if the general hunting population really believes this somehow recruits hunters. Interesting how selfish gun hunters are that they need to take a day from bowhunters to even consider taking a brat out hunting. I have never believed these hunts recruit anyone to become a hunter anyway. All that is really accomplished, other than screwing up my season, is keeping kids away from dad's hot seat on real hunt days during real gun hunting season.

Bowhunting gets attacked by "handicapped", "youth", "muzzleloaders", next will be "senior" hunt days. None of these have merit and all of these are scams.

I stopped by a local bow shop a few days ago. This place has been in business for about 5 years. The town we live in is a "bow zone" with changed and reformed laws that are friendly to bowhunting. It

would seem his shop should be thriving. After a visit I realized I had more landowners and home owners calling me than call his shop asking for a bowhunter to participate. I thought this was a little odd but the more we talked and the more I looked around, non hunting citizens might be more aware than we think. First off this guy strongly supports using crossbows. His excuse is, "It allows 11 year old girls to bowhunt." Give me a break; he actually said that! He followed with, "Anything that brings more people into hunting is a good thing," an amazing statement!

"Anything?" I could not disagree more. This is not a Safari Club luncheon this is about bowhunting as a way of life. Perhaps I take this too seriously but "anything" does not work for me when we speak of recruiting hunters or protecting bow seasons.

This is a shop that only sells the latest compound (vertical bow) and compound crossbows (horizontal bow). Interestingly his inventory of (vertical) bows has stopped selling. Plenty of (horizontal) "bows" have moved the last few seasons.

NC went full legal saying compound crossbows are now "bows" and at the same time the NCWRC stole another 'best week' of bow season and gave it to muzzleloaders. Similar restructuring has taken place in nearby states. GA stole the last best week of bow season years back and gave it to muzzleloaders and then a few years later declared (horizontal) compound crossbows – "bows". There is a lesson that all dedicated bowhunters should know and that it is never a good idea to be flexible with muzzleloader hunters, youth days, handicapped people or any other of the long list of lame reasons to steal days from bowhunters.

Not me. I am completely opposed to anything that takes days away from our season. As it stands today, muzzleloader hunters in NC and GA owe me weeks of bow season. It may happen.

GA is a now steadily trending downward, selling fewer archery licenses each



year. This is due in part to losing the best week of the season and also being forced to share the woods with cocked horizontal bows. TN as well; the result of compound technology destroying our bowhunting culture, then allowing crossbows has attracted fewer hunters and sales of 'archery' hunting licenses is trending down each year.

It appears many hunters have gotten disgusted and are quitting. Compound crossbows are not safe to be around. The fact is they are 'cocked' and a bolt can go a long way whether launched purposely or accidentally. 2014 in NC a guy shot his buddy with his compound crossbow bolt. Both older hunters with experience and the bolt hit a man by accident. Truth is this situation could never have happened with a real bow. Can't happen. At 15 yards with fingers on the string if a guy's buddy came back trailing because he forgot something he could never be shot accidentally by a friend shooting a recurve or longbow. It is after all "bow season" and for most of my lifetime "bow season" was a safe time.

Now "safety" is a real concern. One third of so called bowhunters in NC are using horizontal compound crossbows. More than seventy percent of so called bowhunters in Ohio use horizontal compound crossbows. We lost our bow season to vertical compound hunters long ago. Now we are losing what we shared with compound hunters as they switch to compound crossbows. It is the same lazy excuse bound opportunist hunters who jumps from compound to compound crossbow. There are no rifle hunters in

~ continued on page 6 ~

~ continued from page 5

The fact that hunters are basically older might be one reason some guys just

Today in Montana the compound and compound crossbow lobby is turning the tables on our game agencies. Their view is that there is not enough difference in a compound and a compound crossbow to justify denying compound crossbow use in “bow only” seasons. Our dedicated

Regional Representatives should each know what the status is in each state in your region. Specifically you should know exactly which states allow compound crossbows during archery only seasons. You should know which states are fighting against this trend. You should know which state organizations are holding firm fighting against compound crossbows and you should know which bowhunter organizations have embraced or welcomed compound crossbow use. It is very important we know who our friends are and who our enemies are. Please research and report this in your quarterly columns in our magazine.

Cory 

danrussell231@hotmail.com

Bowhunting Preservation Committee

By Rob Burnham, Chair – 804.402.6900 – Rob@RoughMountainOutdoors.com

Preserving OUR bowhunting heritage. How do we accomplish such an enormous task? There is no doubt that it will be a never ending journey. In order to protect bowhunting we will need to stand tall as a unified Society and defend the ethics, the dedication and commitment to bowhunting in it's simplest and purist form. I feel certain that the members of PBS are up to the task. It's time that we all come together as one to stand up for what bowhunting was and is truly meant to be.

I can't speak for how the committees of PBS worked in the past, but I can say that they are now working hand in hand to achieve the goals that will allow the Society to prosper and grow. By functioning as a team, we are moving forward. In the past six months the committees have put in motion many of the things that will be key to our future success. The Regional Program has been fine tuned and we now have the regions and the representatives designated. I'm sure that there will be a few more tweaks, but suffice to say it's on

the move. The Publicity Committee has been focusing on social media and how we market ourselves. The Young Bowhunters Program is about to unveil it's new plan of attack which should really get this vital program jump started.

On the Preservation Committee's agenda, we have been working on several items that will hopefully help PBS get our message out to the masses. A document expressing our position with regards to the continued advancements of technology and how we feel it has adversely affected bowhunting, is being drafted for approval by our Council. The follow up to the "Journey of Challenge" is beginning to take shape, but as anyone who has been involved with putting together a video knows, it doesn't happen over night. The key to this follow up will be to focus on PBS and our message.

We have taken some giant steps since our last gathering, starting a new chapter and pointing the Society in the right direction. We are a little over a year away from

our next banquet and with the hard work from Council, the Committees and more importantly the membership we are building an organization that will be here for future generations of bowhunters. There's still a lot of work to be done, so if you have been looking for ways to get involved and give back, get in touch with your region's representative. Other things include our magazine. We can always use articles and photographs. Our magazine is where the seeds of adventure are sown and the campfire of brotherhood is kindled.

The goal of the Bowhunting Preservation Committee is to preserve the heritage and history of bowhunting and we, The Professional Bowhunters Society. United we act for the good of bowhunting. If you truly care about the future of bowhunting please consider how you can help make a difference. We are interested in hearing your thoughts, suggestions and ideas.

>>~~Rob Burnham~~>

Election & Voting Results

January, 2015 Candidate Election/Ballot Items for By Law Amendments.

The following results have been counted, re-counted, and confirmed in accordance with PBS Election By-Laws. Since Cory Mattson was elected to be Vice President, and moved from his 3 Year Council position, Council deliberated and voted to fill his remaining two years of term with Norm Johnson, who has accepted this offer. Winning candidates are in bold. The results of this election will be implemented on March 1, 2015.

Final Count – Election Candidates 1/26/15

President

186	J. Akenson
74	J. Vargo
6	Abstain
2	No Vote
268	Total

Vice President

127	N. Johnson
133	C. Mattson
7	Abstain
1	No Vote
268	Total

Three Year Councilman

129	T. Receveur
131	M. Schuster
6	Abstain
2	No Vote
268	Total

Final Count – Ballot Initiatives 2/6/15

By-Law Amendments: All ballot initiatives met the 2/3rds majority to pass. The pertinent By-Law will be changed accordingly.

#1 (Eliminating 50# Minimum for regular members)

235	YES
58	NO
2	Abstain
1	No Vote
296	Total

#2 (Establish prudent investing opportunity for Life member Funds)

245	YES
25	NO
23	Abstain
3	No Vote
296	Total

#3 (Making the voting period consistent at 30 days for both candidates and ballot initiatives)

280	YES
11	NO
4	Abstain
1	No Vote
296	Total


Chaplain's Corner

by Gene Thorn

912 Kedron Rd., Tallmansville, WV 26237


(304) 472-5885 pethorn@hotmail.com

The Birds



As I am looking out the window at the snow coming down, the birds are coming to our feeders, busily getting the variety of seeds and suet we have filled them with. Cardinals, blue jays, mourning doves, nuthatches, juncos, downy woodpeckers, red bellied woodpeckers, tree spar-

rows, song sparrows, white-throated sparrows, tufted titmouse, purple finches, house finches, goldfinches, Carolina wrens, chickadees, Rufus sided towhees, and the occasional beautiful evening grosbeak hopping up to get their share. We just watched two big turkey gobblers walk through our field, scratching down to dig down through the deepening snow to get to the clovers I planted last August. As I watched them, I dreamed of calling to them this spring up on the ridge across the river in the direction where they went when they moved on. Their wing feathers sure would make fine fletching for arrow building next winter. Their tail and breast feathers would make great fly tying material. Slices of turkey breast dredged in flour, salt and pepper then fried in butter were envisioned. Birds are an important part of a bowhunter's life, in a lot of ways. The Bible makes reference to birds from beginning to end.



Matthew 10:29 *Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will.*

30 *But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.*

31 *Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

God loves all of creation, but He values you and me far above all of the rest. It is good to know that the King of Heaven and Earth cares so much for us that He has every hair on our heads numbered. That task has gotten easier in some of our cases. LOL! God says in His Word that it is He that feeds the birds in the big picture. His creation of plant and animal life is so intricate and intertwined into habitats that grow just what is needed to feed every species of fish, reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds. One of the things I find fascinating in my travels to far off bowhunting adventure places is the different habitats, and plant, mammal and bird species. How different South Texas is from the tundra in Quebec above the Arctic Circle. Florida compared to Ohio, Idaho, Wyoming, and Alaska. I absolutely absorb those many experiences of different places into my bank of memories of the diversity and awesomeness of God's creation.

Matthew 6:25 *Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life*

more than food and the body more than clothing?

26 *Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*

27 *Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?*

28 *So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;*

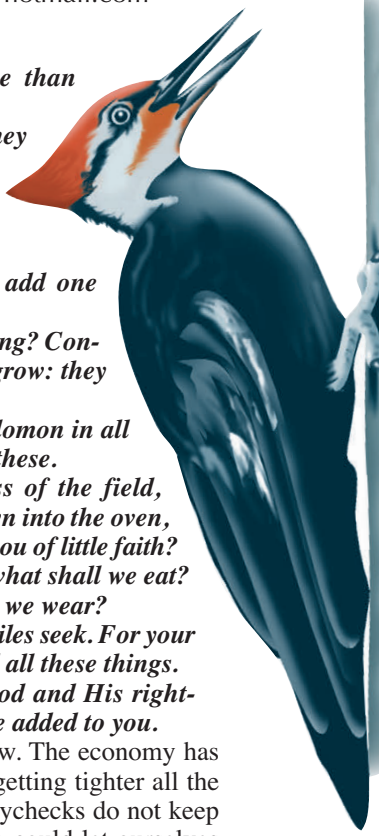
29 *and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

30 *Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?*

31 *Therefore do not worry, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or what shall we wear?*

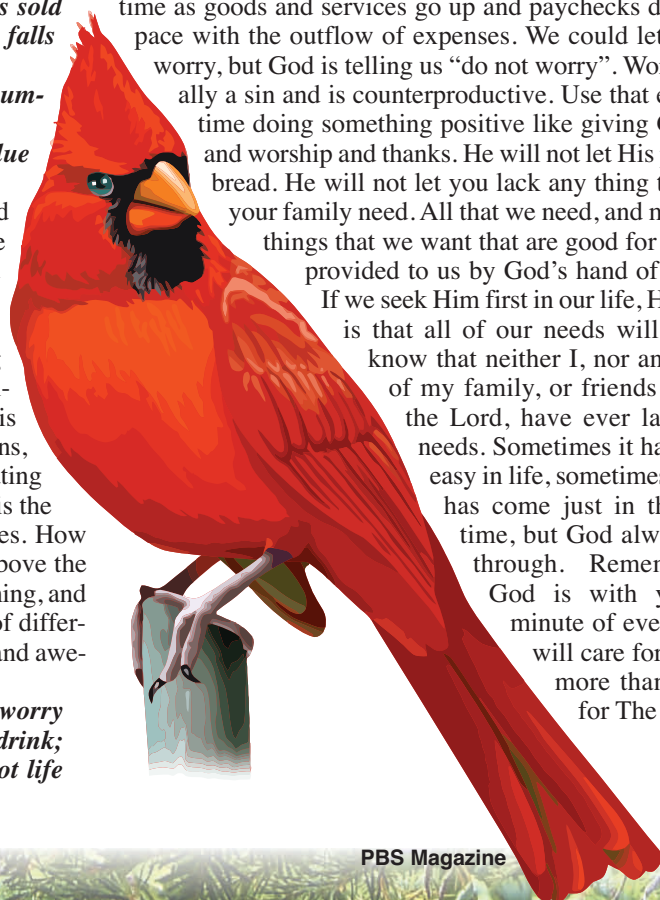
32 *For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.*

33 *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*



We are living in tough times right now. The economy has not recovered in many ways. Money is getting tighter all the time as goods and services go up and paychecks do not keep pace with the outflow of expenses. We could let ourselves worry, but God is telling us "do not worry". Worry is actually a sin and is counterproductive. Use that energy and time doing something positive like giving God praise and worship and thanks. He will not let His people beg bread. He will not let you lack any thing that you or your family need. All that we need, and many of the things that we want that are good for us, will be provided to us by God's hand of provision.

If we seek Him first in our life, His promise is that all of our needs will be met. I know that neither I, nor any member of my family, or friends that serve the Lord, have ever lacked their needs. Sometimes it has not been easy in life, sometimes provision has come just in the nick of time, but God always comes through. Remember that God is with you every minute of every day. He will care for you, even more than He cares for The Birds!



PBS – Regionally Speaking

By Jeff Holchin and Terry Receveur
First Quarter 2015

The Regional Representative program continues to move forward and a leadership conference call was held January 14, 2015 - 8 PM EST. Complete minutes can be seen at www.ProBow-Society.NET. Following is a summary of the outcome.

The states to be included in a region were defined and the final version is as follows:

Region	States
Pacific West	Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Washington
Rocky Mountain West	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
North Central	Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
South Central	Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas
Great Lakes	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
Northeast	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont
Appalachian	Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia
Southeast	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee
International	Australia, Canada, England, France, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, All Other Countries

Terry Receveur led a discussion on the Regional and State Representative positions. The basic job descriptions and selection criteria can be found in the minutes on the website.

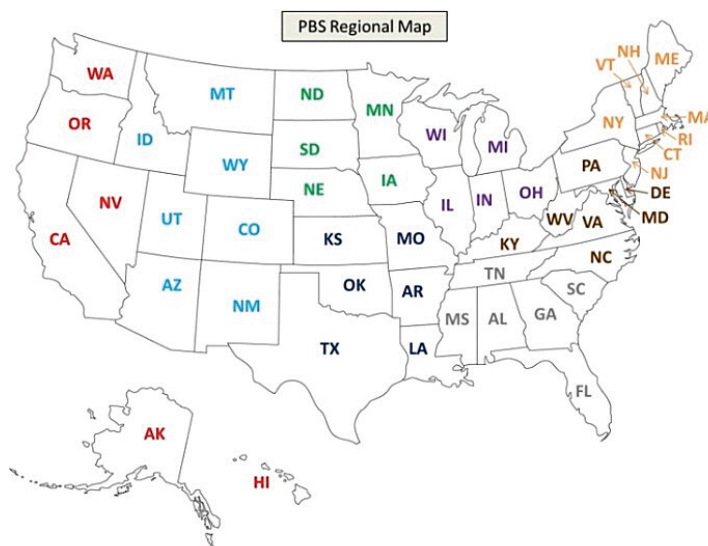
We continue to seek interested members from all the states and other countries to serve as state representatives and help the regional representatives.

The current Regional Representatives are as follows:

Appalachian - Gene Thorn
Great Lakes - Ron Lang, Mike Vines
International - Richard Flett
North Central - John Vargo, Mark Viehweg
Northeast - Terry Receveur
Pacific West - Tom Vanasche
Rocky Mountain West - Dan Mathis
South Central - Preston Lay
Southeast - Ethan Rodrigue

Steve Hohensee outlined some of the changes he has made to the Website and is very open to any suggestions or ideas to improve it. Please be sure to send Steve any ideas you might have.

A regional flag has been designed and Council has approved the purchase of one for each region.



Regional Membership Hunts

One of the greatest benefits of membership in the PBS is the opportunity to meet and interact with like-minded individuals. This often results in lasting friendships and many fun bowhunting adventures. An excellent way to facilitate this even further is via membership hunts. There has been resurgence in the number and variety of these recently and the results and response to such hunts has been extremely positive. The biggest downside to the hunts conducted has been the geographical challenge for those wanting to attend. Some of the hunts are just too far for some to travel. While this has not deterred some, for others the cost is prohibitive. More local opportunities were presented in 2014 and 2015 is shaping up to provide even more opportunities. We believe the membership hunt aspect of the program has been a huge success. The feelings of camaraderie and fellowship are stronger than they have been for several years.

The focus of this program should continue to be the facilitation, communication, and execution of these hunts. Steve Hohensee has done a terrific job on the Website and a useful tool to screen through planned hunts is in the "Everything PBS: Quick Links" and in the topic "PBS Calendar of Events".

Please remember these are "Membership Hunts" that are initiated at the grassroots level by the members. ANY PBS member can organize and execute a hunt. Take a moment and think about what local opportunities you have that others might enjoy and set up a hunt. It could be the start of a few more great friendships.

Following is a listing of 2014 hunts and planned regional membership hunts for 2015:

1. Southeast Region: Georgia Hog, February 2014
2. Northeast Region: New York Bowfishing, July 2014
3. Rocky Mountain West Region: Utah Elk, August 2014
4. Appalachian Region: Virginia Rough Mountain Rendevoez, October 2014
5. Southeast Region: Blackbeard Island, Georgia, December 2014
6. Great Lakes Region: Indiana Rabbit, January 2015
7. Rocky Mountain West Region: Arizona Deer/Javelina, December 26 – January 11, 2015
8. Southeast Region: Georgia Hog, January 28 – February 8, 2015
9. South Central Region: Texas Hog/Javelina, Spikebox Ranch, February 16-20, 2015

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PBS Regionally Speaking

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10. South Central Region: Texas Hog/Javelina, Spikebox Ranch, February 23-27, 2015
11. Appalachian Region: Baltimore Bowmen, Odd Year Gathering, March 27-29, 2015
12. Southeast Region: Louisiana Bowfishing, Late March/Early April
13. Southeast Region: Tennessee Turkey: April 4-12
14. Rocky Mountain Region: Logan, Utah Golf Shoot (15 holes) and 3-D April 18-19
15. Northeast Region: Frog Hunting Hullabaloo, June 2015
16. Great Lakes Region: Wisconsin, Ojibwa Bowhunters, Odd Year Gathering, July 17-19, 2015
17. Northeast Region: New Hampshire, Bear Hunt, September 15-21, 2015
18. Appalachian Region: Rough Mountain, VA Deer/Bear/turkey, Late October 2015
19. Northeast Region: NY Catskill Mountains, Deer, Oct 24-25, 2015
20. Southeast Region: Georgia Hog, October 2015
21. Great Lakes Region: Ohio Deer/Turkey/Small Game, Late Oct/Early Nov TBD
22. Pacific West Region: Oregon, Columbian Blacktail Hunt, November 14-22, 2015
23. Pacific West Region: Alaska, Sitka blacktailed deer/Mtn goat Membership Hunt: Nov 7-14, 2015
24. Rocky Mountain West Region: Arizona Deer/Javelina, January 1 - January 10, 2016
25. Southeast Region: Georgia Hog, late January - early February 2016

Pacific West Report

(Alaska, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Washington)

by Tom Vanasche – Regional Representative

The western states application process is in full swing and for those collecting points or applying for hunts you need to be diligent.

Oregon

The Eagle Cap Traditional Archers will host their annual 3-D shoot June 13-14 in LaGrande, Oregon. This is a great time and attended by many PBS'ers.

Oregon is once again set to battle the crossbow. We are attempting to offer a potential crossbow season to the "severely" disabled to thwart any lawsuits for the "disabled" through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Much more to follow on this as we all know they are not a bow.

Washington

Special Permit applications are due May 22. Spring Turkey season generally April 15-May 31. Check the new regulations for actual dates in 2015.

Alaska – Tim McKinley

Dall sheep are iconic in Alaska and there is a very readable summary on their status that includes success rates by area, resident vs nonresident hunter comparisons, etc. It is an oral report that was prepared for the Alaska Board of Game. The report is titled "Sheep Populations, Hunters and Harvest, A summary on current status and trends".

The link is: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main>

The report was to help inform the Board of Game in making changes (if any) to Dall sheep hunting regulations. Although the number of hunters are down and success rates are pretty good, there are strong public perceptions that are contrary, a lot of divisiveness between hunters of different types (res-nonres, motorized access vs non-motorized, guided hunters, etc) and has become a very emotional issue for some. As an aside the photography within it is pretty stunning.

Also, here is another link to a written report on the apparent decline in black bear numbers and harvest in Prince William Sound, and the likelihood of changes in the pretty liberal regulations there.

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=wildlifenews.view_article&articles_id=694

Remember you will need a bowhunting education card to bow hunt Alaska in 2016.

Rocky Mountain West Report (Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming)

by Dan Mathis Regional Representative

Arizona

Rick Wildermuth is again hosting a membership hunt for Coues deer, mule deer and javelina in January 2016. This is a late season hunt so might fit in your schedule or be a nice break from the frigid Midwest weather. Please visit the PBS web site member hunts forum or contact Rick Wildermuth for details.

Colorado – Bryan Bolding

Bill Kissner is a seasoned Colorado elk hunter and he is willing to share his "knowledge through experience" and is hosting a 2015 membership elk hunt in Southern CO. Please visit the PBS member hunts forum at the PBS website or contact Bill Kissner for details.

It is that time of the year here in Colorado to start preparing for your 2015 Big Game season. Colorado Big Game regulations and deadlines for application have been published for Deer, Elk, Pronghorn, Moose, and Bear. The first deadline is the Limited Licenses by Drawing, which is April 7th, 2015 and is due by midnight. This is an application and draw process. Next, the Over-the-Counter licenses will be available beginning 9AM on July 21st, 2015, no application necessary to purchase over-the-counter (OTC). Finally, Leftover Limited Licenses will become available 9AM August 4, 2015 in person or by phone (1-800-244-5613) and available Online starting at midnight August 5th, 2015. These are the leftover limited licenses remaining after the limited license draw. If you purchase one of these licenses, you will not use any of your preference points.

When reviewing the new 2015 regulations have a close look at page one (1). Some interesting "What's New: 2015" topics may catch your eye, like; Lighted Nocks, Recording Devices approved, Antler Collection, Youth hunting open to more species, NEW unit changes, et cetera.

Remember that whether you have hunted Colorado in the past or new to the idea you can always find additional help from Colorado Parks and Wildlife. They have hunt planners available to help you plan your next Colorado big game hunt (303) 297-1192. Wishing everyone a successful big game season! Aim Small!



2015 High Country Shoot - June 26 – 28 2015, Flat Tops, North of New Castle, Colorado

Guaranteed outdoor fun for the whole family!

TOP 10 REASONS TO ATTEND THE HIGH COUNTRY SHOOT

1. Seeing old friends and meeting new friends!
2. Walking and shooting the courses with old friends and new!
3. Having good laughs with old friends and new!
4. Fresh mountain air.
5. The beautiful mountain flowers and scenery.
6. Peaceful mornings listening to the sounds of birds and wind in the trees.
7. Larry Alma's kitchen!
8. The jug shoot, battle clout, long distance shoot, 3 arrow!
9. Really relaxing and enjoying time with my family.
10. Just being at THE BEST traditional shoot IN THE WORLD!

Idaho

Mike Schlegel has agreed to cover Idaho as the PBS State Representative.

Montana - Dan Mathis

Libby MT, May 2-3, 2015 Fawn Creek Traditional 3D shoot - traditional equipment only Details at; <https://www.facebook.com/libbyarcheryclubmt>. Novelty shoots and fun 3D course. Contact Dan Mathis at dnl.mathis@yahoo.com if you are interested in attending as part of a small group of PBSers.

Utah

The Cache Archers are excited to announce the Hardware Ranch 3D and golf shoot is happening April 18-19, 2015 at the Hardware Ranch Elk Refuge. It is located 15 miles east of Hyrum, Utah, in Blacksmith Fork Canyon. Shooting begins Saturday, April 18 at 8:30 AM and goes to 6:00 PM and Sunday, April 19 from 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM. There will be two courses: one unmarked and one marked Redding style. There will also be an Archery Golf shoot. Cost is \$20 for fun shooters, \$15 for members, \$5 for ages 12-16, and ages 11 and younger shoot free. Lunch will be available for purchase all day and there will be drawings and prizes. Clay pigeon rounds will be shot on Saturday. Rich Roskelley notes that the Cache Valley, Utah, boys will be part of this shoot and their camp will be 1 mile down the canyon on the right from the shoot. We will camp Friday through Sunday. No formal PBS action but camping.

North Central Report

(Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota)

by John Vargo and Mark Viehweg Regional Representatives

Activities of interest for PBS members in the North Central region include the following:

- May 23, 24. Iowa Traditional Bowhunters Rendezvous 3-D shoot at the Raccoon Valley Sportsmen's Club near Adel, IA. Vendors. Primitive camping on site.
- June 19. Traditional 3-D shoot at the Rapids Archery Club in Coon Rapids, MN. Vendors. Camping.
- July 1 – Aug 2. Iowa Bowhunters Association Fall Festival at the Pine Lake Archers Club just north of Eldora, IA. 3-D shoot open to any bow type. Vendors. Concessions. Primitive camping on site. Full-service camping at state park a few miles away. We always have a group of 4-6 PBS members who attend this shoot and set up at the club's primitive camping site.

South Dakota - Mark Viehweg

It has been a relatively quiet legislative session. It appears deer licensing will remain virtually the same for 2015 as 2014 as the state continues to recover from the effects of habitat loss, drought and EHD. Hopefully, with the opening of the regional Pheasants Forever office in Brookings, SD, the initiative for an increase in grasslands will come to fruition. This will not only benefit the pheasants, but certainly the deer populations.

The Prairie States Traditional Bowhunters will be holding their annual shoot either the last weekend in July or the 1st weekend in August near Platte on the Missouri River. I will update everyone on both the website and Facebook page as things firm up.

A new state record typical whitetail (194 1/8") was taken during the archery season in McPherson County. This bests the all-time record dating back to 1948. This buck was measured by PBS Regular Member Stan Rauch and Associate Member Craig Oberle.

We have plans for either a Spring turkey hunt or Fall deer hunt in the near future.

Nebraska - Bryce Lambley

After holding the first mountain lion season in 2014-15, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is not holding one in 2015-16. While the small expected quota of harvest was met, there were several more killed inadvertently on the state's highways or while trapped incidentally. While there seems to be little worry about the state's small population of lions, the NGPC wants another year to study the species. This may remove a little of the momentum of liberal Sen. Ernie Chambers who last year came close to wresting management ability of the species from the NGPC. He will likely try again this year, and state legislators in the past have shown more than a passing interest in micromanaging the state's wildlife due more to social factors than environmental and biological ones.

The Nebraska Traditional Archers have a busy schedule, culminating with the Aug. 26-27 Summer Rendezvous with unlimited 3D shooting, guest speaker, and vendors. This date is a change from their usual Labor Day weekend, as Nebraska's archery deer opener has now moved from Sept. 15 to Sept. 1. Other events include the Spring String Shoot on Apr. 12 at Hormel Park in Fremont, NE, and the 20th Annual Selfbow Building Seminar June 6-7 at Izaak Walton Park in Fremont. They are also holding the first Best of the Midwest 3-D Buckle Traditional Shoot on June 26-27 at the Pheasant Bonanza Hunt Club at Tekamah, NE. Details on all these events are available at nebraskatraditionalarchers.org/upcomingevents.htm.

North Dakota - Paul Speral

We are having a very quiet legislative session. The North Dakota Bowhunters Association met with Game and Fish prior to the start of the legislative session to talk over any possible upcoming issues. New for next year bow mounted cameras will be allowed. The question of lighted sights has also come up and we have unanimously voted a "No" to that. Game and Fish has the final say, but they asked us, and with the great relationship the NDBA has had for many years with G&F, we expect they will follow our suggestion. Deer numbers continued to have a slow recovery but with the mild winter we have experienced so far, hopefully a good fawn crop with little winter kill will follow. We can probably expect another closed, or very limited season, on mule deer does. We still have to get through March. There has been discussion of not having our very limited bighorn sheep season this year due to problems with pneumonia. The herd has suffered significant losses as the sheep struggle with this. Spring surveys hopefully will show they fared better

~ continued on page 12 ~

PBS Regionally Speaking

~ continued from page 11

than expected. Even though sheep tags are typically limited to only 3-5 per year, waiting for that drawing has always led to dreams of "What if?". Our state-wide clubs will be holding shoots, both indoors and out, throughout the year and the schedule can be found on the NDBA website. This is a great resource and contains much information as well as contact information for all of our officers and area reps. Anyone having specific hunting questions can feel free to contact reps in whatever corner of the state they may have questions about.

Great Lakes Report

(Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin)

by Ron Lang (WI) – Regional Representative and Mike Vines (MI)

Before I get to what is going on in Wisconsin, Mike Vines of Michigan and I would like to announce that we now have PBS state reps for all the Great Lakes States. They are Paul Ladner in Illinois, PJ Petiniot in Indiana, and Shane Close in Ohio. Mike and I are real excited because all three graciously volunteered their time and effort to help make the PBS Regional program a success and the PBS stronger. This is special because everyone is busy with family, work, careers, and even hunting but when the PBS needed some of their time they said yes. I have only been in the PBS since 1991 and have never seen or been part of a group or an organization where people are so willing to serve and work together to get things done as the people who make up the PBS. Too bad our government doesn't work the same way. Sorry, I shouldn't go there. Anyway welcome these new state reps and get to know them. This is where we can all make a difference by just getting involved. Let's get some hunts and gatherings going and participating in the fun.

I have mentioned this before but will mention it again, the big thing we have going on in Wisconsin this year so far is the 4th Biennial Midwest PBS Odd Year Gathering hosted by the Ojibwa Bowhunters. Money raised here is to benefit "The Doug Kerr Memorial Youth Leadership Hunt". You do not have to be from the Midwest or Great Lakes States to attend this event! They are required to attend. Just kidding but please check your calendars and see if you can make this event. You can contact Jerry Leveille 414-852-2923 or Brian Tessmann 262-389-6319. Great course, excellent food, campfire, and very much a family event so bring mom and the kids. Invite someone you know should be a member of the PBS and let them experience what we are about. Info on this is also in your last two PBS Magazines.

Right now as I write this Wisconsin, like much of the country, is suffering from severe cold weather. So far we have not had the snow amounts like the North East but winter is not over. I feel guilty as I write this as I left home Jan 30th for two months in Florida. Our only daughter and family make this necessary as I would never want to escape the cold and snow. I hope to be in Ocala, Florida March 6th, 7th, and 8th for the (TBF) Traditional Bowhunters of Florida state shoot. I hear it is well attended and some PBS people should be there. That is a good enough reason to attend.

A good number of our PBS members will be at the (WTA) Wisconsin Traditional Archers Banquet this weekend February 21, 2015. Even with the cold and snow there are scheduled bunny hunts and shoots that go on throughout the winter. Even though this will all have occurred by the time you read this keep all this

in mind for a chance for future outings next year if Texas hog hunting isn't your thing. You can check the WTA website for exact dates and information. Maybe you can do both!

PBS member George Henrich of Merrill, Wisconsin wanted me to remind all of you of an opportunity to participate in archery golf if you are so inclined. I do not have an exact date yet but it is in early spring close to Fund du Lac, WI actually closer to Mt Morris, WI. I will post the exact date and info on the PBS website as I learn the details.

I also want to give Mike Theis of Lodi, WI a long overdue thank you for a PBS whitetail hunt he put together 2 years ago. Like all the hunts in all the regions a perfect example of what we should be participating in or even putting together and arranging ourselves.

In closing I will be trying to personally contact as many of you PBS members in Wisconsin as I can. If you want or need to contact me I can be reached at my email rtlang46@gmail.com or cell # 920-421- 1746.

Illinois – Paul Ladner

Thanks to Ron Lang for asking me to serve the PBS. I could have easily volunteered, but am embarrassed to say I didn't until asked. Sometimes we need a push. I am proud to be a PBS regular member and have enjoyed the benefits of PBS membership from the day I joined. I've "taken advantage" of the contacts I've made to find a world of adventure all over north America, and shared camps with the finest group of people I know. I would have trouble putting into words what makes a PBS member special, but I know it when I see it. Simply put it seems it's not the destination, but the journey. I am currently serving my first year on the board of the United Bowhunters of Illinois. A good share of our members are PBSers. We have just finished our second season with general crossbow use for the latter part of our archery season. We protested this as best we could and maybe the fact that crossbow use is limited to just part of the season is the result of our efforts. Interestingly the "archery harvest" has continued a gradual decline from 64,819 in 2008 to 56,083 for the season just finished in spite of crossbow use. Our total deer harvest has also followed a gradual decline over the same period. 189,634 in 2008 and 148,614 in this past season. There has been a greater decrease in total harvest than in the "archery" harvest likely due in part to reduced deer herd in at least parts of the state. We are battling CWD in the northern part of the state. DNR sharpshooters have been hired to cull deer from the hot spots. We also had a pretty severe bout of EHD (blue tongue) especially summer of 2013 with varying effects across the state. The EHD seems to be a periodic issue that the deer will rebound from given a couple years. The real concern is for the CWD here and across the country. Chances are coming to a state near you soon. Game farms and interstate trade in cervids seems to be the likely culprit as CWD has shown up in close proximity to such operations. We recently elected a new governor. What effect that will have on DNR is not totally apparent yet. It has come as a surprise to me how political the leadership of the DNR is. New governor equals new DNR director. Illinois is screwed up politically in general, but assume there is considerable politics involved in other states too. I have minimal background in wildlife resource management, but can see how difficult it is to run a department on biologic principles when heads roll on political whims. Habitat seems key. Build it and they (the critters) will come. Fingers crossed, but God help us.

Effective January first 2015, bears, mountain lions and grey wolves are protected species in Illinois. Not that we really have any significant resident populations. There have been several much publicized sightings, road kills or hunting kills of one or another

of these species, but seems pretty clear that the Land of Lincoln does not have the habitat to support functioning populations. However, if you see one don't shoot it. We have a pretty good population (estimates of 5-6000) bobcats, but efforts to establish a hunting season were recently vetoed by our outgoing governor. It may be late by the time you receive this, but the UBI will be having our annual meeting/banquet/auction 3/7/5015. Monty Browning will be our featured guest speaker.

Indiana – PJ Petiniot

Indiana members of the PBS, I am now officially the Indiana State Rep of the PBS. Ron Lang asked me and said something about a steak dinner and cold brew if I accepted, well the connection was bad, so he may not have said that, but I am pretty sure he did. Anyway, here's what I need from the PBS members in Indiana. I do not want the Indiana Report to be PJ's view of the state of things in Indiana and I would really prefer that we hear from a variety of people across the state and you keep us in the know of what is going on. I will put it all together and make a report and send it into the magazine every three months.

I am going to draft a couple of good friends as I know they will help and they usually have some valuable info for their fellow bowhunters. Nick Dedaker is going to be my North Central Guy, all he has to do is keep his ear to the ground and let me know what's going on in his part of the world. Same for Herb Higgins, Herb lives in the central part of the state and he is also the Indiana Bowhunters Association Membership Secretary. Herb can keep me informed all things IBA and let me know if there are any tidbits of bowhunting information we need to know about as well. Nick is in the North and Herb is in Middle Part of the state I would like some input from the southern part of the state, maybe two people and another person from the north. Herb and I can take care of the middle part of the state. You don't have to do much, just keep your ear to the ground and if you read an interesting piece online or in a paper, or in your sportsman or bowhunting group's publication, just let me know. If you or your friends have planned a PBS member hunt or shoot, let me know. If there is an event you would like to see a PBS presence at, let me know and I will do what we can to see that it happens. I just want to keep our report interesting and full of information that all Indiana PBS members will consider relevant and pertinent.

I will gladly accept any bowhunting, wildlife or PBS related information from anybody here in the state, I would just appreciate a commitment (very small one) from a few members that will e-mail me or call me and give me a little data to use in OUR quarterly report as well as to help get the word out for any PBS functions within the state. If you could make this small commitment to help get OUR new state and regional rep program moving forward, I am certain all PBS members will be appreciative. Just let me know that you are willing to help and send me the occasional story/article/ web link etc.

I also want to let our members know about bowhunting related events they may want to attend as well as what's going on within the state Legislatively and any DNR issues coming home.

The captive deer hunting beast is rearing its ugly head once again in the Hoosier state. This may or may not be resolved by the time you receive this magazine. All Hoosier bowhunters as well as members that hunt in Indiana but reside elsewhere should let their voice be heard. Contact the State Representative and Senator that represent the region where you live as well as where you hunt if they differ.

I would like to see the PBS once again have a presence at the Farmland Conservation Club Traditional Weekend and the Traditional Archery National shoot in Cloverdale. Keep an eye on the

Great Lakes Region page on the Regional Forum on the PBS website for the most current and up to date information on these or similar topics.

Michigan – Mike Vines

This time of year (January-March) there isn't much going on bowhunting wise except the guys chasing rabbits and squirrels, and there are quite a few of us still doing that.

The end of January was the Kalamazoo Expo where the PBS had a booth set up. Myself, and quite a few others volunteered our time to not only benefit the PBS, but to support trad events around the country. We signed up 2 new members and had 5 renewals at Kalamazoo. There were many more who were interested in what we were promoting.

Do the PBS, and yourself a favor and volunteer some time at the booth when you see it set up, or ask for the booth to be sent to you so you're able to promote the PBS at an event you will be attending. The best part is that you don't have to go anywhere to see the people in attendance, they all come to you, AND you get to talk bowhunting all day long. Not to mention the kind of people you will get to meet. For instance...I got talking to a couple guys who were walking by us and noticed the Canadian accent which led to moose hunting conversation and low and behold, this guy was a pilot who flew many years for the air service another PBS brother and I will be using this fall to go moose hunting. My new Canadian friend had nothing but great things to say about our outfit and area we will be going to. You never know who you're going to meet.

Ohio – Shane Close

Recently I, Shane Close, became the state rep for Ohio. I haven't gotten a chance to get information on the Ohio members or a lot of what is happening in the State. I will be getting a list of members and contacting everyone individually via the phone. The goal is to get everyone's thoughts about the program and general knowledge about the different events going on within Ohio. In addition I'm going to be creating an email list for all the Ohio members so that way we can disseminate information quickly to everyone.

Our big game hunting season ended on Feb 1st, but people can still go out and hunt cottontail rabbits until the end of the month for some winter hunting fun. The Ohio Wildlife Council recently (2/13) received the 2015-2016 deer hunting proposals. Notable proposed changes include: reduced bag limits in the majority of counties, reduced statewide bag limit from 9 to 6 deer, suspending the antlerless only muzzleloader weekend, moving the youth gun hunt to the previous antlerless only muzzleloader weekend, adding a two day gun hunt from Dec 16-17. Voting on these changes will happen after district open houses occur (March 7), and comments can be submitted online until March 8. A statewide open house is on March 19. More information on this can be found at <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/wildlife-home/post/ohio-wildlife-council-receives-2015-2016-deer-hunting-proposals>

There's also some interesting information that was recently published by the Ohio DNR about the quality and quantity of harvests. The deer population has increased and overall there have been more trophy bucks taken in recent years, but this is misleading because the number of trophy bucks per 1,000 bucks taken has actually dropped. More information can be found here: http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/Portals/wildlife/pdfs/hunting/OhioDeerHerdUpdate_Web.pdf

Ohio DNR has posted some final reports on deer harvest, (which can be found here: <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/portals/wildlife/pdfs/hunting/020215deerharvest.pdf>)

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however this information does not break down their archery information to see whether the deer were taken with a crossbow, compound, or traditional bow.

South Central Report

(Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas)

by Preston Lay – Regional Representative

Arkansas – Dave Lay

Arkansas is just coming off its 5 month archery deer season that runs basically from October 1 thru the end of February. We are very blessed with this long season, but a very large portion of it is shared with either muzzleloaders or modern gun hunters, and crossbows have been in place for a lot of years, luckily we are allowed to bowhunt during the gun seasons which is not allowed in a lot of states.

Our turkey season is next up but it is a fraction of what it was in the past with a declining population our spring season has recently been cut from approximately a month to 2 weeks. The 2 bird limit has remained and the fall season eliminated entirely, again, our remaining season is open to shotguns and we can bowhunt during this time. I have lobbied, rather unsuccessfully, for a fall archery only turkey season and go back to a month long spring gun season with a one bird limit. This would allow working folks and bowhunters more time to hunt.

Our bear season runs about 2 months with a zone quota in place, and again we share all but a few days with the gun hunters. The bear population in Arkansas is very healthy and has produced some really nice bears in the 400-500 lb range. Baiting is allowed only on public land.

The thing that has hunters scratching their heads the most is our game and fish approach to controlling the growing feral pig problem. The State has limited the hunting of feral hogs on all state owned wildlife management areas to weapon specific seasons. Their thoughts are that they can more effectively trap them without hunters in the woods during the off season. I'm sure illegal poaching of game animals during the off season is a very real thought as well.

One last thing. Most folks don't know a lot about Arkansas and I'd like to take a few sentences to share. Arkansas has a little over 3 1/2 million acres of public hunting land, including over 100 state owned WMA's and a dozen federally designated wilderness areas, which a bowhunter can lose himself in pretty easily. Luckily for some hearty folks the wilderness areas and 3 million acres of national forest land is rough enough that most folks don't get far from a road. We have several designated wild and scenic rivers as well as the nation's first national river. It is free flowing for a little over 100 miles through 2 wilderness areas and is protected from any encroachment for its entire length.

Oklahoma – Preston Lay

We have a couple things of interest in Oklahoma. First being the Oklahoma Self Bow Jamboree (OJAM). This event is March 19-22. It's near Perkins, OK and directions can be found on the Oklahoma Self Bow Society website. This event is fun for the whole family, from novice to expert. Many vendors are on hand to sell you everything needed or you can bring your own stove and obtain advice or socialize and exchange bow building ideas. PBS's own Terry Lightle will be on sight for the duration with

his traveling archery supplies. The Oklahoma Bowhunting Council will have a 3 – D shoot on the land surrounding this event. With good weather and cabin fever burning this offers a great excuse to get out and build a bow.

The special draw hunt for the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant is May 15. For those not in the know this is a traditional bowhunt on about 30,000 acres. The deer are free ranging and well managed. They are held beginning the first weekend in October through the second week in November. The hunt starts on Thursday for hunt brief and scouting. Hunting starts on Friday and ends at noon on Sunday. This hunt offers a great opportunity to hunt mature bucks. Several P&Y class deer are taken each fall. To apply for this hunt you must possess an Oklahoma hunting license and complete the application on the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation website. Oklahoma has started a preference point system, so each year not drawing the odds increase the next year.

I get asked a lot what Oklahoma offers the bow hunter. We are very diversified. The primary species is of course the White-tail deer. We have mule deer, antelope, black bear (limited), and three subspecies of the wild turkey. We have mountainous terrain in the southeast and open prairie in the northwest. In the central and northeast we have a blend of open with mixed hardwoods and desert with canyons in the southwest. The entire state has hunt-able populations of game.

Northeastern Report

(Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont)

by Terry Receveur

The Northeastern region is looking for a few good men. If you are interested in serving on the committee to represent your state, let me know. Also, if you have an idea about another PBS hunt or would like to assist in setting one up, please call (518-755-9119) or Email (Terrance.Receveur@Taconic.com).

New York – Terry Receveur

Sean Bleakley will be hosting a PBS Catskill Mountain deer and bear hunt October 24 & 25, 2015. Hunters must apply for a NYC DEP access permit at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/recreation/recreation_rules.shtml. It's a QMA requiring that bucks have a min of 3 pts on at least one side and bears must be alone to take them. This is the third year of the antler restriction program. There will be onsite camping available. If interested contact Sean Bleakley at 845-243-4229 or at seanbleakley45@gmail.com.

Connecticut – Bill Terry Sr.

Bowhunting Boom in the Constitution State – Waterbury, Conn. (AP) – A mix of premium access to hunting land, legal changes and popular culture is fueling a bowhunting boom in Connecticut. "I've seen a big pickup in classes," said Jason Marshall, a chief archer instructor for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. "I think a lot of it had to do with younger kids signing up because of the 'Hunger Games' movie." This wave of interest is reflected in numbers of people seeking bowhunting training, and following through with state hunting permits. In fiscal year 2014, 2,868 people graduated DEEP bowhunting safety courses. That number has nearly doubled since fiscal year 2010, when 1,481 graduated. Bowhunting permits have been on the rise in the past three years, from 13,179 in 2011 to 15,800 in 2013.

Last year, for the first time recorded by DEEP, the number of

deer taken by bow and arrow topped the total taken with firearms – 6,046 to 4,340. Marshall said the legalization of the crossbow hunting statewide last year has contributed to the growth of the classes.

New Hampshire – David Kretschmar

New Hampshire's 2014 deer harvest preliminary numbers are in, and they show an 8.6% decline over 2013's harvest numbers. Hunters in New Hampshire killed 12,540 deer in 2014, just over 1,000 less than in 2013. While the herd seems to be stable, it remains to be seen what effect this difficult winter will have on its health.

The 2015 moose lottery is now open! You have until May 29th to get your application in. Last year's non-resident chances of drawing were in the vicinity of 1 in 255, while residents had a 1 in 59 chance of drawing. That may go down as Fish and Game still hasn't set the number of permits to be issued, but there is a chance that they will be reduced from last year's low of 124 as the herd continues to decline.

One of the hot button items right now is Fish and Games push to enact rules banning the use of drones, "smart rifles", and live action game cameras in the pursuit of game animals. Believe it or not, there is a faction pushing hard to be able to use drones while hunting, not something that falls in line with our line of thinking.

Finally, if things go right, I will be hosting one or two members on a September bear/deer hunt this year. This should be fun, and while I can't guarantee we will kill something, I feel pretty good about getting guys on bears!

Appalachia Report

(Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia)

by Gene Thorn – Regional Representative

A PBS Appalachian Region 2015 Odd-Year Gathering will be in Baltimore!!! March 27-29, 2015 at Baltimore Bowmen, the home of the Baltimore Bowmen Traditional Classic (BBTC). This is a great venue with a wide open field for camping, a clubhouse with stone fireplace and kitchen, pavilion with picnic tables, bathhouse with showers and toilets, and a big grill pit that we can cook whatever you want in case you decide to bring some venison from last year's hunts. You can camp on-site with tents, trailers, or RVs, or take advantage of the motels in the area, although I would suggest staying on-site. The 3D course that will be set out is one of the nicest and more challenging you will find, with shots at all distances and at all angles. You can get there early on Friday morning if you want and stay through Sunday late afternoon. Like other OYGs, we will have a raffle or auction on Saturday so please feel free to bring something to help raise some funds for the PBS. Let me know. For more information contact Larry Schwartz by email at larryschwartz@comcast.net or by phone on 443.994.1098. Address: Graham Memorial Park 10301 Harford Road Glen Arm, MD 21057. Area Hotels: Towson Place 410-372-5104, The Williamsburg Inn 410-335-3172, Ramada 410-823-8750, Comfort Inn 410-882-0900

We have added Kentucky to the Appalachian Region – welcome to PBS members there!

West Virginia – Gene Thorn

WV will go to electronic and phone game checking starting with spring gobbler season 2015. You must get an ID number from WVDNR to check in game with this system. WVDNR has been monitoring captive deer and elk farms in WV but may have lost

that job to the WV Dept of Agriculture unless the bill is vetoed by Governor Earl Ray Tomblin. The bill recently passed the Senate and House despite opposition by numerous WV Sportman's groups, including the WV Bowhunters Association, and individual hunters. This move endangers WV deer herds to the spread of chronic wasting disease which has ravaged captive cervid farms in other nearby states monitored by state agriculture departments.

Pennsylvania – Tim Denial

PA Game Commission has announced that you may now get certified for a hunting license online. You must be sixteen years old and pages are timed to make sure you do not gloss over text. Under sixteen must still go to hands on classes.

North Carolina – Jeff Holchin

Carolina Traditional Archers has just relocated from Maiden, NC to their own property and clubhouse in Conover, NC. See their website thecta.org for details.

Virginia – Randy Brookshier

Last year Sunday hunting was a hot topic as for the first time ever, Virginia allowed hunting on Sunday with certain restrictions. One of the arguments against Sunday hunting was the fact that the deer would get no rest and our deer kill would sky rocket. The final numbers should be released by the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries in mid February, but preliminary reports indicate that the deer kill in VA was down approximately 22% when compared to last year. A heavy mast crop, disease and heavy predator kills have all been cited as possible reasons.

A federal agency investigating puma sightings in the eastern United States received 381 reports of mountain lions or pumas in 2014, with the largest number of reported sightings coming from Virginia.

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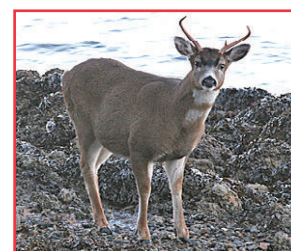
Pacific West Region 2015 Membership Hunts Blacktail Deer

Blacktail Deer North: Alaska

A membership Hunt will be held on Alaska's Kodiak Island for Sitka Blacktail Deer from November 7-14, 2015.

Spots are extremely limited.

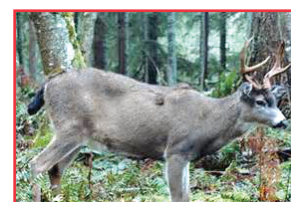
Check the Pacific West Region forum of the PBS website for more information.



Membership Hunt lead is Steve Hohensee,
steveh.alaska@gmail.com

Blacktail Deer South: Oregon

A membership hunt will be held in Oregon's Evans Creek Unit for Columbian Blacktail Deer starting November 14, 2015. Details will be forthcoming on the Pacific West Region forum of the PBS website.



Membership Hunt lead is Jim Akenson,
micaake@yahoo.com

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Maryland – Tony Sanders

Historic St. Mary's City CWMA to Open to Deer Hunting - there is a new public hunting opportunity available in St. Mary's County. The 170-acre Historic St. Mary's City Cooperative Wildlife Management Area (CWMA) will be open to regulated deer hunting only. The site will follow the season dates and bag limits in the 2014-2015 Guide to Hunting and Trapping in Maryland. To access the area, hunters must possess a seasonal permit (free) and schedule their reservation in advance through the Myrtle Grove WMA office. Hunters must park in the designated parking area. For more information, to reserve access, or to apply for the DNR Southern Region Public Hunting Permit, call the office at 301-743-5161.

Four Maryland Deer Test Positive for Chronic Wasting Disease - The Maryland Department of Natural Resources received laboratory confirmation on January 16, 2015 that four additional white-tailed deer harvested in Maryland tested positive for chronic wasting disease (CWD), bringing the total number of overall positive cases to six. More information on CWD in Maryland is available on the DNR website.

Southeast Report

(Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee)

by Ethan Rodrigue – Regional Representative

There's lots going on in the South East! There are several major shoots coming up, an upcoming turkey hunt, and a hog hunt for the books!

Alabama

The Pre-Spring Arrow Fling will be held once again at Tannehill Historical State Park in McCalla, AL. The dates are Feb. 27, 28, and March 1. Compton Traditional Bowhunters will be co-hosting this event. There will be lots of vendors and great fun for all. For additional information contact Terry at archertw@bellwouth.net.

South Carolina – Ron Herman

South Carolina is the home of the NWTF and thus the state garners a lot of turkey talk. Visit the following link for season information. <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/regs/turkeyseason.html>. SC has Game Zones so you have to know where you are hunting to know the legalities for dates and limits. Other good turkey information can be found at the following links:

- 2014 Turkey Brood Survey - <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/turkey/2014BroodSurvey.html>
- Fall Turkey Season Proposal - <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/turkey/fallseason.html>
- Good article on helping SCDNR control coyotes and some upcoming programs and workshops they offer - <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/wildlife/coyote/index.html>

Tennessee

The Tennessee Classic will once again be held May 4-6. There will be a pot luck supper Saturday night and primitive camping is available on site. "The Ultimate Self Bow Challenge" is a must for all self-bowyers, both experienced and novice! There will be lots of vendors and displays set up for all to enjoy. For additional information please visit "[twinoakesbowhunters.com](http://www.twinoakesbowhunters.com)".

We will be holding the first annual Tennessee Spring Turkey



hunt at Fall Creek Falls this April. The hunt dates for the park are April 4-12 and this is an archery only hunt held in Fall Creek Falls State Park every year. Anyone wanting to bring along their better half is more than welcome, as there are tons of things to do and see in the park, and this is located about an hour North of Chattanooga. My lovely wife has volunteered to entertain a "ladies day" of shopping and sightseeing on Saturday. There is primitive and modern camping as well as cabin rentals and an inn complete with a fantastic restaurant in the park.

We will be primarily targeting one four day weekend out of that time frame, but anyone wanting to hunt the entire time is more than welcome to do so! Please contact me with any questions about this hunt. woodsmanbows@yahoo.com.

Georgia – Matt Schuster

Black Beard Island Tuskers! The first weekend in December found ten PBS members on the famous Blackbeard Island National Wildlife Refuge bowhunt and a great time was had by all. This hunt has a strong traditional following and about half of the hundred-plus bowhunters were carrying around a stick and string. Although we greatly enjoyed swapping stories with our PBS brothers, we also had several opportunities to tell our story to other bowhunters on the island. The weekend was foggy, but beautiful, and hunting Blackbeard is a challenge, especially for those first visiting the island. We did well; however, and posted a 30% success rate. Rob Burnham, Tom Jenkins, and Bill Dunn all took home venison, and several other folks passed up shots at deer and hogs. To read much more about this hunt and see some impressive photos, visit the Blackbeard Hunt thread under Membership Hunts on the PBS website.

In late January, Jeff Holchin again hosted a PBS pig hunt off the coast of southern Georgia. The hunting this year was phenomenal with nine hunters taking seven pigs the first weekend and everyone got plenty of action. Some more than they wanted: Bob Brundage even managed to get charged by a sharp-tusked boar and had to fend him off with his bow, and Tim Denial got so stuck in the mud he had to just watch as a sounder eased by him. After dark, he managed to use his cell to call for help and his PBS brothers managed to dig him out. The second weekend, four hunters had plenty of action as well and managed to bring back a couple more coastal rooters. Again, for details and pictures, please check out the threads on this hunt on our website.

Both of these hunts represent the best of PBS and are sure to have lots of support in the future. Thanks to all who participated in these hunts and made them so successful, especially Jeff Holchin who put in a tremendous amount of time and effort shuttling hunters around on the coastal hunt. If we had a Southeast member of the year, he would get my vote. One other note - thanks to these hunts and some nice word-of-mouth, PBS picked up at least a couple good new members from Georgia just in the last month. *



In Memory of Larry O. Fischer

March 22, 1957 – October 18, 2014

Rivers, Rain and Remembrances

Clouds crowned the Bitterroots and a steady rain ran across the windshield as we turned to follow the Bitterroot River to Lolo Pass, which would be the first leg of our melancholy journey from Montana to Boise, Idaho. The trip would be hard and the gloom of October rain wouldn't make it easier – then again, it seemed only fitting that this tearful passage should be accompanied by oppressive weather. After all, we were on our way to say our final goodbyes to our close friend, Larry Fischer.

As we climbed the winding road running along Lolo Creek toward Idaho, I couldn't help but notice the lure of fall; a time that all hunters treasure as their favorite time of the year. How many times had Larry and I felt the cool air of a fall morning greet us as we ventured forth in search of game?

"Not often enough." I thought to myself as we dropped into Idaho and traveled along the Lochsa River as it tumbled westward on its path toward the Pacific. The mist framed evergreens and golden tamaracks as each turn in the road revealed eddied waters that would surely hold fish to be tempted by a well-placed fly. Were Larry with me, we would have had to linger with rod in hand ...

The morning fog rolled in from the Atlantic and the wind pelted us with sea spray as we all stood together on a rocky beach along Namibia's Skeleton Coast. Larry looked a bit comical as he stood with the surf rod fixed to a belt grommet around his waist and waited for a fish to bite. He held the long surf rod in one hand and a bottle of Castle beer in the other as he tipped the beer in my direction to toast the adventure.

"Does it get any better than this?" he yelled over the din of wind and surf.

"Nope!" I shouted back. "But it would be nice if the sun would come out!"

I pointed back toward the sand dunes of the Namib Desert only a few hundred yards behind us and we could see that the sun was



Larry's spirit of adventure and propensity to "seize the moment" started a group of friends on their Namibian adventures. Surf fishing on a rocky beach along Namibia's Skelton Coast and hunting Gemsbok with Belinda were among those adventures.

shining there while we endured

the mist and chilly winds on the beach. Later, we drove into the dunes and grilled the fish the sea had given up to us. Shaking off the chill of the beach, we enjoyed the sun and practiced with our bows in anticipation of the hunting that would come when the fishing was done. The high dunes stretched for miles and presented an unobstructed view of the Skeleton Coast all the way to Angola.

Two years earlier we had been enjoying a PBS gathering when Larry hatched a plan for what would become our Namibian adventures.

"Have you met Gert and Lyn Coetzee yet?" Larry asked.

"The Namibians?" I asked.

"Yeah," Larry said. "Gert is offering two-for-the-price-of-one Gemsbok. I think we should take him up on it. It would be a great trip for the wives, too!"

It wouldn't be my first trip to Africa, but I looked toward Carol, who had been chatting with Belinda Fischer, and M.C. Slaughter while Larry and I dreamed our dream with Bo Slaughter.

"Sounds good to me!" Carol said.

Bo and M.C. agreed and Larry left us to return a few minutes later with Gert and Lyn in tow. Soon, we were all bound for Namibia, thanks to Larry's spirit of adventure

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The Namibia adventurers were Wayne, Carol, Larry, Belinda, M.C. and Bo.

and a propensity to “seize the moment.”

We passed the confluence of the Selway River and the Lochsa River, which converged into the Clearwater River’s Middle Fork and the rain continued to fall. So much water passing from sky to earth, earth to river, and river to sea. As I watched the currents guiding us forward, I couldn’t help but contemplate the role that water plays in the timeless dance of predator and prey.

Billy guided the Zodiac through the boulder-strewn river toward a gash in the mountains that had been cut by primordial waters flowing into the north-western portion of Alaska’s Prince William Sound. I glanced over the side and noted scores of salmon swimming upstream toward our destination.

“They’re still running good here.” I said to Larry as I gestured into the water at the side of the Zodiac. Larry looked over the side, smiled and nodded back at me in agreement as Billy maneuvered the Zodiac to a shallow spot at the river’s edge. He could go no further at low tide and Larry hopped out and held a line while I scrambled onto the shore.

With the tide at low ebb, the gash through the mountain was only a few yards wide with unscalable cliffs rising up on both sides. When the tide came in, the stream would be impassible so we hoped we would find an open valley at the other end and a good place to hunt hungry Alaskan black bears. Billy would wait until we were out of sight before returning to his First Mate duties on Outer Limits, Captained by Roark Brown of Homer Ocean Charters. As Larry and I carefully waded the stream

Larry, Wayne and Bo shooting in the Namibia dunes.



beneath the cliffs, I glanced back and saw that Billy was gone and a steady Alaska rain began to fall.

Eventually, the cliffs opened to reveal an inland bay set in a grassy plain surrounded by pine-covered slopes and several anonymous streams feeding the bay. The grass at the edge of the bay was tall and reminded me of the long-grass of Africa. Dead salmon, most half-eaten, littered the shore and bear trails through the grass led away from the bay into the wilderness. We had definitely picked the right spot to find bears!

We decided to press forward in search of a likely ambush spot with a favorable wind and a willing bear. Our longbows seemed a bit puny when considering a close encounter with a hungry Alaskan black bear, but that just added all the more to the thrill of our adventure.

Soon, we found a stand of pine trees adjacent to one of the small streams feeding the bay.

The trees provided a respite from the rain and the fact that the grove was strewn with rotting salmon carcasses indicated that the bears also liked to feed in the cover after catching a meal from the water. Larry and I settled down to wait with our backs to the same tree so we could watch for bear in all directions. As we waited, we talked like old friends often do. We hoped that our next trip would be to New Zealand where we could fish for trout, hunt valley forests for red deer, and trek across mountain tops in search of Himalayan tahr.

“What is that?” Larry remarked as he gestured to the far shore of the bay. I looked toward the tree line a half-mile away and saw little more than a black spot in the tree line. I raised my binoculars and scanned the area, as did Larry. At first I saw nothing, but then a black dot emerged from the shoreline grass.

“It’s a bear . . . and a big one,” I said. It was so far away and such an insignificant little black dot that it really didn’t seem important. We’d seen many bears from afar and there was little point in pursuing one that was foraging a half-mile away across an inland bay. We judged it a better option to stay put and wait for bears to come to us. But every few minutes, we would look across the bay and the black spot would be a bit larger. Soon, the black spot grew too large and got close enough to our side of the bay that it could no longer be ignored.

“One of us should set up for that bear,” Larry said as he gestured toward the far side of the adjacent stream.

“Your turn, Larry.” I had already been busted while stalking a bear that had approached from the same direction. “Mind the wind after you cross the stream.” I told him. “Set up past those willows on the far side. It seems the wind is blowing toward the bay closer to the stream.”

After crossing the stream, Larry gave me a final look and faded into the willows on the far side as he went to meet the bear. I tried to track his progress with my binoculars, but he was gone and I was left alone in the grove with the steady patter of rain as I waited for the outcome of Larry’s encounter with the bear.

Soon, motion caught my eye in the willow stand and I picked out Larry’s wool hat moving back toward the stream. His gate indicated a lack of success, but he seemed satisfied at having had an opportunity at a good bear.

“He winded me,” Larry said without fanfare. Nothing more needed to be said or explained. We’d hunted together for a long time and both knew that a lack of success is all part of the traditional bowhunting experience. We gladly paid that price every time we ventured out into the world with bow in hand and adventure in our hearts. Larry settled back down at our tree and we shared the peace of a quiet rain on an inland bay in the wilds of Alaska.

“Hey, Larry. I love you.” I said. The phone line hummed for a

few seconds and I heard Larry's voice crack with emotion.

"I love you too, Wayne." We both began to cry.

Our time together had grown short and neither of us wanted to leave anything left unsaid. Fourteen months earlier, a black spot had emerged on scans of Larry's pancreas. Larry had fought the cancer valiantly, but it was eventually declared inoperable. We both knew that our shared paths would soon be coming to an end. We had planned one last adventure together. A return to the Prince William Sound where we had fished and hunted with Belinda and Carol and close friends, Dave and Nancy Doran. Larry and I really wanted to see that little bay one more time. But it was not to be. "The Bastard" (as Larry had come to call the cancer) had lumbered into our lives and was taking everything with it. Now it was about to take my friend with whom I had shared so many great adventures and happy times.

Cutting south across North Idaho, we found the Salmon River – fittingly known as "The River of No Return" – and we followed it south, eventually crossing the Payette River's North Fork and following it on to Boise.

Belinda had asked me to provide a eulogy at Larry's services. As Carol and I traveled the river ways of the Bitterroot, Lochsa, Selway, Clearwater, Salmon, and Payette, I realized that Larry had been like water to my life and the lives of his friends and family. He nourished us and quenched our thirst for adventure. And, like water, he gave of himself by filling the dimensions of any role he was asked to assume. He gave of himself to bowhunting by teaching those who aspired to the bowhunting lifestyle, led us in preserving our traditional values, and provided a benchmark of ethics and fair-chase to those who might be tempted to find an easier

way

when it really is all about hunting the hard way.

As I closed my eulogy and looked out across the sizeable gathering of Larry's friends and family, I could think of no words better than those of Norman Maclean as he described memories of a cherished friend and outdoorsman lost too soon:

"Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world's great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs. I am haunted by waters." – Norman Maclean, *A River Runs Through It and Other Stories*.

I will miss you, my friend. Keep a camp fire burning for me.

J. Wayne Capp

One for Larry

The journey to my 2014 buck started 2 days before the Montana September elk and deer season opener. I was hunting antelope 30 miles from my deer and elk area along the Missouri river breaks. My thoughts were heavy at this time about Larry Fischer and his brave battle with cancer when something happened to me. I became very sick with lots of pain in my lower back and groin area. I was 20 miles from my camp and hunting alone. I became dizzy from the pain, and had many wild ideas of what might be wrong with me.

I stumbled back to the truck and drove back to my camp. I laid down for awhile and decided to go back to my cabin 4 hrs away. I knew I couldn't pack an antelope out so elk and deer hunting was put on hold.

The next week I kept the doctors busy with tests and blood work. To my surprise it turned out to be three large kidney stones. What a relief as I have had them before only on my left side never my right side. Cancer was on my mind waiting for

the results. I never told anyone of my ordeal because it was pale compared to what my friend Larry Fischer had gone through.

The pain lasted through elk season so I missed my first elk and deer opener in my life. I did do a little hunting close to home and got to learn some new areas as bow season ended. I was still thinking of my friend Larry every day. Rifle season would start in six days. You can bowhunt during rifle season which allows me to hunt during the November rut, O YA!!

To make a long story short, the buck I shot came up from the depths of the canyon below the cabin in search for the girls. I had slipped out at dark and knelt at a natural blind at the base of some pine trees with several game trails passing close by as I had done in the past. I was below the does when he came by 10 yds from the tree I was kneeling by. He turned to look at his



back trail and a 1970 aluminum Bear tipped arrow was on its way through to the far shoulder. When you are that close you can hear your shot go through him. I watched him run over a small ridge and with my hands cupped to my ears, I heard him crash to the ground.

It was a very warm November morning, as I looked up to the heavens above and said this one's for you Larry; I will miss you.

Jerry Krauth

Memorial to Karl Lockwood

1950 – 2014

On December 28, 2014 we lost our old friend Karl Lockwood. Karl died of complications of heart disease at home with people he loved by his side. Karl was born in Cleveland, Ohio, in February, 1950. He was a journeyman electrician and avid outdoorsman. He was especially enthralled with archery and traditional bowhunting. Karl was one of the first members to take out a Life Membership in Professional Bowhunters Society. He was Life Member #4 and a past president of New York Bowhunters, Inc. (NYB). He was also a past president of the Ontario County Conservation Federation. Karl was a New York State certified Bowhunter Education instructor where he taught the National Bowhunter Education course for many years.

In the 1990s a bowhunter friend of ours lost her eye sight as a result of an accident during spinal surgery. Devastated at the news, Karl was determined to do something to help. Karl contacted his friend, the late John Rook. Like all of us he marveled at John's archery and bowhunting accomplishments. Karl brought the two blind bowhunters together in conversation. Before long Karl had called a meeting of some of his NYB friends and at that meeting he laid out his plan to host a New York Bowhunters, Inc. Physically Challenged Bowhunt. I believe it was the first hunt of its kind in the country. It was a huge undertaking but Karl had his mind set. Within a few months all the pieces had fallen into place. With the help of God and Mr. Robert Congel, NYB was host to more than a dozen men and women with all manner of physical disabilities ranging from blind, deaf, amputees, paraplegic and quadriplegic. Some of these people had never dreamed they would ever be able to hunt with a bow and arrow and some of them had been bowhunters but thought that they would never again be able to hunt with a bow. Karl knew better. His staff was partly made up of bowhunters like John Rook who had not allowed their disability to stand in the way of their passion for bowhunting. Even though it would have been legal for some of these people to hunt with a crossbow Karl would not have it. He found ways to modify conventional equipment and/or technique so that every one, without regard to physical limitation, could successfully take game with conventional bows and arrows. Though it seemed like an impossible dream those hunters that first year, on that first hunt, took a number of deer. The hunt became an



annual event that continued under Karl's guidance for several years. Through working with physically challenged bowhunters on a daily basis he became a foremost authority on the topic of physically challenged bowhunting equipment and technique. Karl rarely took credit himself. In his opinion the credit should go to the men and women courageous enough to take up the challenge of bowhunting in spite of disability. He revered people like John Rook and George Bolender who had mastered the art and now made it their mission to mentor the new hunters.

As a bowhunter Karl had a unique and refreshing point of view. He was something of a bowhunting historian and collector but he had his own twist. I once knew him to spend quite a bit of money at auction on one of Fred Bear's personal hunting arrows. The next bow season he carried that arrow in his quiver. We all just assumed that he carried it as a sort of good luck talisman. We were wrong. When the time came he shot a deer with that expensive collector's arrow. The cedar shaft snapped in two as the deer ran off. Back at camp he proudly told the boys that he had killed that deer with Fred Bear's own arrow. Knowing what he had paid for it someone had to ask the question. "Karl, why would you use 'that arrow' to shoot a deer?" With his silly smirk he answered "That's what it was made for."

I was Karl's vice president when he was president of New York Bowhunters, Inc. I saw him confront and stand his ground with some of the most powerful men in New York State government. I also saw him tenderly work with shy young people who suffered horrible disfigurement and disability. He had a knack for identifying a person's strengths and putting that person in a position where they could use their strength to everyone's best advantage. That done, he liked to sit back, have a

There can be no doubt that Karl Lockwood left the world of bowhunting better than he found it. Though understated and perhaps under appreciated his accomplishments have and will continue to benefit hundreds, even thousands of bowhunters in our time and well into the future.

~ Kevin Armstrong

beer, and watch them do their thing. He and I used to guide NYB by a few basic tenets like; 'The buck stops here' and 'If you have to get the job done give it to a busy man' and 'It does not matter who gets the credit so long as we achieve our goal'. Karl had no problem with public speaking. He could address a crowd of two hundred as easily as he could talk to his next door neighbor. I was green to NYB leadership and he knew I was nervous about public speaking. He and I both knew that the various portions of our NYB banquet had to go like clock work or the auction at the end of the presentations would run too late to make any money for the organization. He had a secret cure for my public speaking fears: At the banquet he finished his meal five minutes before it was time to begin the evening's presentations. He leaned over to me and said "I have to go out for a smoke. I'll be right back" and away he

went. I was sweating bullets knowing that if he did not make it back by 6:00 PM I was going to have to stand up in front of all those people and lead the evening's events. He did not come back! Trying to buy a little time I leaned over to our guest speaker Dr. Dave Samuel and asked, "Are you about ready to give your talk?" Dave looked me in the eye and said, "I'm a nervous wreck!" I still don't know if he saw my nervousness and was ribbing me or if he was sincere. Either way I had to suck up my courage, take the microphone, get up in front of all those people, and begin the events. Karl let me have the reins for 10 or 15 minutes. Just long enough for me to see that I could do it. Then he casually returned and resumed his duties. He knew I would overcome my fear, he just forced my hand. The old sink or swim technique. That was Karl.

Karl's friends joined me in searching through their old photos to find a good picture or two of him for this memorial. We found several photos but looking through the pictures from over two decades two themes became vividly clear. First, there were very few pictures with Karl by himself. In the overwhelming majority of all of the pictures he was one man in a group picture. He would be standing among members of New York Bowhunters board of directors, or presenting an award to a youth, or working with a physically challenged bowhunter, or a legislator, or a group of kids at a youth bowhunting camp or with his buddies. Usually the group was a bunch of bowhunters. Often they were celebrating an accomplishment of either the group or of some individual member of in the group. Whenever he could Karl stepped to the back or the side of the picture. Second, in the few pictures that we did find of Karl by himself he was always in camouflage and his face was always painted with camouflage grease paint.

There can be no doubt that Karl Lockwood left the world of bowhunting better than he found it. Though understated and perhaps under appreciated his accomplishments have and will continue to benefit hundreds, even thousands of bowhunters in our time and well into the future.

Karl had his demons. In the last several years they estranged him from most of his old friends. That was not our choice. It was his. His friends could only respect his decision. That said he never left our hearts or our minds. He never will. Rest in peace my old friend. I hope you find a strong heart, happiness, and good hunting in your new dimension. When we all gather again at the great campfire Mike and Weaver and I will all be expecting a bowl of your tortellini soup.

Kevin Armstrong



What Makes a Superior Self Nocked Arrow?

By “Hatchet” Jack Keener

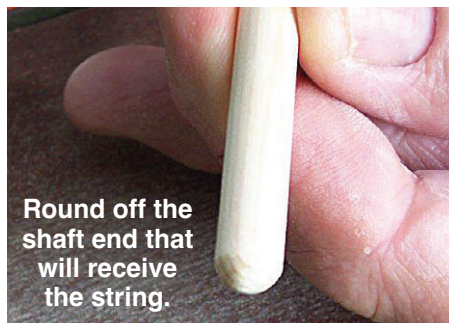
Since the early 90's I have been involved with the Florida Frontiersmen club here in Florida and have been selling my wooden bows and arrows to members and participants of our premier event, the Alafia River Rendezvous. I have always tried to impress on the participants of our archery events the importance of using the right arrow with their bows. Most of the participants are not hunters or toxophiles like you would expect to see and be among at a traditional archery event. Generally they do not have a broad knowledge of their tackle. In an effort to enlighten them as to what makes a good self nocked arrow I wrote the following guide that I thought would help them in making their own arrows or what to look for in a well made self nocked arrow that they may have an opportunity to buy at our event. Many of the tips and instructions listed below are also good points that apply to making any arrow and would benefit any arrow's construction. What I will be describing below is what I call “production arrow” construction. What I mean here is arrows made from raw shafts purchased for the intent to make arrows as opposed to arrows made from cane, bamboo or shoots. Many of the techniques would apply but those arrows require extra attention to make them become an arrow shaft. Once you have learned to make these production arrows it would be a short few more steps to make more “primitive” arrows.

The following things make a well-fashioned self nocked arrow in my opinion. I have now made thousands of self nocked arrows and believe these are the items that are important and necessary to craft a quality arrow. I will assume that any one that is interested enough to read this and who intends to build their own arrows has researched arrow building enough to realize the tools and materials required, such as dip tubes, rasps, saws, fletching, jigs, etc.

1 Start with a shaft that is the right spine for the intended bow. This is probably the most important of all the items listed as

shooting the wrong spined arrow out of a bow can never lead to consistent accurate shooting. Spine of course, is a measure of deflection of a particular shaft. If you are purchasing the shafts from a supplier you will want to ask for shafts within a spine group that encompasses the spine you are wanting to achieve. Shafts are sold in spine groups of 5# deviations. If for example you believe the shafts that are required should be 53#'s, you would want to order shafts in the 50-55# range. If you are producing your own homemade shafts you will want to spine them yourself with the aid of a spine meter.

2 Choose one end of the shaft and grind a rounded surface on the end of the shaft that will receive the string. When I say grind I mean to use a rasp, file and/or sanding to achieve a smooth rounded surface on the end of the shaft. Before you do this you should perform the first straightening procedure. This is nothing more than looking down the length of the shaft and seeing a bend, kink, or curves in the shaft. Once any are identified, simply use the base of your left hand (assuming you are right handed



Round off the shaft end that will receive the string.

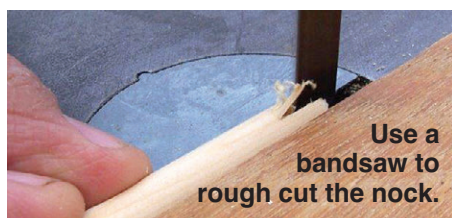


Straightening procedure

and right eyed dominant) to torque the shaft the opposite way while looking down the shaft. It will take a little practice but you will achieve a straight arrow in the end.

3 Sand the raw shaft with 220 grit sandpaper including the nock end. This is important to achieve a surface that will be smooth and accept the sealants that will later be applied. Most shafts are fairly smooth when received but some will have rough places along their length and this will help these areas. Also the sanding will remove any unseen materials that may be on the shaft and undetected. This procedure only takes several seconds to perform and is worth the effort. Use one whole sheet of 220 grit paper and pass the shaft back and forth through the paper held in your left hand while rotating the shaft and reciprocating it with your right hand, again, assuming you are right handed. You can change ends during this procedure once to get full coverage of the shaft.

4 Cut the nock into the end of the shaft that will receive the string to a depth of about + or - 7/16th of an inch. Use a band saw or other means to achieve a rough-cut width of about 1/8 inch wide. This width when finished will readily accept a 16strand Dacron string that is commonly



used on wood bows with weights over 40#s. If, however you are making arrows for smaller diameter bow strings you may want to reduce this width. I only reduce this width for arrows that will be made for bows that are under 20#s as stings can be double served to accommodate this wider width. Make sure the cut is performed on the "rift" or face grain side, (the side that forms "feather points"). Make the cut on this side of the shaft so the cut will be at an angle of 90 degrees to the "reed" (edge grain).

5 Rasp, file and sand the bottom of the nock opening so that the bottom becomes "well rounded" as described in old literature. The bottom of the nock should be rounded from rift to rift grain so that it forms a semi-circle in section. **This is important** as the finished arrow will make the least amount of contact at the center of the arrow diameter and thus not receive "torqued" forces when going through the power stroke of the string when shooting the future arrow. I believe this one oversight by most self nock arrow makers to be the single most important way that they could improve their arrow making. Many

arrows that I see at our Rendezvous are simply sawn out nocks that are square at the bottom of the nock. I believe that



this will lead to poor arrow flight and bow-string wear and tear. This procedure takes a little time but makes the better arrow in the end. **It's worth the effort!**

6 You should have already made the first straightening of the shaft before you ground the rounded nock end as described above in #2. It is now time to perform a second straightening before you give the shaft it's first dip of whatever finish you are going to apply. The straightening procedure is the same as above. once you have sealed the shaft you will notice that less straightening will be required in the future construction of the arrow. You will also notice that as the spine weight increases the straightening procedures will decrease in the number of times that they are required. I use Bohning lacquers for the finishes on my arrows and the first full-length dip is in "clear coat". Use a horizontal 2"x4" with finish nails spaced about 4 inches apart to hang the dipped arrow on for drying. Use clothes pins to hang the un-nocked end of the shaft. This first coat is thinned well and will be to seal and raise the grain on the shaft. The nock end of the arrow should be the bottom when dipped and you should have a card handy to blot the bottom of the arrow before the clear coat dries. This will help your finished arrow to not have dried protruding drips forming "nipples" on the end of the nocks.

7 Once the shaft has been dipped and is dry it will require "wooling" to knock off the prickly grain that has been raised on the surface of the shaft. This is done with 0000 steel wool by holding one end of the shaft and reciprocating it back and forth with one hand and holding the shaft be-

tween the steel wool in the other. The procedure is similar to the sanding procedure above in #3. It just takes a few passes to knock off the prickles.



8 The next step is to re-enforce the nock below the bottom that you rounded in step #5. I do this with either un-waxed dental floss or colored silk thread depending on what I intend the final appearance of the arrow to be. I do this now because the second dip described below will lock this reinforcement in place and solidify it. To do this, I fold back about 1/5" of the thread on itself and lay the loop end 3/4" below the deepest part of the nock. Start wrapping the thread around the shaft and itself below the nock where the rounded part fades back into the shaft. After a few wraps the thread will hold itself in place and you can continue the wrap simply by turning the shaft. Once you have wrapped about 1/4-3/8 of an inch, feed the loose end through the loop that you previously left for this purpose and pull the opposite end to bring the looped end under the serving. Once under and snug, consolidate any gaps in the serving by pushing the edge of the serving towards each other and ending at the top just under the rounded nock. Re-snug the serving one last time by pulling each end of the serving

~ continued on page 24 ~



Barry Wensel's Trophy Whitetail Bootcamps

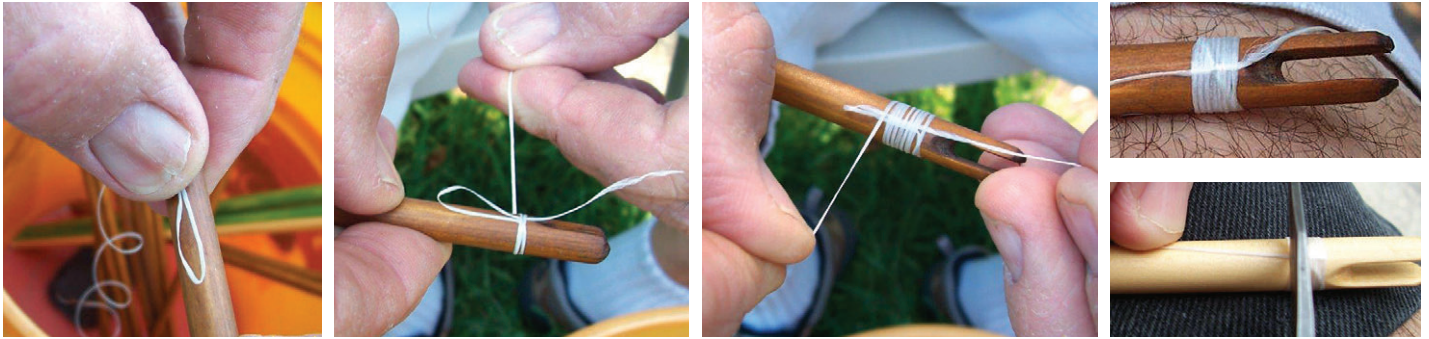
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What Makes a Superior Self Nocked Arrow?

~ continued from
page 23



Step 8. Re-enforcing the nock.

threads that are at opposite end of the served area. Use a sharp knife or box cutter to cut the excess serving ends flush with the body of the serving.

9The second dip is ready to be performed after one more straightening as described in #2 above. Straightening just before the dip will insure that you have straight arrows later. This means that you have all of the shafts that you have prepared to dip hanging by clothespins on a horizontal 2"x4" with finish nail hangers spaced far enough apart so that shafts that have been dipped will not inadvertently touch its neighbor. I use Bohnings Super Coat for this second and final dip on production self nocked arrows that I sell. This Super Coat dip is not thinned as much as the first Clear Coat dip. This dip will leave a nice smooth non-absorbent finish coat that can stand on its own or receive crown dipping and/or cresting if desired. If you were to want an extremely glossy finish, you would give the shafts one more dip after this second one. After this second dip you should use a card again to blot the bottom tip of the nock as you did before after the first dip. Again these final drips will harden on the nock end (bottom) of the shaft to form "nipples" if not blotted away before they harden.

10Crown dipping is optional but I do it a lot to dress up the arrow and to make it visible in flight for a couple of reasons. One is to see any irregularities in flight so adjustments can be made. Also, if you hunt with your self-nocked arrows as I do, it is much easier to see where you hit an animal under low light conditions with a crown dipped arrow. Lastly it is simply easier to

find the arrow later, as the crown dip is easier to see sometimes. I will not go into this procedure because it is only cosmetic and does not make the arrow function any better. If you do decide to crown dip your shafts though, make sure you again use a card to blot off the excess lacquer before it starts to dry.

11Cresting also adds to the beauty of the arrow and again I do it a lot for that reason and because it also personalizes arrows to make them easily identified. Again as mentioned above with crown dipping I will not elaborate on this procedure as it does not help the arrow function better or have any values other than the ones mentioned above. There are many reference manuals on arrow making and this topic along with crown dipping are covered exhaustively in many of these manuals.

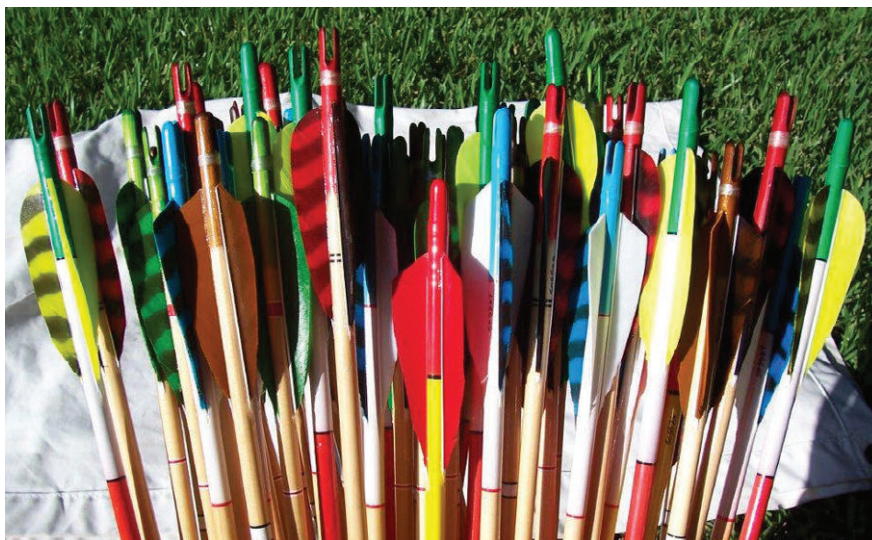
12Fletching the arrow can be done manually by hand and I do it sometimes if I am making an arrow from shoot shafts or cane/bamboo. I have been describing above what makes a superior production type, self nocked arrow from commercially produced shafts that most shooters use and will only describe what makes a superior fletch on these shafts. I

use, and have only used, Bitzenburger fletching jigs. These, in my biased opinion, are the best that can be purchased for many reasons. Whether you buy pre-cut feathers or chop full-length feathers as I do does not matter. What does matter is making sure they are all either left wing or right wing. The fletching jig that you will use will be left, right or straight. I use a left wing jig and all left wing fletches. I also make all my arrows for a right hand shooter, as the majority of shooters are right handed. i.e. (Arrow will be on left side of bow when held by the shooter.)

THIS IS IMPORTANT IN MY OPINION: Make sure that the rift grain of the shaft that points forward is on top of the shaft when placing in the nock receiver of the fletching jig.

The reason is because when a right handed shooter shoots this arrow, the remote possibility of the rift grain being lifted from a previously unnoticed break in the grain at one of these points will not be moving forward on the power stroke on the bottom. This alleviates the remote possibility of injury to the right-handed archer's left hand/arm if that point were to open up and pierce the shooters hand/wrist. If I were making a custom set of arrows for a left handed shooter the above would simply be

reversed so the points were facing forward on the bottom. I will not go in to actually fletching the arrow as this can be done with a variety of tastes and preferences and is generally up to the arrow maker. I will say however that I try to use minimal length and height fletching, as I believe in tuning the bow and using the

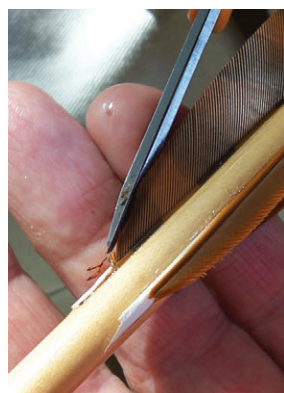


correctly spined arrows to achieve good consistent arrow flight. I do not like to drag arrows down with too much feather.

13 What is important as far as I am concerned in regard to the fletching are two points that I notice that many arrow makers ignore. One is placing a small amount of glue at the rear and front of each fletch so as to seal and reinforce these points. I usually do this just after the last fletch on each arrow is secured and the arrow is removed from the jig. Secondly, when all arrows in a set (usually a dozen for me), are sufficiently dried/cured as for the glue at the ends of the fletch, I trim the leading end of the fletch. I usually wait a day or two for this to occur. When I say trim, what I mean is removing the abruptness at the leading edge/end of the fletch by taking a sharp knife or box cutter and tapering the leading edge down to the shaft so that there is not a "snag" to come in contact with the shooters rest/strike plate on the bow or more importantly the shooters



Step 13. Gluing and trimming the fletching.



hand/knuckle if shooting off the hand as many of us do with our wooden bows that have no rest. This trimming procedure takes a little extra time but is very important in my opinion as for getting off a clean/safe shot.

14 Now that the back end of the shaft is finished, it's time to cut your shaft to the desired length and taper for points. Remember that a field point will be tapered with a taper tool that produces a 5 degree taper and the extra length needed so that the back of the point will end up at the correct length of arrow desired. This extra length is usually between 3/4" to 7/8" for field points and longer for broadheads. Remember also that arrow length is measured from the deepest point of the nock to the back of the point to figure out the cut off point. Mark all arrows in a set to the correct length and cut off excess length.

15 Tapering the shaft to receive the points can be done using a "pencil" point type taper tool or, as I use, a grinding type taper tool that is much faster and I be-

lieve more accurate. Whichever type tool used can provide the required taper. What I believe is important is to give each arrow a spin testing after the taper is made. If the taper is out of whack you will know it after placing the point on the tapered point end of the shaft and spinning it from the nock end vertically on a hard surface. If you notice any "wobble" grind a small amount from the tapered tip and adjust the taper accordingly. When your taper tool is set up correctly this hardly ever happens. You can set up correctly using an unworked shaft so that you have it set correctly before you start tapering your finished shafts.

16 Gluing the points on the shafts is usually done with a hot melt type of glue. I use Ferr-L-Tite by Bohning with an alcohol burner. Heat a little glue and rub/apply a little to the taper of the shaft. Use a set of pliers to hold and heat the point over the alcohol burner. When sufficiently heated the point will slide on the tapered end of the shaft and by turning the shaft the glue will squish out from the back of the taper and point. While holding the point with the pliers and the shaft with your hand place the tip of the point on a wood stop and remove the pliers from the tip while holding the shaft with a little pressure towards the wood stop. Use a part of an old t-shirt to remove the excess glue by rotating the shaft in your hand and holding the doubled thickness of t-shirt against the base of the point and back end of the taper

where the excess glue is appearing. Once the glue is removed, pick up the pliers that you previously laid down and secure the point with them again. While holding the point with the pliers and the shaft with your other hand submerge the point in a small bowl of water to lock the point in place. Spin the arrow one last

time to make sure the point is aligned correctly. If any "wobble" is present, reheat the point and adjust until no wobble. **IMPORTANT:** When you receive field points from the source, make sure you clean the oil residue off them that was left in their manufacturing. This can be done by dumping the points in a bath of acetone that is placed in a container with a top and gently agitating for a few minutes. Remove the points from the acetone bath and spread out on a paper towel until completely dry. This procedure will help eliminate the possibility of points working loose under use.

When the above items have been accomplished you should end up with what I believe are well made SELF NOCKED ARROWS. ♣



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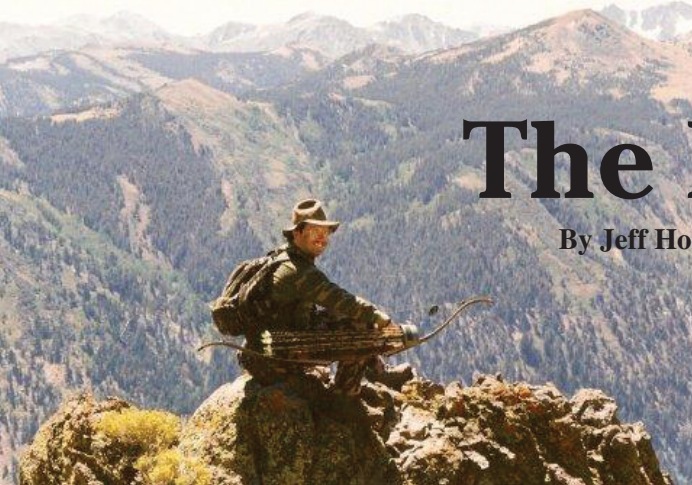
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The Drifter

By Jeff Holchin, Bowhunter



The first thing I noticed about the bow was the black marker inscription on the riser “The Drifter” custom made for George A Gomez by Jim Brackenbury” along with info on bow length and draw weight. It was a bow made by Jim Brackenbury himself, in the mid 1980’s. I was only “borrowing” it from my PBS friend Rick Stillman because I needed a bow with a draw weight of 60 pounds or more, but didn’t own one, for my upcoming New Hampshire moose hunt. However, after arrowing my first moose with that sweet-shooting bow, I begged Rick to part with it, and he did so for a very reasonable price. That was in 2003 and that bow and I “drifted” through life together for more than a decade to the present, traveling all over to bowhunt together. Since 2003, we have drifted through two states, three houses and four jobs. We’ve hunted Midwest whitetails, Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer and bighorn sheep, coastal Georgia hogs, Newfoundland moose and caribou, Alaskan Sitka deer and caribou, Texas javalina, Arizona Coues deer, and Virginia black bears. Sure, I’ve flirted with other bows, but always returned to my Drifter when I needed a sure thing. Several offers to buy it have been rejected.

I was very curious who George A Gomez was, and why he parted with the bow. Rick had no idea who he was, only that he got a good deal on the bow somewhere, perhaps at a shoot. I bought bowstrings from Linda Brackenbury and asked her if she knew, but she did not. I

Top left George A. Gomez with a brand new Drifter in California. On the right, Jeff Holchin with the same Drifter elk hunting in Montana. Bottom left, the drifters hunting bighorn sheep.

asked the question on a TradGang thread about Brackenbury Drifters some years ago, but nobody knew the name. I assumed that the mystery would remain unsolved. Then this past summer, a man in California Googled his name and that TradGang thread alerted him that somebody was looking for him. After a few PMs, my cell phone rang and I was finally speaking to George A Gomez. It turns out that in the mid 1980’s George wanted a new recurve bow so he ordered one from Jim Brackenbury with 51 and 61 pound limbs, and hunted hard with the bow for a year or two, but without a kill. Soon he drifted away from traditional archery and moved on to rifle hunting, so he sold the bow. It must have passed through several hands before Rick bought it, and then I got it. I wish I had met Jim Brackenbury, he sure sounds like he led an interesting life. I think he would be pleased to know that this bow, which he made to hunt, has been all over and killed a lot of animals. It still has a lot of life left in it, and I plan to keep it for life. 🦋



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R. J. Matthews with a Tenn. ten pt. Schafer bow, homemade cedar, 2 blade Magnus. Arrow wt. 735 gr. 11-3-14.



Steve Byerly with his 17 point bull with a 40 inch spread. He used a 56 lb. Morrison Recurve and a 740 grain arrow with a 200 grain Grizzly broadhead. It was a 20 yard shot and the bull traveled 220 yards. Gander, Newfoundland Canada



Steve Byerly, 74 years old, took this 6x6 bull elk. It was 25 yard shot and the elk traveled 80 yards before going down.

Member Photos



Gene and Barry Wensel with a great 5x5 buck Gene tagged when it came in to kick a decoy's butt! A 17 yard shot and 25 yards later he was on the ground.

Floatplane

Pack Horse of the North



By Monty Browning

Bush pilot Dave Fletcher thumped my shoulder and pointed a leather-gloved finger towards the tundra below. “Caribou,” Dave yelled above the roar of the 300 hp Pratt-Whitney radial engine. From my vantage point in the co-pilot’s seat I could clearly see two big, white-maned bulls stripping leaves from a clump of alder in the center of a football field-sized patch of yellow swamp grass, their massive velvet-covered racks bobbing up and down through the mirage of the spinning prop.

“How far from Camp 12,” I shouted.

“Maybe twenty miles,” Dave shouted back.

Just a good afternoon stroll for caribou, I mused, pulling my wool cap down over my ears to fight the cold. Moments later Dave throttled back and glided the DeHavilland Beaver float plane to a gentle swishing touchdown on a rain-speckled lake surface.

Dave nudged the throttle enough to keep the Beaver scooting along the surface until we were close to the rough sawn spruce planking of the makeshift dock. He cut the engine and coasted in using the rudders for a perfect broadside landing at the end of the dock. Dave jumped out on the floats and, with a big grin and a French greeting, threw a rope to the Indian camp caretaker to tie off. The flying packhorse had landed.

Unbuckling my safety belt, I eased the tip of my hickory longbow from under my boot where I had kept it firmly wedged to keep it from becoming tangled in the rudder pedals. Bush pilots are picky about such

things. Dave swung the cargo door open and three bowhunters plus gear rolled out on the dock. Boxes of grub, duffle bags, and bags of salt for the caribou capes were passed down from man to man, bucket brigade style until a sizeable pile was deposited on the rocky shore.

Dave humped up to the white canvas cook tent and returned nursing a milk glass mug of steaming coffee cupped in his fleece-lined gloved hands. Standing among the cold, dark spruce, I asked Dave if he ever tried any aerobatics in the Beaver. “Not with passengers,” he replied with a wink.

Dumping the last ground-filled swallow of coffee from his mug, Dave climbed into his mystical machine and strapped himself in. He adjusted his head set, then hit the starter. The big yellow-tipped propeller turned in a jerking arc, the engine sputtered and caught with a roar. Blue smoke belched from the exhaust but was quickly whisked away by the prop-wash.

Turning slowly into the wind and towards deep water, Dave let the engine idle until he was well clear of the dock. Dark, angry clouds rushed by overhead as the big engine suddenly roared to full power. The floats seemed to bog down in the water momentarily in a cloud of fine water spray. In seconds the empty and much lighter Beaver was skimming along the surface growing smaller in the distance. Then, as if jerked off the water by an invisible rope, it popped into the air.

Dave made a low sweeping turn against the dark spruce background at the end of the lake, then headed back towards camp in a low level full power run. Standing on a high bank above the water I knew what Dave was doing. The cowboy turned bush pilot was simply letting his pony run. Dave kept the Beaver pointed at the cook

tent with the floats trailing water no more than a few feet above the dark choppy surface of the lake. At the last minute, Dave jerked the wheel back hard, standing the Beaver on its tail in a steep climb, just missing the tops of the spruce. The Beaver clawed towards the clouds, then under Dave’s knowing caress, it slowly stood on one wingtip before pivoting towards the ground in an airspeed gaining power run. Dave rolled it out level just over the trees and headed back to pick up another load of hunters. The Beaver dipped first one wing tip then the other in typical “wing-wagging” goodbye.

As the dull thumping drone of the Pratt-Whitney faded in the distance I couldn’t help but marvel at the role the floatplane played in the modern day hunting scene. The floatplane is the pack-horse of the North.

From Alaska to Labrador, the floatplane is the hunter’s most important link between civilization and the remote bush. And the bush pilots who fly them are the barnstormers of our day. Loners mostly, some searching for adventure in a romantic daredevil lifestyle that seldom lasts more than several years before the novelty wears off and they fly off into the sunset in search of a more glamorous flying career, or bigger bucks.

In Northern Quebec, flying seaplanes is limited to relatively short periods of time, usually from July to October, when the weather dictates flight schedules. Pilots who shuttle hunters and fishermen to and from camps during the hunting and fishing season find themselves looking for work after the snows settle in and the long winter blast begins.

Some pilots sign on for the hunting season to ferry hunters and their gear to increase their total hours of flying time. And they do. Flying during the caribou season out of Schefferville, Quebec, most pilots log six to eight hours per day of actual flying time, not to mention loading and unloading

DeHavilland Beaver the author flew into camp in.





time. Such days can easily stretch into twelve long hours before the floatplanes are tied down for the night and the weary pilots trudge up to the café for a hot meal.

Because of the inherent risks involved in seaplane operations, pilots are strictly forbidden to fly over a certain number of hours before they are forced to rest up. During the intense rush of the hunting season, men and machines are put to the supreme test of endurance.

And, even considering the pilots' excellent safety record, and regardless of how careful each pilot is, an occasional mishap is inevitable. On a barren hillside that gently slopes into Squaw Lake at Schefferville, Quebec two white crosses rise out of the tundra in stark testimony to the risks involved. Several years ago, as the story goes, two floatplanes collided when a landing pilot failed to see another seaplane that was attempting to take off.

Since the first seaplane made its maiden flight in 1914, man has been fascinated with landing on the water with anything that flies, and understandably so. In caribou hunting, the cost and work involved in building a suitable landing strip in the wilderness is almost always cost prohibitive to the extreme, not to mention the annual

upkeep involved to keep it serviceable. And that is taking for granted that the game will be in the same area the following season.

The idea is to be able to put the hunter within walking distance of the game he wishes to hunt. And the floatplane does that extremely well. Virtually every lake or river with enough deep water for a takeoff becomes a per-

fectly level landing strip. No trees to cut, no rocks to blast and no equipment necessary. The pilot simply flies over to look for rocks, then drops his flaps and glides in like a big Canada goose for a smooth landing—no muss, no fuss. If the same movement patterns shift (as caribou are fond of doing), the bush pilot chooses the best lake in the vicinity and the hunter is back in business.

And for adding pure excitement and that special touch to the bowhunting experience, the floatplane hunt can't beat. I well remember my first experience with floatplanes. The year was 1979 and Tom Wright, a bowhunting friend and I, ventured to Alaska on an unguided, do-it-yourself bowhunt.

September found us under dark cloudy skies at Hank Rust's Flying Service located on Lake Hood in Anchorage. Our bush pilot stowed duffle bags, camping gear, bow boxes and other assorted necessities for the ten days in the Alaskan bush aboard Hank's Cessna 285 Skywagon. Moments later we

were winging our way toward distant snow-capped peaks. Flying west, we were working our way through a pass between two steep mountain ridges when the heavy cloud cover settled in on the mountain tops, leaving only an inverted triangular tunnel in which to fly. We were hugging the solid granite wall on the right side of the plane, and it occurred to me that in case of engine trouble, there was no place to land on floats.

We buzzed along the narrow alley, the bush pilot checking his chart occasionally,



Otter and boats at Camp 12 in 2008.

seemingly unconcerned. I was about to settle back and not think about how low we were flying when I noted another floatplane flying down the same tunnel, but straight in our direction. I pointed towards the oncoming plane and the bush pilot acknowledged with a calm, "Yeah, I see him." The other airplane simply roared underneath us without so much as a wing waggle. That's when I decided that I wouldn't get worried until the bush pilot got worried.

An hour later we headed straight in for a downwind landing on a dog-legged, high mountain lake in a blowing rain squall. Low clouds had the usual approach socked in so our bush pilot simply put it on the water with the stall warning buzzer blaring in our ears.

Then we found out why high top boots and waders are so popular with bush pilots. Our pilot taxied as close to the shore as possible, but the floats grated to a stop in loose gravel in shallow water fifty yards from shore.

Now I can tell you that the best waterproof ten inch boot is worthless in eighteen inches of water. Our stocky bush pilot was quite the sport and ferried our gear and two red-faced bowhunters to shore on his back.

But we weren't through with our floatplane experience. The day we left that lake, the weather was the exact opposite of the day we landed. It was bluebird weather, blue skies, sunny

~ continued on page 30

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Floatplane

~ continued from page 29

and warm, without a breath of wind to disturb the light blue puffy cloud mirrored surface. We loaded the gear into the plane, taxied out and lined up with the natural dam. Our pilot mentioned that we might have a little trouble breaking loose (whatever that meant).

A floatplane can land on a dime because of the drag created by the water on the floats. For the same reason, a floatplane needs a relatively long area to get enough airspeed to lift off. And naturally, the heavier the load, the more room necessary for takeoff. Add to that warm air and no headwind, and you have a problem on a short dog-legged shaped lake.

Our bush pilot cranked down the flaps and punched the throttle. The engine roared, the plane shook, and the floats started plowing through the cold water. The heavily-loaded Cessna picked up speed laboriously with the three bladed prop clawing at the thin, warm air. The pilot coaxed all the speed he could out of the engine. As soon as he had enough speed, he raised first one wing, breaking the float's contact with the water to decrease drag, then alternating one to the other in an attempt to become airborne. It didn't work.

Just as it seemed that we would crash headlong into the dam, our pilot cut the power and the floats bogged down with the

desired effect. We turned and taxied back to the other end of the lake.

The second attempt was the same. Not enough speed or lift to get airborne. If we could have broken free of the water, we could have buzzed over the shallow dam and started our instant descent into the river valley below.

The pilot wasn't happy, but he was calm. As we taxied back, he talked to Tom in the co-pilot's seat, then, over his shoulder to me, he said, "Hold on, this time we're leaving."

Our pilot had nursed a few precious feet of extra distance for our third attempt. He ran through his mental checklist, tapping gauges and toggle switches with his fingernail as he physically double checked each one. Satisfied, he shouted, "Hold on" over his shoulder as the engine roared to full power.

In moments we were skimming along the smooth surface, the floats acting like water skis as we raced towards the dam in a long gently curving arc. Our situation seemed unchanged, but just as I expected the pilot to cut power, he suddenly cranked the flaps down past the maximum takeoff position and jerked back on the wheel. The heavily-loaded Cessna humped into the air just as the dam passed beneath the floats. As we eased over the crest, the pilot dropped the nose and hugged the tundra for a short distance until we picked up enough airspeed to climb safely.



This is a new turbo conversion on an old Otter 2008.

As he cranked the flaps back up, the pilot turned to Tom with a grin and said something about tricks of the trade. Ole' Tom understood, he had flown a fighter plane at the close of WWII.

Of all the floatplanes in use today, Cessnas far outnumber all other makes. But, in northern Quebec, the big lumbering DeHavilland Otter rules the roost. And while almost everything that flies, with the exception of a "747" has been put on floats, the DeHavilland Otter is probably the most popular floatplane where carrying capacity and durability are desirable criteria. The Otter will lift off a white-capped lake in a blowing snow storm with the pilot and five bowhunters, plus gear and enough caribou meat and antlers to piece together a small herd. Granted, I spilled a little of my coffee the last time we did that but it worked.

The Otter is a great plane with a colorful history that dates back to World War II. It saw service in Vietnam and, in fact, one of



Helio Courier Float Plane. Author has spent many hours in this one.

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the Otters flown by Air Schefferville in northern Quebec carries patched-over bullet holes from the Vietnam conflict.

With more and more bowhunters headed north each year to hunt the ever popular Quebec/Labrador caribou, the name "Otter" is becoming a household word. Bowhunting exotic big game is always exciting. But, add to that the floatplane experience, and even an unsuccessful hunt in terms of game taken can be remembered and treasured as an adventure.

Author's note: This story was published in P.B.S. in 1992. In 2008 I ran camp 12 in Quebec again. It had been seventeen years since I had been there. I found my old camp Lonesome campsite 200 yards out in the bush and the firewood that I had cut in 1991 was still stacked waiting. The wood was completely rotten and moss and lichens covered it like a garment, but it was untouched. It is the land that time forgot.

I flew into camp in the same Otter that I had photographed seventeen years before and flew out in a Beaver to another camp. ♣

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2014 PBS Membership Utah Elk Hunt

By Randy Brookshier

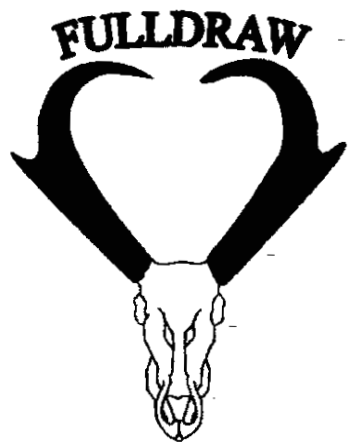
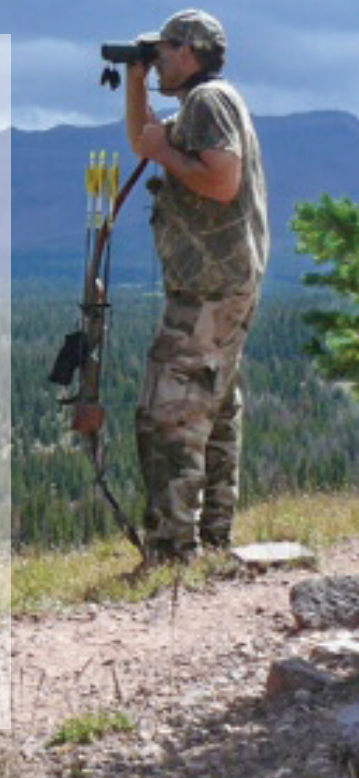
Along about the first of July this year I received a phone call from fellow PBS member, Duane Means. He was inquiring as to whether I was interested in traveling to Utah with him in mid September to attend the PBS members hunt for elk. Well, naturally I had to check with my wife to see if there were any conflicts but I still think I was able to get back to Duane in about ten minutes... Yes!

The next several weeks were a whirlwind of activity for me. I needed to purchase new equipment and upgrade some old equipment and most importantly, get myself in some kind of decent shape. I had to buy licenses and maps and all of the little last minute items we would need. Weeks of sweaty hikes, compiling check lists, purchasing and testing equipment and putting it in a pile finally came to an end. We loaded Duane's truck up with more gear than Lewis and Clark had packed for their expedition and headed west.

We left Virginia at 9:30 am on Saturday, August 15, and drove straight through, switching off driving and napping. We stopped off at a small store in Wyoming to pick up last minute provisions and then

headed to the mountains. We pulled into the trail head where we were going to set up base camp at 5:30 pm on Sunday, August 16th. We logged about 32 hours of driving time through some incredibly beautiful country. Once there it took us about two hours to set up a pretty comfortable base camp. I had purchased a new wall tent and wood stove earlier in the year and this was the maiden voyage as a hunting camp for it.

The first couple of days we cut some firewood, took care of camp chores and hunted pretty close to base camp. We were waiting for Jeff Holchin to arrive. He was traveling from North Carolina by himself and was due to arrive sometime on Monday. Duane and I hunted Monday afternoon and then came back to camp. We had a dinner of marinated venison back strap and sour dough bread and then crawled into our sleeping bags. About that time Jeff pulled into camp. We helped him get set up and settled in and then sat up way too late that night catching up and planning our assault on the local elk population. This members hunt had been pretty well attended in years past but this year it would only be the



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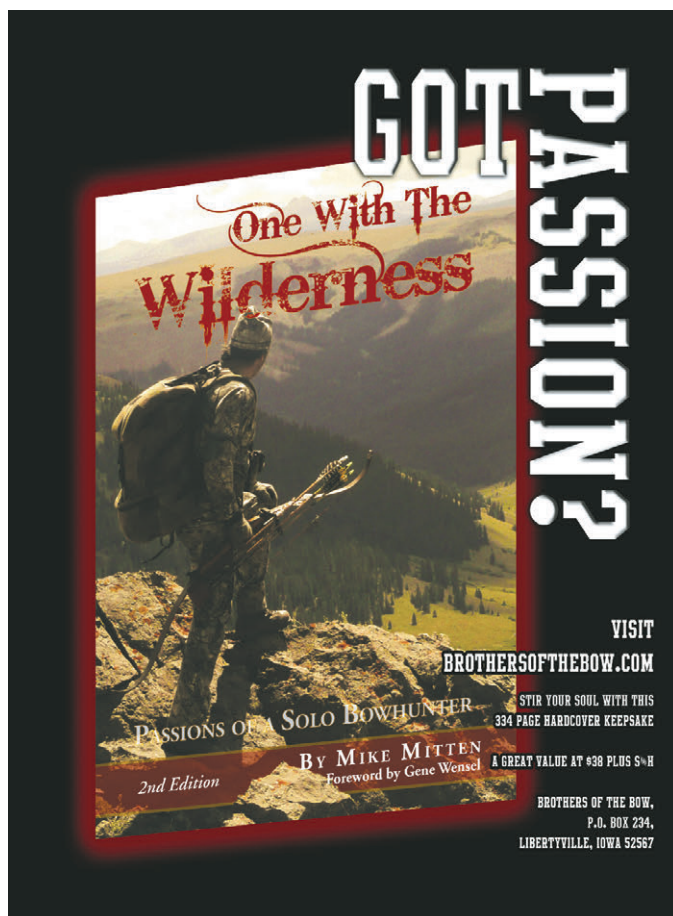
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three of us. Jeff and Duane had both hunted this area before so I was relying heavily on them for guidance and direction.

The next couple of weeks went by as a blissful blur. We would each load up our packs and head off in different directions to solo hunt and camp for a couple of days and then return to the wall tent for a night to resupply and compare notes. The weather definitely didn't cooperate with us. Utah is for the most part dry but we experienced the wettest August on the books since 1964. The radio reported wide spread flooding in Salt Lake City and several local communities. But the three of us soldiered on, hunting and camping despite the weather. We hunted in the rain every day but one. We had two nice sunny days, the day we arrived and set up camp and then the day we broke camp to head home.

The three of us had returned to base camp one night for a big spaghetti dinner and then stayed in the wall tent that night. I set my alarm to get out of camp early the next morning and head back up the drainage. I was excited as I had heard the rain stop falling on the roof of the tent a couple of hours earlier and I was hoping it had cleared up. Imagine my surprise when I opened the flaps of the tent on the morn-



ing of August 23 and discovered that we were in the midst of a white out! The rain had turned to snow. I stepped outside and could barely see a moose cow and calf walking past in the snow about 50 yards away. It snowed pretty steady most of that day and we used it as an excuse to ride into town and resupply.

A great trip with a couple of great guys in some incredible country. We hunted hard for 14 days and had several close encounters with animals. We all had elk, mule deer and moose within bow range and I ended up missing a 30 yard shot on an elk in the rain one morning. I had another encounter with a 3x3 bull one morning that lasted about an hour. The very last evening I was fortunate enough to find myself facing an absolute monster of a bull at about 20 yards on a trail. He left without offering a shot opportunity but that image is one I'll carry with me for the rest of my days.

As always happens, all too soon it was time to head back east. The weather cooperated for once and we were able to dry most things out before we packed them up. We made a couple of stops and then hit the

road on Saturday afternoon at 3:30 pm and arrived back home in Virginia on Monday morning at 2 am.

We always brag on the quality of our members.... hard core bow hunters who relish doing things the hard way. For me, this trip really brought home that concept. This was a long, hard drive across country followed by an extended hunt in some very trying conditions. The weather was bad enough most days that if we were back home, we

probably wouldn't have thought of going hunting. It would have been very easy to get down, depressed and miserable, but we still had a great time and made the most of the opportunities. I have been in camp before with guys who would have been constantly complaining and ready to go home after a couple of days. The three of us carried on, laughed and joked with each other and made the trip what it was intended to be, a great western adventure. I certainly couldn't have asked for a better couple of guys to share a camp with. Of course I can also say that about every PBS member that I have ever shared a camp with.

An interesting side note... We were cold and wet almost constantly but still managed to cut up and have a good time, as well as hunt hard. There were a couple of bow hunters from Wyoming camping at the trail head during this period of time that we extended the invitation to share our campfire and a couple of meals. Watching us stump shoot around camp and interact with each other prompted a lot of questions from them about our equipment choices and the PBS in general. A campfire is always the best place to have this type of discussion. These conversations continued via e-mail once we returned and as a result, we have recruited a new member into the PBS. Scott Meeks has joined and has already been questioning me as to when we are going to show up out there again! *

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Point Blank Destiny

By Duane Krones

A heavy frost shown on the meadow grass as I checked my walking light. Above me, a billion stars slowly giving way to the promise of sunrise. It had been quite a week of elk hunting in Colorado's Grand Mesa National Forest. I looked down at my Lacrosse Outdoorsman rubber boots and sighed.

My feet were a wreck after 40 plus mountain miles. Swollen so bad my regular hunting boots wouldn't fit. I was up early on this last day of our hunt to patch my feet up one last time. My toes were badly bruised from down hill trauma. Toenails destined to fall off, blisters busted open, what a mess. Thank God for mole skin and duct tape. Red Green would be proud. The old patched up outdoorsman boots at least fit and I figured I could make an easier hunt on the last day. I planned to head north towards a beaver pond complex where I'd had a couple close calls during the first couple days. This season had been extremely dry and the elk were making nightly visits to get water and green grass. On the third day of our hunt rain and snow had changed things but this morning my feet were calling the shots and the beaver ponds seemed like the best option.

Larry and Jim were going to do a short hunt and were just stirring as I left camp. Chris was snug in his bag with a set of elk antlers hanging in a nearby tree. Chris had made a great stalk on a 5x6 bull two days prior and one well placed arrow from his longbow had made his dream come true.

As I walked out of camp, I informed my companions of my intentions to hunt the ponds and exchanged good luck wishes. I was forty yards out when a lone bugle drifted down from the north face of Flat Top Mountain. I thought maybe I was imagining it at first because of my noisy footsteps in the snow and frosty grass. There it was again. Clearer this time. I shivered and felt the blood rush in my ears.

Chris' sleepy voice was asking Larry and Jim if that was a bull. They had not heard it. I called back to camp, "I guess I'm headed up Flat Top". I took a deep breath and softly said, "Maximum effort".

The north face of Flat Top is about the worst climb in the area. Blowdowns, giant boulder fields, and a steep climb 1,100 ft. above our camp elevation. The going would be worse because of the snow left behind from the storm when Chris got his bull. Foot pain be damned. Off I went,

down hill at first to cross the creek, and then the upward death march assault on Flat Top's north face.

I fought my way through piles of blowdowns on the way up to a relatively flat shelf, a familiar and welcome feature. Relatively flat because it was better than the rest of the terrain. By now I had dim light and I paused to get my wind and listen. As if on cue a bull bugled north of me on Plateau Ridge. I waited for the bull on my side to respond. Nothing. I stuck with my plan not to bugle. I was having doubts about my max effort decision to scale Flat Top. I reasoned that since I was halfway up, I would hunt west along the shelf and maybe pick up the trail to a special place.

"...My God, those eyes rolled back, nostrils flared and that awful whimpering half bugle as he ran up the final few steps. Big as a box car and he was gonna run right through me!..."

Seven years earlier my dad and I had hunted this mountain and I took him to a spot where I had spike camped. Dad was a 45 year smoker and I was worried about him making it to the spot. Altitude is above 10,000 ft. and I was thinking that the climb might be a bit much for him. I was dropping hints about the going getting worse

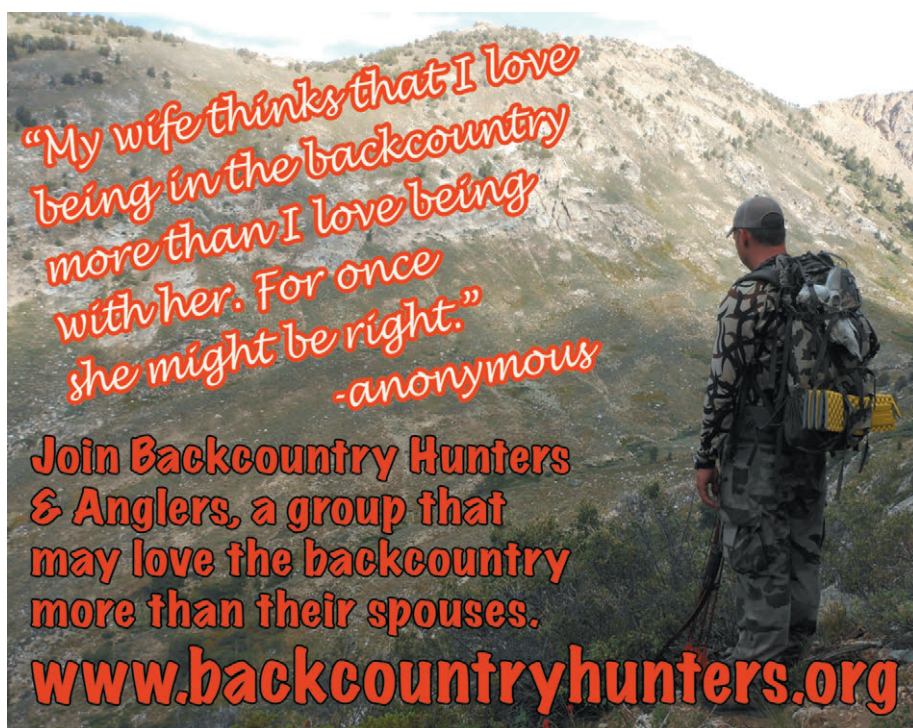
and how maybe we should head back.

His words I'll never forget. "Come on...you can make it". We laughed and that night we stood looking over a fantastic view of the area we had hunted together. It was a fitting end to our first elk hunt and sadly our last bow hunt together. Dad passed years later after his battle with cancer.

And so I thought why not visit this place again. However after an hour I realized to my despair that I couldn't get my bearings and reluctantly gave up. I had worked my way into another bad mess of blowdowns and the snow was causing footing issues. My boots were not made for mountain use and the slippery conditions had me in a bad way. On top of that, snowballs were falling off lodgepole pines from great heights, targeting my exposed neck. The whole ordeal was witnessed by the local pine squirrel population and they squeaked with delight at every impact.

I decided to defy it all and climb straight up to the top. I would throw my bow ahead and use all fours to climb, claw and cuss my way out of the mess I was in. By the time I got to ground where I could walk upright, the sun was peaking over Willow Ridge and I was a sweaty, steaming max effort predator. At least the wind was right so I continued west.

Then I heard it. The most perfect three note bugle, somewhere ahead of me. Way



too perfect. I suspected another hunter since muzzle loader season was open and I knew some hunters were camped somewhere on the top of Flat Top Mountain. I didn't want a confrontation, especially. Onward I went, alert and looking for orange. I got to a spot where I had good cover so I did a soft immature rag horn bugle. Again the same store bought three note bugle came back. It was closer now and I decided no more bugles. I maneuvered to get a better look at the terrain ahead. As I moved into a position beside a big pine I felt the heat of the sun on my neck like a hand warmer. I saw no movement and heard nothing. I sucked the spit out of my diaphragm call and did a single, soft "eeeeeyouuu."

All hell broke loose. A bull was coming hard, smashing sticks and hitting branches with his antlers, I caught sight of him as I fumbled an arrow out of my bow quiver and onto the string. He was turning into me and approaching from slightly below and left. My God, those eyes rolled back, nostrils flared and that awful whimpering half bugle as he ran up the final few steps. Big as a box car and he was gonna run right through me! Some how I was at full draw and the big Magnus danced on his throat mere yards away. My mind screamed, "Turn! Turn! Turn!" He veered slightly right and rolled his head to so his antlers would clear my tree. As his body slid past I took a half step as the arrow hit in full paradox. Buried to the cresting, fletching wildly high from close range impact. The bull gasped as if punched in the chest and



The bull died with his feet under him and head outstretched. Magnificent and dignified even in death. My facial expression tells the story.

tore up some forest putting distance between us. He paused at fifty yards or so looking back. Then he was gone down the slope in the direction I had come.

I leaned against the pine and sank to the ground in shock with my heart hammering and my head swimming. What just happened? Did it happen? I reached over from where I sat and picked up a small clump of tan colored hair. My God! No one would ever believe me!

I don't know how long I sat there before I got up and followed the blood trail. The snow covered slope left no doubt as to the fate of the bull. I saw where he stumbled and went down sliding fifteen yards or so. He died with his feet under him and his head outstretched on his chin. No one could ever walk up to a sight like this and not be moved beyond words.

I sat down in the snow and looked at him awhile before I went over and touched his head. "It was just your day," I said as I ran my hands over his 5 x 6 rack and felt the warmth of his body.

I found a dry spot under a pine tree

nearby and ate my lunch. I was mentally and physically spent. What an incredible series of events leading me to the spot where this bull and I nearly collided.

Here I was with my first bull elk. Unbelievable! I crawled up here on the last day of the hunt with my bandaged feet in patched up rubber boots. I called him up and shot him, point blank with my trusty old homemade recurve bow and no one will ever believe the story.

I was finishing up lunch and preparing to leave to get help. The pack job logistics had me concerned. Suddenly it hit me. I'd been so taken in by the whole thing that I had not considered that after all, this was the last place on Earth that dad and I ever bow hunted. Maybe I had a guide with me today. Maybe dad's words, "Come on...you can make it," had pushed me beyond the pain and frustration. Maybe indeed.

I took another look at my fallen bull and set my compass for camp. As I started down the mountain, I had a tear in my eye and a tired smile on my face. "Come on dad, lets go tell the guys!" *



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Taking a breather at 10800 ft. Pictured are myself, Jim and Chris. Larry is taking the picture. The pack job was accomplished by first going uphill then back down on a more favorable route.

My Favorite Place to Hunt Whitetails

By Dr. Dave Samuel

Over the past sixty years I've hunted whitetails from Pennsylvania to Alabama, from Alberta to Texas, from Ohio to Montana, and lots of states in between. Colorado, Kansas, Iowa, Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, and a few others. Being from Pennsylvania and then West Virginia, I've spent a lot of time in the eastern hardwoods chasing whitetails. With Ohio being close, as I got older, I ventured there most years. Weekends and Thanksgiving week as I had that time off from work, I'd head off to bowhunt in Ohio with my good friend Dennis Crabtree.

We know that whitetails do really well in mature oak hardwoods mixed in with agricultural crops such as corn, alfalfa, and soybeans. However, when you look at all the states and provinces that have great whitetail bowhunting, you realize that when it comes to habitat, whitetails are extremely adaptable. The habitats in West

Virginia are far different than Texas. The deer habitat in Alberta is far different than the habitat in Iowa.

So you might ask the question, what is the best deer habitat? It depends. Obviously deer do well in all the above states and many more. So why are some states known for big bucks? Actually it's about the habitat there, and also about the age of bucks in that habitat. Midwestern farm country has great soils, especially along rivers. Thus the vegetation there, and the farm crops planted there, provide great nutrition for deer. In addition, hunter pressure in many Midwestern states is lower than in my home states of Pennsylvania and West Virginia. That means older bucks running around. Given that, where would you like to chase whitetails?

Most of us will respond by stating "I'd rather hunt whitetails right here, in my home state." Growing up in Pennsylvania and spending all of my adult life in West

Virginia, bowhunting whitetails has been the center of my hunting life. However, into my early 50's there were not many big bucks in my home states because hunters shot most as yearlings. Fortunately that has changed to a degree, but back then my only shot at a good buck was to drive to Ohio, which I did as often as I could. And I shot some bucks out there, but nothing that was in the "huge" class. So, when I retired in 1998, I decided to spend more time bowhunting where the big guys lived. The first place I went was Iowa. Back then getting a license was pretty much a given. You didn't have to worry whether you would get drawn for a permit. Just plan and go do it. That's now changed a bit.

Obviously the habitat in Iowa is totally different than our eastern hardwood forests. Lots of corn and beans, some alfalfa, and trees along waterways and in small woodlots. One gets the impression that forests are not found in Iowa, but six percent of the

Appalachia Odd-Year Gathering in Baltimore!

The Appalachia region of PBS will have its first Odd Year Gathering of 2015 from March 27-29, 2015 at Baltimore Bowmen, the home of the Baltimore Bowmen Traditional Classic (BBTC). You can get there early on Friday morning if you want and stay through Sunday late afternoon.

Baltimore Bowmen is a great venue with a wide open field for camping, a clubhouse with stone fireplace and kitchen, pavilion with picnic tables, bathhouse with showers and toilets, and a big grill pit that we can cook whatever you want on in case you decide to bring some venison from last year's hunts. You can camp on-site with tents, trailers, or RVs, or take advantage of the motels in the area, although I would suggest staying on-site.

The 3D course that will be set out is one of the nicest and more challenging you will find, with shots at all distances and at all angles. Take careful aim on the mountain goat shots unless you want to bust an arrow on the cliff face behind them. The caribou is a very long, and very misleading distance shot.

Like other OYGs, we will have a raffle or auction on Saturday so please feel free to bring something to help raise some funds for the PBS. You can list them in this thread or let me know directly.

For more information contact Larry Schwartz by email at larschwartz@comcast.net or by phone on 443.994.1098.

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The author's best buck, an Iowa bruiser.

state is forested and there are some large forested areas in the state. In 1998 I was hunting in one of those tracts, trying to find the buck that had rubbed trees the size of my thigh. No question, seeing such rubs had me excited, and I got lucky and got on that buck and made a great shot on my only Boone and Crockett whitetail (top photo).

I loved Iowa whitetail habitat, but getting drawn there now is iffy. So the past four years I've been heading to Kansas in early November and for me, that habitat,

classes, means bigger bucks. There are trees, especially cottonwoods along the rivers, and these areas create natural funnels where bucks travel, especially during the rut. Sometimes those areas have plum thickets, but often the plum thickets are found away from the rivers, in agriculture country, along shallow ravines, and even in open country.

This past November I had the opportunity to hunt on lands managed by my friend Tom Turner near Hutchison. Tom has been

though different than Iowa, and much different than our eastern hardwoods, is a great place for big bucks. Yes, it is a draw state, but I've found that they often have left over tags in many areas.

OK, maybe the habitat isn't better in Kansas than other states, but hunting pressure there isn't what I see in West Virginia. Bucks get into those older age classes, and there is lots of private land, if you can get on it. The food is there with alfalfa, some corn, and sorghum. Great food, plus older age

managing lands for whitetails in Kansas all his life, and he exposed me to plum thickets. These shrubs and trees are gray to brown in color, with thorny branches. They form very dense thickets and produce a sweet fruit in August and September. If conditions are good it can grow to a height of 12 feet, but often they are found in dense 4-6 foot high thickets. Plum trees like moist soils so are often found in small waterways, or moist ravines separating CRP fields.

One 1,000 acre area I bowhunted last fall had one red cedar (photo on previous page) and no other trees. Just plum thickets and native grasses, but the big bucks were there. They bed in the thickets, browse the shrubs and eat the juicy plums when ripe, but mostly these deer fed on grasses and nearby alfalfa. With no trees, it doesn't look like whitetail habitat, but boy does it hold big bucks.

When plum shrubs grow into trees (and it takes many years), you get travel corridors for big bucks (photo on next page). As mentioned, often these plum trees grow in shallow ravines, 100-200 yards wide, bounded by agricultural fields and CRP fields. For those that do not know, CRP fields are former crop fields that federal farm subsidies pay farmers not to farm. CRP fields are what we might call old

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My Favorite Place to Hunt Whitetails

~ continued from page 37

grown up fields, but they are great for song birds, game birds such as quail and pheasants, and deer. With feed on one side, and thick CRP bedding areas on the other, the long funnels of plum trees create great bowhunting. Such areas contain tons of buck rubs and scrapes (see photo at right).

This past November I planned a ten-day bowhunt just west of Hutchison, Kansas and Tom Turner was to be my guide. He'd set up two ground blinds on two tracts of land that had almost no hunting pressure. Unfortunately a death in my family cut that hunt to 3 ½ days. The first morning I was sitting along the edge of plum trees that grew in a shallow ravine. Total length of that area was about one half mile, with CRP on one side, and cut corn fields and mowed alfalfa on the other three sides. It reeked of big bucks and Tom had a camera about 400 yards from my blind that proved big bucks were there. One dandy was off limits for me. The landowner was "saving" him for his dad. Tom and I looked at pictures and estimated him to be over 200 inches.

The first morning I was in the blind before daylight. As the sun peaked, the pheasants were crowing and turkeys were walking by. It was fairly cold, and windy. Just at daylight a small eight point ran by, hot on a doe's trail. Several does slowly fed by, then several more. At 8:00 AM a book eight point stopped at 20 yards. Big back home, but not big enough in Kansas, especially on day one. At 8:30, a bigger eight point walked by the blind at 27 yards. He stood there for a few minutes, but again I passed. Then at 9:00 a huge-bodied nine pointer walked in with a doe. I estimated him at 135 or so, but a few days later I realized that he probably was ten inches bigger and just looked smaller because of his huge body size. I thought he was a four-year-old buck and I passed on him too. On day two I went to another 1,000-acre area. This area had no plum trees, just lots of plum thickets. There was one lone red cedar tree on the entire area. I'd have never hunted there because it just didn't

look like buck habitat to my naïve eyes. But Tom knew better and camera pictures confirmed the presence of several good bucks.

I only saw two smaller bucks that day, a long day in a blind, but they were there. In fact, the landowners son bow shot a huge ten point there the week before I arrived that greened at 188 inches. Whoa.

I fully expected to see

deer on what would turn out to be my last morning. A nasty storm was headed our way, with high winds and very cold temperatures starting that afternoon. The deer had to be moving, and they were. I was back at the blind I hunted on day one, and again passed on the same two eights I'd seen on the first day. A third big eight, that would have made book, walked right by the blind at 8:30. Fifteen minutes later, here comes the big boy. He was only an eight, but was he ever an eight. I estimated him at close to 160, but the landowner and dad would later sit that blind during gun season and passed on him because he was after the 200 incher that was there. This man knows his deer and felt that he'd score close to 170.

I didn't know eight points got that big!!! His G-2's and 3's were huge. His brows solid. He was way beyond his ears, and high. And his mass went all the way. He was probably the second biggest buck I've ever shot at, and I missed him broadside at 27 yards. Even though I'd practiced drawing my bow from the chair in the blind several times (I wish now I had shot from my knees), upon release, the lower limb of my bow hit the chair and the arrow sailed harmlessly over his back. He never knew what happened, and walked slowly out of my life. Did I mention that I hate ground blinds?

Word is that this buck made it through gun season, so hopefully I'll get invited back and next November I'll be right there.

So what is my favorite place to bowhunt? Well, right now it is the plum thickets of central Kansas. White-tails are adaptable and use lots of different habitats, and for me those Kansas plum thickets yield the best white tail bowhunting in the world. Lord willing I'll spend a few more years experiencing it. *

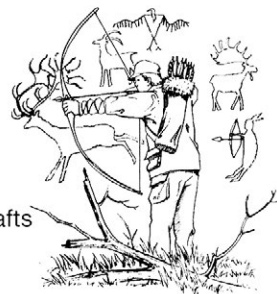
Plum trees are rubbed a lot.
Note my ground blind
in the background.

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BIG GATORS and Old Goats

By Terry Receuver

The bridge we were under was so low we couldn't stand upright in the boat. Bob, Bill, and I were trying to get protection from the lightning and heavy rain, which is a nightly occurrence in South Florida in August. It was just after dark and we were plying the ebony waters of an orange grove water supply canal in search of a big alligator. We had already seen several gators and Bob skipped a Muzzy tipped fish arrow off the back of one over 9 feet. After a sandwich and a piece of fried chicken, the rain finally stopped enough for us to continue our hunt. We didn't go far and spotted a gator that appeared to be large enough to offer some excitement. We quietly trolled toward the gator and Bob and Bill prepared for a shot. Bob shot first and managed to hit another boney spot on the gator and his arrow didn't penetrate. The gator wasn't so lucky with Bill's well aimed shot and the arrow connected with a thud. The detachable fish head sunk deep and the fight was on.

This adventure began two years prior with an alligator hunt a few fine PBS members donated. Jeff Holchin, Bryan Burkhardt, Kevin Dill, and I pitched in to fund a fully outfitted alligator hunt for a youth. The hunt was auctioned off to raise money for the Doug Kerr Memorial Youth Hunt. The successful bidder was Bob Seltzer, who purchased the hunt for his grandson Michael. We had a fantastic hunt and Michael was able to take a nice gator... after earning the nickname of "Skippy" by skipping several arrows off the head and

back of a lot of gators. Bob had so much fun he asked if he could plan a future hunt for himself. The timing worked out and the 2014 season would be the year of our hunt. Florida alligator tags come in pairs and thus there was room for another hunter. The same group of dedicated PBS guys noted above pitched in and funded another hunt to be auctioned at the Cincinnati Bi-Annual Banquet. Bo Slaughter was the successful bidder and plans were put in motion. Unfortunately, just a few weeks prior to the hunt Bo was experiencing neck and shoulder pain that prevented him from pulling a heavy enough bow to be confident in taking a gator. I let him know it would be fine to defer to 2015 and he felt good about that option. I was then tasked with finding a last minute replacement. Fortunately, I knew of a retired bowhunter that loved to bowfish. A quick call to Bill Terry Sr. and the slot was filled. The band of bowhunters for 2014 were quite a bit older than the youth hunt in 2012. The average age for the three of us is 65. I think we could safely be referred to as a bunch of "Old Goats".

Our hunt began with an early departure from my New York home. Bill lives in Connecticut and drove over to catch a ride down to Florida with me. I was pulling my boat down and the plan was to make a quick stop in Virginia to pick up Bob. The 1st leg of the trip went by quickly and Bill and I arrived at Bob's house where he had

a huge T-bone steak and grilled vegetables ready for us. After the great lunch, our trio of Old Goats loaded up and finished up our 24 hour drive to Okeechobee, Florida.

We rolled into my parent's place at around 9:45 AM. Dog tired, but not so much that it prevented us from unpacking some gear and loading back into the truck to pull the boat to some new areas we wanted to scout. We spent most of the day covering lots of water. We found several gators and I now had a few backup spots in case we needed them. We didn't even go to my main hunting area as I knew the gators would be there.

After the scouting we fell into bed and didn't move again until about 6 AM the next morning (I let the guys sleep in as it was going to be a very long day). After we got up and dressed we loaded into the boat and headed for some bass fishing. Unfortunately, when the hot August sun comes up, the bass go down. We caught a few, but not what I'm used to.

After the bass fishing we headed back home to load the boat and head out for a



Bob Seltzer with his grandson, Michael, on a PBS youth alligator hunt in 2012.
Bill Terry, Sr. and Terry Receuver with bass they caught before going alligator hunting.



night of gator hunting. We were at the ramp and hunting by 5 PM.

The technique for hunting alligators involves using a high powered spotlight to see their reflective eyes and then using a trolling motor to quietly get within range for a shot. You can't shine the light right at them as the light will "burn" their eyes and they will submerge. You have to keep the light aimed high and keep track of the gator with the "halo" of the light. I also mouth call the gators with a baby gator distress grunt that often results with the gators coming to us. The photo of Bill and Bob shows how we setup on the bow of the boat.

When a gator is in view, I'll stop the big motor and man the trolling motor up front. Bill and Bob will stand and be ready to shoot. When we get within range, I will say "get ready" and then lower the light on the gator. As soon as the gator is illuminated enough to shoot the shooter only has a second to pick a "spot" and shoot.

The "spot" you pick is NOT what you see. Generally, just their head and a bit of the back is visible. Both are basically solid bone and you do not want to pick those "spots". The best "spot" to pick is slightly behind the back of the head and down a few inches. This will hit in the soft tissue of the jowls and allows for good penetration of the Muzzy fish head.

After the execution of a good shot, the gator will take off and there is no stopping it. This is the reason we have a detachable reel with a float attached (engineered by PBSr Greg Kraus and I). The reel and float will be pulled into the dark water and we then have to chase it down with the trolling motor on high speed.

Once we get to the float we will ease the gator up to the surface and shoot another lined arrow into it. If the first line is in solid we will harpoon the gator with a similar Muzzy tip, but with a cable leader and a heavy rope tied to it. Once we have enough lines on the gator we then get him next to the boat where we will grab him by the snout and try to hold him tight while one of the other guys use electrical tape to secure the mouth closed.

They sometimes don't like this much and will try to bite your hand, head, arm, or about anything they can get hold of. Big gators are notoriously mean and in these cases we have a few arrows rigged with broadheads to punch holes in their lungs.



Florida law requires all arrows to have a line attached, so even our broadheads have lines and floats attached. A broadhead through the lungs tends to slow them down a bit and we can tape the mouth and the shooter then gets a knife and pithes him.

Pithing is inserting a knife in the soft tissue at the base of the skull and cutting the spinal cord. Yep, we actually kill the gators with a pocket knife. Most guys who hunt gators use a "bang stick". Our method is significantly more dangerous, but shooting the gator with a gun is not bowhunting.

The gator Bill shot at the start of this story was bigger than we thought and the fight was on. This gator was not happy and he battled us up and down the canal. Bill's arrow, which was tethered to a float with 250# PowerPro line was zooming all around. Bill finally grabbed the float and he eased the gator up to the surface with some steady pressure. I was able to sink a second harpoon line into him and he didn't like that much. Off he went again.

It's a good thing we were able to get the harpoon line in because the arrow pulled loose right as I hit him with the harpoon. This gator was a beast and fighting hard.

Bill had prepared just for this instance and had a big Grizzly tipped kill arrow ready to take some wind out of him. Bill shot the gator and the arrow sliced through him like butter. This seemed to just make him mad as I had the gator 3 times by the snout and he would give a death roll and I couldn't hold him. We were finally able to get him up and Bill taped his mouth shut and gave him the final pithing. Bill did amazing and was re-

warded with a great 9' gator that will be seen in St. Augustine as a pretty cool vest.

Bob was up next and he tried hard to earn the name of Skippy Sr. by shooting at a few gators without a solid hook up. Actually, Bob was shooting very good and hit all but one gator he shot at. Gators have extremely thick skin and are covered with boney scutes. This is why I always recommend shooting the heaviest bow you can accurately shoot. Bob was shooting a bow with enough "oomph"; unfortunately he just hit some tough gators. This also validated Bo's decision to defer his hunt due to his limited ability to pull a heavy bow. You can't shoot too heavy of a bow. The one shot Bob did miss was on a really big 10'+ gator that I called in to under 10'. I have no idea how the shot missed. It looked like the arrow hit the

~ continued on page 42 ~



Bill's gator was bigger than they initially thought and put up quite the fight. In the end he was rewarded with a great 9' gator.

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BIG GATORS and Old Goats

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water where I would've aimed. Maybe he just got a little excited. Gator hunting is an exciting sport! Anyway, Bob was not to be deterred and didn't miss a beat when the next gator gave him a shot. Within just a few minutes from the "miss" a really big gator was distracted by my mouth calling and allowed us to approach within shooting range. Bob executed a textbook shot and the gator took off pulling line like a tarpon on steroids. Bob clicked the reel in gear and the gator yanked it into the canal and it zipped off with a solid wake. The gator pulled the reel through some Ropeweed and everything else you can think of. I was sure it was going to pull the foam off or break the line, but the 250# Kevlar line cut through the weeds with little effort. After about a 1/4 mile chase we finally caught up to the reel and I grabbed it and handed it to Bob to get some line back. The gator had a different plan and almost spooled him again and he had to pitch it back into the canal. We chased it down again and I was finally able to get the gator to stop. We pulled up the trolling motor, lifted the big motor and Bill got the harpoon ready. Bob was finally able to get him up and Bill sunk the harpoon deep. We now had two lines on him and he about yanked me overboard. Bill actually had to grab me to keep me from swimming with the gator. The big gator was pulling the boat all over the place. He was so big we decided another harpoon line was in order. Bill rigged another harpoon and sunk it deep when Bob pulled him up. This just got him mad. Fortunately, Bill had another kill arrow and this one had a big Rothhaar Snuffer on it. Bob made a great shot and you could hear the air let out of his lungs. After some more wrangling we were finally able to get his mouth taped shut and Bob administered the final pithing. It was a HUGE bodied gator and we three Old Goats had all we could handle in getting him in the boat. All three of us yanked hard and the gator rolled in and Bob rolled back. I looked over and Bob's arms and legs were in the air flailing around like a turtle on his back. It was all I could do to keep from laughing...Ok, I wasn't successful and laughed out loud. I'm just glad he wasn't hurt. However, when you look at the photo of Bob with the gator in the boat I believe you can see in his face that he had been in a wrestling match with a dinosaur. The gator turned out to eclipse the magical 10' mark and Bob couldn't be happier. You will also get to see Bob's gator in St. Augustine as he will likely be wearing him. Bob is having custom cowboy boots made by a boot maker in Texas.

As you can see in the vertical photo, Bob is 5'10" and his gator is MUCH taller than that.

Overall, our hunt was very short. It took us 48 hours of round trip driving to get to Florida, but we spent less than 7 hours of actual hunting to take the two gators.

I'm very grateful for the opportunity to hunt with Bill and Bob as it isn't very often that you can hunt with two Old Goats that have a combined hunting experience of over 100 years. August is just around the corner and Bo and I will be in Florida stalking the dark waters in search of a big gator for another Old Goat. ♦

Bob's gator eclipses the magical 10' mark and Bob couldn't be happier.



The Wedding Band

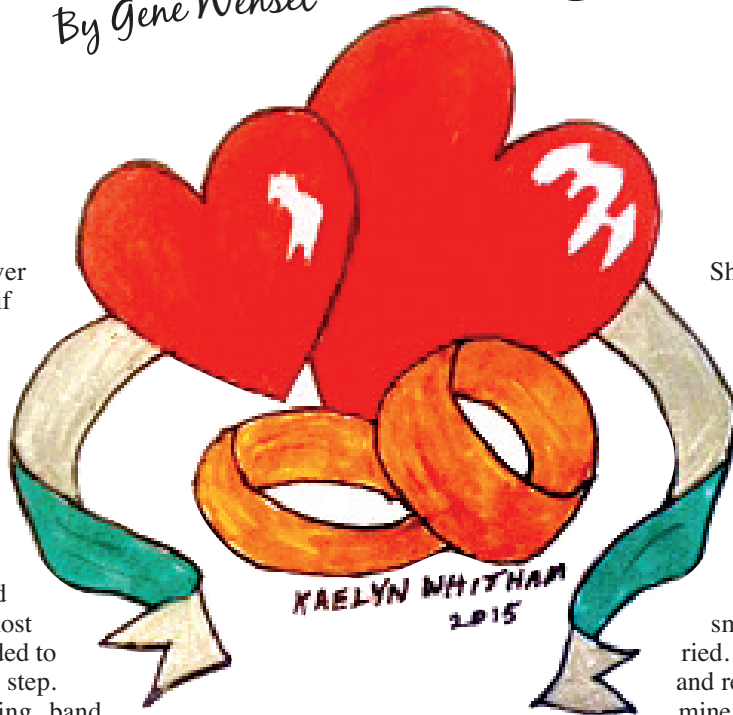
By Gene Wensel

The first time I ever hunted Iowa was in 1998 if I remember right. I was still living in Montana at the time and came to “test the waters” of Iowa that fine November. I sat one evening in a big oak on a beautiful hardwood ridge.

At dusk, I unhooked my safety belt and started to climb down. I was almost to the ground when I decided to hop down from the lowest step. When I did, my wedding band caught on one of my higher screw-in treesteps. Body weight alone caused the ring to cut to the bone of my finger. I feel fortunate it didn't tear my entire finger off. The ring was no longer round, but due to the wetness of fresh blood, I managed to get it off before the finger had a chance to swell. I'm ashamed to admit I was so pissed, I threw the ring into six inches of dry leaves.

The next morning, I felt guilty about what I did. With a bandaged hand, I went back to find that needle in a haystack of ankle deep dry leaves. It took me almost half an hour of searching on my hands and knees before I finally found it. I took my ring home and kept it in a jewelry box for over 15 years. After all, I had heard multiple stories from farmers, ranchers, truck drivers, machinists and heavy equipment operators who knew people who had torn fingers clean off by way of their wedding bands. I didn't want to be one of them.

Fast forward 16 years. We have a very good friend of the family locally, a happily married beautiful lady we think a lot of. She would regularly take her wedding band off for days at a time. It bothered me, so I asked her why. She's a good person with a good heart. Very attractive, she has the unique ability to easily transform from a pretty lady to a hard working tomboy-type farm girl.



She told me she removed her ring whenever it gets in the way of hard work.

She does farm work, castrates hogs, does lots of yard work, runs a chain saw, carries and stacks firewood, moves furniture, does more than her fair share of heavy lifting, etc. She went on to explain that everyone in our small town knows she is married. In her next breath she smiled and reminded me I too never wear mine. I told her that wasn't exactly apples to oranges because men are

most often predators while women are prey. Not wearing a ring is a green light to strangers. She reminded me that a wedding band often won't stop the worst of predators. I told her I wouldn't let my wife out of the house without hers on, but then I realized I was being a bit hypocritical.

Although not really functional, wedding bands are instantly recognizable symbols of eternal love that have been used for many centuries.

Two weeks ago I was going through my jewelry box when I discovered my bent up old wedding band. I took it out to look at it after almost two decades and suddenly felt very guilty. I felt as if I had abandoned a friend.

The week before our 46th wedding anniversary, after almost half a century, I realized, at least for me, my ring was more valuable than my finger. So I took it to town. A jeweler made it round again. He even buffed and polished it to make it shine bright again. If my shiny gold ring costs me a buck or a finger someday, so be it. The risk is worth the price.

For our 46th wedding anniversary, I put my ring back on and told my Donna once more, “Til death do us part.” I feel a lot better about things now. And I also noticed our friend now wears hers a lot more than she used to. ♡



Illustration created by Gene's nine year old neighbor, Kaelyn Whitham.

New Book Review Section!

The following is a new segment to our Magazine which highlights, and reviews, books about bowhunting adventures that have been written by PBS members. We'll start with a goal of this segment appearing twice a year. We have several premier book authors within our membership and we want to get the word out about their fine bowhunting literature! ~Jim Akenson



The Review

Recent Books Authored by PBS Members

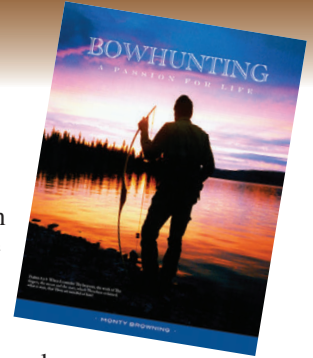
BOWHUNTING: A Passion For Life by Monty Browning

Reviewed by: Kevin Dill

Almost anyone who has spent some amount of time around PBS, or who has been hunting long enough with bow and arrow has heard the name Monty Browning. This book which represents a lifetime of his bowhunting adventures has been nearly three years in the making. Obviously, you can't hurry quality and this book exudes quality from the moment you pick it up. Looking at it for the first time, I was immediately aware that the author and publisher spared no effort to create a true legacy book. This book demands that you find time to sit down with no distractions and take your time with it. Beginning at an early point in his bowhunting life, Browning takes the reader on his personal journey through a life lived behind the bow. Many stories await, and they span a wide range of experiences from the comical misadventure to the hold-your-breath moments where anything can and does happen. There are very real moments where life hangs in the balance, and death is no more than a sudden lunge away. If you enjoy the styles of classic sporting writers of a past era you are bound to enjoy this book. More than simply a compilation of hunting tales, the author weaves and paints a complete picture of his sporting life and his many relationships built through and around it. His wife Annie is a constant presence. Of obvious importance is his religion and reliance on faith to see him through many difficulties. There are hunting companions and friends, guides, local folks, children...all

important to his story and this book.

This isn't a book written by a man who writes multiple books. It strikes me as a man wanting to write one book, and wanting to do it very, very well. The work that went into this book is immediately apparent. Hundreds of full color glossy images adorn the pages. In fact, there is no point in this book where you will not see a supporting photograph. Some of the pictures are simply stunning. The author's style of writing is uniquely his own, but I found myself experiencing a wide range of emotions as I turned pages. This book really satisfies on many levels. Measuring 11-1/4 x 8-1/2 inches, this is a seriously sized coffee table book. It has weight with over 230 pages of heavy paper, and all of it glossy. The standard edition comes with a full-color dust cover identical to the main front and back of the book. In addition, one-hundred leather-bound and numbered limited editions were created. The standard edition isn't inexpensive at \$65 (shipped) but given the quality of the overall book and its timeless style, the cost is truly very reasonable. If you like books that go beyond the ordinary; that take you on a trip and immerse you in a rollercoaster of adventure, this book is a complete must-have...written by an author who is the epitome of what PBS represents. ♣



BAREBOW! An Archer's Fair-Chase Taking of North America's Big-Game 29 by Dennis Dunn

Reviewed by: Tom Vanasche

Dennis has written a very informative and detailed account of his obtaining the North American 29 per the Pope and Young club. What makes his account unusual compared to most is in the title, Barebow. For all of his hunts he never used sights, a release aid or any attachments to his bows, which included longbows, recurves and compounds.

The author tells his tales in a comfortable, entertaining and intriguing manner. The book spans 503 pages and is set up as a "coffee table" type to me, as it physically will consume a bit of your table's geography. Dennis wrote it to appeal to the non-hunter as well, and specifically left out the standard "trophy" photos. However he did get Hayden and Dallen Lambson, quite noted artists, to add incredible life like renditions of all species at their chapter headings. Dennis also leads off the chapters with a very professional natural history page, and distribution map, for each species.

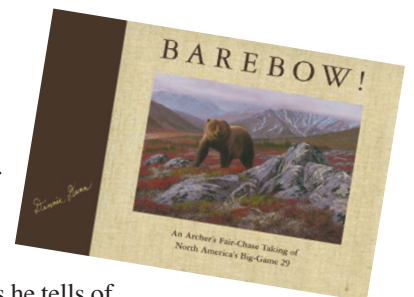
The book starts with an excellent preface by Dennis on why we hunt and how it is beneficial for conservation. That is well worth reading alone to hone your "defense of hunting" in this age. It is also interesting to learn that he grew up in a non-hunting family and yet became so intricately involved in the pursuit of game. This

passion would cover over a quarter million miles and 40 years of his life.

His hunts were not always easy or successful as he tells of the seven times each he had to pursue both the grizzly and the brown bear. Each of these is quite exciting as the "almosts" and "what if's" keep adding up. On many of these tales you may laugh out loud or say to yourself, "Been there, done that."

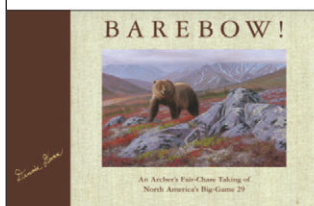
The book has many great attributes, particularly the fine art and action-packed storytelling. Dennis did deliberately leave out "dead animal" photos to appeal to the non-hunter and put in the excellent drawings, but as a hunter I yearn for pictures. This is somewhat answered in an epilogue of a few dozen tasteful photos at the end of the book.

For those of you without a coffee table, he has released an e-version that can be easily downloaded to your Kindle, iPad or other smart device. I find this version a lot easier to handle in bed, on an airplane or in a blind but the book edition does look nicer! ♣



"A BOOK FOR THE AGES"

That was the title Editor Dave King gave to his Review of BAREBOW! in the August 2009 Issue of *Hunting Illustrated Magazine*.



"There have not been very many book reviews in the pages of *Hunting Illustrated* over the years. In fact, this is the first one and may be the last as well. However the justification to inform our readers about this magnificent book is enough."

Winner of six national awards since it first came out in the fall of 2008, Dennis Dunn's *BAREBOW! An Archer's Fair-Chase Taking of North America's Big-Game 29* has now garnered more literary honors than any other hunting book ever published!

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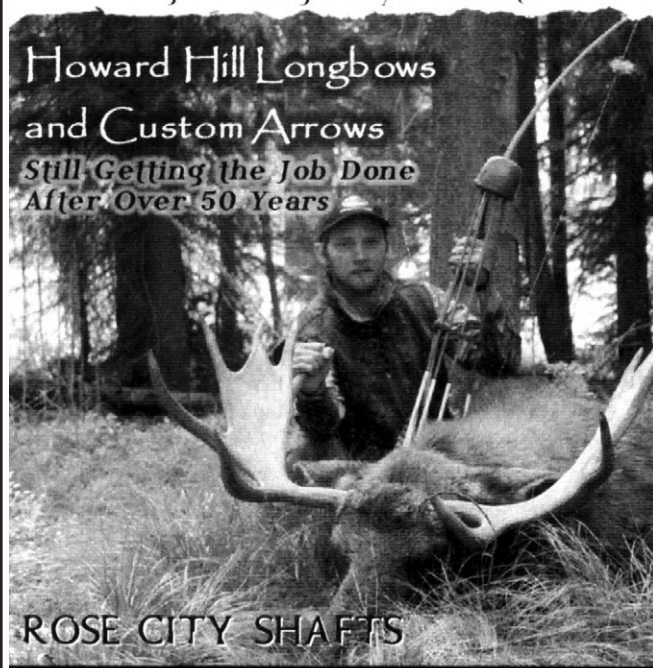
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Doing Your Part

By Terry Receveur

The rain had finally subsided and the dark, lush forest was fresh and clean. It was late spring in Western New Brunswick, Canada and the aroma of the spruce, fir, moose maple, alder, and birch trees was very pleasant. The wet morning had been warm with bear sightings non-existent for the first four

hours of my tree stand vigil. However, I was happy and absorbing all the splendor of nature. Suddenly I was rudely interrupted by a very large and unconcerned black bear. He waltzed into the bait site like he owned the place. My guide (Wes) had provided a specially prepared elixir that he promised would please the olfactory senses of the biggest male bear. He did not lie! This big boy had his nose in the air and showed every sign of an expectant risqué interlude with a sow. I had misted the magic love potion liberally around my stand and it was this that he seemed to zero in on. The elixir was bringing him right to the base of my stand. The bear's advancement was straight on and did not provide a clear shot. At three yards the bear became suspicious that the large blob in the leafy outfit at the top of the stand was not the object of his desires and he turned to search elsewhere. At four yards he was at a perfect quartering away angle and I had selected a small white piece of grass on his shiny ebony coat as an aiming spot. It was slightly higher and a bit forward of the "middle of the middle". I chose this aiming point due to the steep angle of my shot. I focused on the white grass, pulled my Stalker longbow to full draw, hit my anchor point and released the arrow.

I have to be honest and say I'm not a big fan of guided hunts. My general impression is of an overweight and out of shape businessman, with a lot of money, paying someone else to do all the hard work after which the businessman steps in and grabs all the glory. He does the typical "grip and grin" and then posts all over social media his great accomplishment. In reality he was simply the arrow delivery guy.

The person just described was me (except for the part of having a lot of money) on a bear hunt taken in late June of 2014. My friend and guide, Wes, had been inviting me up to bear hunt for several years. We first met at a bear camp in Northern Maine when my daughter was on her inaugural bear hunt. I didn't hunt that time, nor did I hunt when my daughter and I traveled to New Brunswick (NB) in 2012 to hunt with Wes. I just didn't think I would enjoy shooting a bear that I had not done any of the work for. My attitude softened after having a great time with my daughter on her successful 2012 hunt and I expressed to Wes that I'd like to come up and hunt with him. I wavered on my decision and could not bring myself to hunt in 2013. I put off the commitment to hunt with Wes in 2014 to the very last minute. In fact, I was so late in my decision that I ended up only being able to hunt the last three days of NB's season. My work had been very busy, full of the stresses we all encounter, and I needed a break. Due to the late decision, I really

had to get in gear to prepare for the hunt. There was a lot I had to do to ensure I was prepared to fulfill my responsibilities on the hunt. This caused me to reflect and contemplate the question: "what were my responsibilities?" After all, this was going to be a "shoot" and not a hunt. I would simply show up, sit in the tree, a bear would show up and I would shoot it. Actually, that's pretty much what happened, but I think it was because of two factors: 1) Wes did a fantastic job in selecting the site and doing all the hard work of baiting and getting the bears coming to the site; and 2) I did my part in ensuring I did all I could to not scare the bears off the site and to be able to make the shot when it presented itself.

Following are some of the preparation details that I believe increased my chance for success and are factors that we should all pay attention to on any guided hunt.

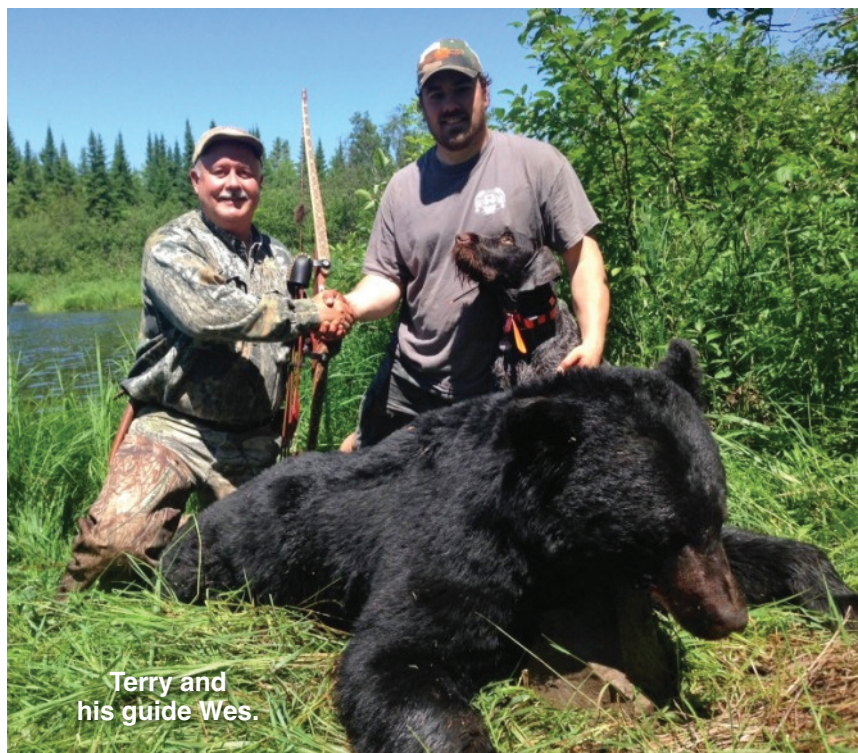
Don't be afraid to go against conventional wisdom and challenge the status quo. I am NOT saying to disregard your guide and his suggestions. That would be very unwise as you are paying him a lot of money for his knowledge and experience and you should listen to it. However, if you have a particular way you would like to hunt or have an idea of a technique that might work, discuss it with your guide. My recent bear hunt is a great example. Most experienced bear hunters would tell you that it is pointless to hunt in the morning and not to bother going to the stand if it is raining or over 70°F. In fact, one of the most trumpeted benefits of a baited bear hunt is the relaxed nature of a leisurely morning wake up, steaming full breakfast, unrushed preparation, and even some fishing before heading out to the stand for the evening hunt. However, I had done my homework and knew the habits of my quarry. I postulated that the mature boar bears I was targeting would be active most of the day in their search for love; rain or shine. Many veteran bear hunters and guides will also tell you to wait until the bear settles into the bait before taking a shot. I've hunted whitetail deer for way too long and NEVER pass up a good shot opportunity. Again, I did my homework and knew that the time of year I would be hunting meant the big boars would be more interested in love than lunch and stops at the bait barrel might not happen. In the scenario above, I'm not totally sure the bear would've stopped and eaten. Had I not taken the shot when I did, I am not sure I would've had another chance.

Stands or blinds are generally pretty generic in nature and many guides and outfitters are not accustomed to the unique needs and requirements of traditional bowhunters. The type of stand, height, shooting clearance, distance from the bait or travel route, and other factors must be considered. It is your responsibility to let the outfitter know of your requirements. On my recent New Brunswick bear hunt, the stand I was to hunt was a homemade wooden ladder stand with a nice comfortable seat with arm rests. While the arm rests were nice and comfortable for sitting and resting they would not allow for shooting from a sitting



position with my long-bow. My friend Wes is a conscientious outfitter and he hunts with a recurve himself and thus knew the importance of letting me know the setup. He sent me a photo of the stand and upon seeing it I knew it would be difficult to hunt from. To account for this I packed a portable ladder stand and a climbing stand to be used if needed. It turned out that I could stand on the seat and get good clearance from the arm rests. What this meant was that I would have to stand virtually the entire time to have any realistic chance of being successful. There would be no way a bear would allow for the movement of me standing and getting into position for a shot. I had to do my part and make a decision to use the current stand or put up another.

It is also the hunter's responsibility to practice from the type of stand or blind that will be utilized. Many Western hunters have



Terry and his guide Wes.

Just because you're on a guided hunt doesn't mean there's no preparation to do on your part. You must be prepared!

never hunted from an elevated stand and often have a hard time adjusting to the necessary nuances for accurate shooting. Bending at the waist, aiming a bit low, and estimating distance can be tricky and many an animal has been lost or wounded due to inexperience. Several years ago I went on a plains game hunt in Africa and the standard practice is to hunt from little huts or blinds set at ground level. The inside is dark to prevent the animals from seeing movement and you generally have a few small windows to shoot through. I had never hunted from a blind like this and it created some unique challenges. You have to be very careful of bow

limb clearance and the tunnel like views can cause mind tricks that make range estimation very difficult. Often times you are actually shooting up at the animal. My inexperience caused me to shoot high on a beautiful Kudu resulting in a high non-lethal shoulder shot. It is our responsibility to the animal and to ensure success by practicing in the hunting situations that will be encountered.

For any baited hunt, water hole hunt, or any tree stand hunt it is imperative to be ready and motionless. You should be prepared for long periods of time with very little movement and always have your bow ready for action. Things can happen very fast and there have been numerous missed opportunities because the hunter was relaxed and texting his buddy. I have no doubt in my mind that had I been sitting down with my bow hung up I would not have had 4 of the 5 bears visit the bait site. They don't see things well, but they see movement extremely well. The big guy mentioned above would've been gone if I had to stand and get my bow ready. It was less than a minute from the time I saw him to the time I released the arrow. When things happen, it is often quick and requires preparedness.

Most of the animals we hunt use their nose as a primary safety mechanism. I firmly believe that there is nothing we can do to eliminate our scent. I do believe that we can significantly reduce the amount that we spread around. Scent control is very important on do-it-yourself hunts and equally important on guided hunts. Follow all the same scent control practices to enhance your success. Don't show up to bear camp wearing the clothes and shoes you just pumped gas in and expect to wear them to the stand and be successful. That is not doing your part.

We've all heard the stories of the hunter coming back into camp flush with excitement over the "HUGE" trophy book bear he just shot. Bears are notorious for "ground shrinkage" and upon recovery of the "monster" bear we find it to be just an average or even sometimes below average animal. Bears are one of the hardest animals to judge, but in order to shoot any mature trophy animal you have to know what one looks like. You

~ continued on page 48

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Doing Your Part

~ continued from page 47

need to know body conformation, horn or antler characteristics, major scoring criteria, or other distinguishing characteristics. It is very difficult to distinguish black bear sows from boars, but there are some indicators. An Eland cow is almost impossible to tell from a bull and it sure seems that all zebras look the same. Do your homework and know what a mature trophy animal looks like.

I was not mentally prepared for the guided African hunt mentioned above. I had many reservations about hunting in a high fenced area and poor enough to be concerned with the common rule of "if you draw blood you pay the trophy fee". I let these distractions impact my focus and when the time came for a shot, I wasn't prepared. I missed a slam dunk shot at an Impala (right over the back) and hit the Kudu noted above high in the shoulder. You need to be fully invested in the hunt and have all unresolved mental issues addressed prior to going afield. I was very fortunate on my recent bear hunt in that I was able to come to grips with my concerns of a guided hunt

over bait because I was able to really enjoy three previous bears coming in and giving me time to realize I was having a lot of fun. This allowed me to

remove all doubts and issues from my mind and truly focus on the experience and the shot. We owe it to the animal and the outfitter to show up mentally prepared.

Most guides make the assumption that you will bring your own gear and it will be appropriate for the hunt. Ankle high leather boots on an Alaskan moose hunt will be about as valuable as a steak at a vegan convention. Showing up with the wrong gear for the hunt can almost guarantee failure. Wes was adamant that I bring a ThermoCell for my bear hunt. I really doubt he cared too much about whether I got bit by a mosquito or not. But I'm positive he recognized that without one I'd be flailing around at the mosquitos and scaring any bear within 100 yards away. Again, the bears may not see things well, but they do see movement.

I don't know how many times I've heard the story about the out of shape hunter who missed an opportunity because they couldn't climb the mountain or had to stay in camp to recover from a tough day of hunting. Know what the physical re-

quirements are for your hunt and be prepared. Lion hunting is a very good example of a hunt that many must experience with a guide. Very few people have good dogs and lion country right out their backdoor. If you want a lion you likely will need to go with a guide. Showing up ill prepared to climb snow covered mountains all day is a sure fire way to go home empty handed.

The spiraling red fletched arrow hit within a fraction of an inch of the white piece of grass. The bear didn't travel very far and Wes and I were rewarded; Wes for doing his part and me doing mine. The bear was a mature boar that will easily make Pope and Young.

I still much prefer a non-guided do-it-yourself hunt as it provides a greater level of satisfaction in knowing I contributed to all aspects of the hunt. However, if you choose to go on a guided hunt, don't think you can just show up and are guaranteed that you will kill an animal. You must do your part. The outfitter and guide have invested untold time and money to ensure you have an enjoyable and successful hunt. Their success and reputation is based on how you perform your part. Don't let them down and honor the animal by being prepared to deliver a good shot! ♣

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