

Official Publication for the members of the Professional Bowhunters Society

THE PROFESSIONAL BOWHUNTER MAGAZINE



UNITED WE ACT FOR THE PRESERVATION OF BOWHUNTING
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Traditional Values**

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THE PROFESSIONAL BOWHUNTER MAGAZINE

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President's Message

by Jim Akenson
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PBS Looking Ahead & Who We Are...

I am done with PBS Council service. Some will cheer, many will not – but PBS will still move ahead, and I'm betting will prosper. On March 1st, I will have served 10 years for PBS – as a Councilman, VP, and two terms as President. By-and-large I have enjoyed the experience and hope my volunteer efforts have helped the organization in a positive manner. I would categorize my time period of service as "introspective," where we the membership took a deep look at ourselves and where we fit in the current world of bowhunting. It was an emotional time during the Identity Statement evaluation and vote. This deliberation was frustrating, exhausting, hopeful, and unfortunately hurtful too, but **we made it through**. PBS members are resilient. PBS members are special, and a big part of that centers around passion – for bowhunting – done in an honorable manner. Bottom-line, we all want to see the best for our organization and the style of bowhunting we cherish.

So where are we now? What are our strong points? How will we move forward? Our place is doing what we have

always done well – promoting bowhunting through example! At present, we do business in a new age of communication, involving social media and many diverse types of video outlets, and this adaptation needs to continue and expand with the rapidly changing times. Our strong points are – like always – our unique experience base. We hunt the hard way over most corners of our planet. Just look at our website during hunting season for an impressive "who's doing what and where" dialogue. Sometimes I think we sell ourselves short. We are the most passionate bowhunting organization on Earth, plain and simple! So how will we move forward? My thinking is that we will move forward just as we have moved along for over 50 years – with extreme passion for bowhunting over a broad landscape of the great outdoors. Our member hunts, our gatherings, our magazine, our dedicated staff at home office, our volunteer base – from members stepping up at events to those serving on Council – that's the unique fiber that makes us – *the PBS, and that's who we are!*

We just elected a new Council. Norm, Matt, Ethan, and Tom will be joining Rob

in leading PBS. This will be a great team and they truly represent some of the best of "who we are." Thank you Terry for your committed service, and we really hope that you'll be back as a PBS leader when time allows for it. During their respective tenures, Council will be donating hundreds of hours to keep our organization moving forward and getting better. Please respect and support them. Contribute to help them, and to help PBS wherever you can. I want to thank all of you – each and every one, for giving me the chance to help steer the ship during a noteworthy time period for PBS, and I especially want to thank Jack and Brenda at home office for all of their hard work behind the scenes – they truly are the engine of our ship!

I will close with this thought – which is not a new one. Be somebody's **Mentor**. Share that knowledge you have developed. Encourage that person – to become a PBS member. Show folks that we are not only passionate bowhunters, but passionate conservationists – in the hunter context, and we're teachers too. That's **who we are!**

All the best in bowhunting...

~ Jim A.

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Vice President's Message

by Norm Johnson

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I will start my column as many of the Council have and offer a sincere thank you to Jim Akenson for 10 years of service to the PBS. It is a tremendous time commitment that is purely on a voluntary basis. Jim's wife Holly deserves a big thanks as well, helping tremendously in organizing many of the "ladies tours" for our gatherings. Thanks to Terry Receveur for his service. When you work closely with these guys you develop a true friendship and admiration for the talents and gifts these guys bring to the table. Working with these guys, I quickly realized I was shorted some IQ points as well. Welcome to Ethan Rodrigue and Dr. Tom Vanasche, our new

Councilmen. I consider them both friends and look forward to working with them. Thanks to Greg Darling and Don Davis for stepping up to run for Council positions.

I am currently working on an aggressive "pro-growth" agenda for my upcoming term as president. The new Council met in Madison to lay the groundwork for the 2018 Gathering. We finalized the details of a pro-growth agenda at that time.

I want to move forward with a unified message that strongly promotes all the great attributes that attracted us to join the PBS whether recently or decades ago. More importantly is focusing on the PBS family. Many of us have photo albums filled with time spent in the PBS family whether hunting trips, biennial gathering, or an odd year gathering.

I also want to encourage all members to stay strong and be a positive part of helping us grow in the near future. The PBS like so many organizations these days, has been slowly bleeding members. I am very optimistic we can turn the page and grow again but it will require help and optimism from the entire membership. As I see more and more gray hair showing up in the mirror I have learned a few life lessons along the way. Number one is there is no such



thing as the perfect organization. Number two, is to see the PBS for all the great things it stands for and the positive influence it has had on so many likeminded individuals over the last half century.

This past week I have spent a lot of time on the phone with members as well as email exchanges. Many of you contacting me with concerns, complaints, and suggestions. I do appreciate all input from any and all members; we can't address a problem or ease a concern without open communication and dialogue from the members. Please feel free to email or call me personally.

All the best,

~ Norm J.

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Election & Voting Results

The election tally has been verified by the Councilman-At-Large. His count matched the initial count from Home Office. The Nominating Committee -- Council + PBS Regular Membership Rep. (our Chaplain Gene Thorn) -- was convened via conference call on the matter of replacing the Senior Council (Matt Schuster) as Matt moved up to VP. Matt had 1 year left on his 3 year term. That one year will be filled by Tom Vanasche as per deliberation and vote of the Nominating Committee. The incoming Council will be comprised of: Norm Johnson - President, Matt Schuster - Vice-President, Rob Burnham - Senior Council, Ethan Rodrigue - 3 Year Council, Tom Vanasche - Councilman.

Final Count - Results

President

165	Norm Johnson
83	Don Davis
8	Abstain
256	Total

Vice President

111	Greg Darling
143	Matt Schuster
2	Abstain
256	Total

Three Year Councilman

136	Ethan Rodrigue
109	Tom Vanasche
11	Abstain
256	Total



Senior Council's Report

by Matt Schuster

matt@easterndynamicsinc.com

First, I want to thank Jim Akenson for his many years in service to the PBS. Over the last decade, Jim devoted countless hours to our organization and has always embodied what it means to be professional in its stewardship. His leadership will be missed and his advice as past President valued. Thanks also to Terry Receveur for filling out Norm's open Council seat, and I sure hope he decides to seek office again. Much appreciation also to Don Davis, Greg Darling, and Tom Vanasche for stepping up and running for office - and welcome to Ethan Rodrigue on joining the Council, you are a valuable addition.

When I joined PBS over a quarter century ago, the internet was in its infancy, *Traditional Bowhunter* magazine was a relatively young publication, and there were only a handful of successful outdoor tv shows. When folks wanted to learn to hunt, they looked to their peers and for the most part, they got good advice based on actual experience. That has somewhat changed with the times. A couple of examples - twice I've had personal experiences in which bowhunters were told in specific terms not to show up in camp with expandable broadheads to shoot tough game, but did anyway - once for elk, and once for hogs. Their excuses were remarkably similar - all said that if mechanical broadheads were not effective then they would not be promoted by their favorite hunting celebrity on tv or at their local shop so they ignored the mandate from the guide or outfitter. And each admitted that they really had no idea how to tune or sharpen a different kind of broadhead and were not sure how to learn. In the case of the elk hunt, three of these guys hunting with a guide out of the same camp (I was hunting un-

guided nearby) each made a perfect shot on a bull, according to the outfitter, and only one was recovered. I write this not to impune these hunters, they didn't know any better, but as an example of the power of modern marketing and as an example of why mentoring is so important. One more example and then I will bring this around to the PBS. I recently popped in to an archery store in SC. I was not surprised that they didn't stock what I was looking for and it was apparent, once I told the guys working the store what I like to do, that they were interested only in me leaving the store so as not to waste their time. They stocked only lightweight arrows and mechanical heads. These guys have been in business for years so must know their customers, but they stock only lightweight arrows and mechanical heads. The experience made me realize that anyone looking to learn how to bowhunt in that area of S.C. and in many other areas around the country is likely getting an extremely narrow view of our sport, and that is too bad.

So how does this relate to the PBS? We are fond of saying that the PBS is not for everyone, and that is true. We have always attracted the hard core, passionate outdoorsmen to whom close range bowhunting with a simple stick and string is a priority in life. We tend to spend a lot of time in the woods, and most members bowhunt outside of their home ground when they can. I hope that never changes. But right now most of the folks who join PBS are already experi-

enced traditional bowhunters. That is great, but we should shift our outlook slightly and begin to actively recruit, as associates, guys who want to be the kind of dedicated, experienced traditional bowhunters that most of us are now. The kind of guys that see Clay Hayes' video *Untamed* and realize that there is great satisfaction to be had in not relying on technology to solve the challenges of the hunt. There are thousands of folks out there who would love to learn to be successful with a stick and string but either don't know it yet, or don't know how to go about the process. I hate that they are missing out on all the fun. We need to find these folks, get them into the PBS as associates, and help them learn to be successful. I am not talking about trying to convert those uninterested or in recruiting casual bowhunters or guys more interested in punching foam than chasing critters - I mean guys that really have the desire to be a successful traditional bowhunter. Some won't stick, and that is ok, but some will. And for those who do, what better place to learn than from the best bowhunters in the world - the members of the PBS!

~ Matt S.



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Council's Report

by Terry Receveur

Terrance.Receveur@Taconic.com

Thanks for the memories!

It's been an honor to serve on Council with true professionals. Jim, Norm, Matt, Rob, and Steve love the PBS and put their heart and soul into doing what they believe is best for the membership. Trust me, these guys care about you and what you want out of the PBS. In my time on Council, I never once encountered anyone with a hidden agenda or desire for anything but the best for you. That certainly doesn't mean that we all agreed on what we thought was best for the PBS, but it does mean all intentions were pure. Jim, it was an honor serving with you. You certainly weathered a few storms and the ship is still sailing. Nicely done! With Norm now

at the helm, you can count on a smooth journey. Norm has a great, calm demeanor that will certainly smooth the water in rough times. Matt is just a great Southern gentleman that lets his southern drawl and woodsy anecdotes belie the fact that he is a consummate professional and leader. We often had banter in our Council meetings about whether Norm or Matt would run for President. There isn't a shadow of doubt that we all would win in either instance and these two will work together for all of us.

You are very lucky to have Ethan Rodrigue and Tom Vanasche join Council. Ethan is a hard worker and has a passion

for bowhunting and the PBS. Ethan is a man's man that stands by what he says and if you shake on it, count on it. Tom is about as good of a guy as you could ask for. I was fortunate to spend a week bowhunting alligators with Tom and he is the kind of person you really want to share camp with. You never need to ask for anything. Tom is always there with a lending hand and a happy heart. He just makes it fun to be around him. I'm positive he will bring a lot to the table for Council. He's also purdy smart having learned a thing or two as an ER doc.



I would be very remiss if I didn't thank Jack and Brenda for their service. The knowledge and history that Jack has is invaluable. He is the single thread that ensures continuity and success across years of Councils. Brenda is always there when you need her and always delivers on what is asked. Thank you Jack and Brenda!

I started my Council service with the following statement and I'll end with it. "I love the PBS for the opportunities it affords its members to interact with and learn from some of the best bowhunters in the world. Best is NOT defined by who has taken the most animals or by those who have their name in a book more than anyone else. Best are those who pursue game in an ethical and sportsmanlike manner. It's those who recognize the hunt is in the journey and not the destination. It's those who understand the complex relationships between man and nature. It's those who know there are no shortcuts to success. A faster bow, brighter sight, smoother release, or clearer trail camera do NOT guarantee success. In fact, it can detract from what truly defines success; the hunt! Best are those who go afield to enjoy nature, learn about and respect the game they pursue, meet the challenge of the environment, and are just happy to be there. Best are those who know that life isn't about stuff, it's about making memories (that's all we can take with us). Best are those who know the kill is simply icing. I have been extremely fortunate to hunt with some of PBS's BEST and look forward to many more hunts."

I've truly been blessed to hunt and work with the BEST!

Aim small and miss small!

~ Terry R.

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Council's Report

by Rob Burnham

rob@burnhamphotography.com

Pondering over what to write about the 1st quarter of 2017, it became painfully apparent just how fast time and life passes by. Recently losing a dear friend and fellow artist helped to drive home the point. Many if not all of us are guilty of putting things off, rationalizing that there will be tomorrow. I've done this far more times than I can count, especially when it comes to my bowhunting adventures. Life, work, family and a multitude of other things just seem to get in the way, preventing us from following up on those dreams of hunting that bucket list animal or far away destination we have longed to hunt. My question to you, if you are like me, isn't life about bowhunting and enjoying all that God has created? Isn't it time we set aside the time and take that hunting trip we have longed to do? If you need a little push I have just the thing for you. Why not purchase some of the raffle tickets for one of the donated PBS hunts? What a great way to not only take that long awaited bow hunt you've wanted to do, but also contribute to PBS.

Speaking of bowhunting, by the time your copy of the PBS magazine arrives in your mailbox, 2017 will be a quarter way through and hunting seasons will be fast approaching. Some less than six months away, not to mention those spring gobbler and bear hunts that some of us enjoy. What once in a lifetime hunts do some of you have planned for 2017? I've got my eye on several great opportunities, but I will hold off talking about them until I know for sure a spot is available. I don't want to jinx myself! Just make sure you keep a diary or good field notes so that you can share your adventure with our members. Writing articles and taking photos is

a great way to support PBS and an even better way to help others in planning their dream bowhunt. More than once I have read an article in PBS magazine and thought to myself, "I'd love to go on a hunt just like that". Our magazine is a direct result of the efforts of our membership, members like you that have shared their bowhunting experiences by way of the articles and images they have submitted to our publication. We have a great magazine, but it can only be good if our members contribute to it. I would really like to see some articles from those of you that have not submitted before. Don't worry about spelling and grammar errors, we have a guru that handles our mistakes. Just tell the story as you would sitting around a campfire.

Unlike our recent country's election, PBS had a great group of candidates running for council this time around, the results are posted on page 3. I'm really looking forward to the next few years and watching PBS grow. To all of those that stepped up to serve, thank you. To those that were elected, congratulations! Just be ready to roll up your sleeves, we have much work to be done.

Speaking of work, the next banquet will be about a year out when you read this, so it's time to start making your plans and arrangements now to attend. Not meaning to beat a dead horse, but if you have not attended one of PBS' biannual gatherings, you owe it to yourself to join us in Madison, Wisc. Regardless if you will be able to attend or

not, you can still help make PBS and the banquet a success by donating something for the many auctions and raffles that will be held. If you have thoughts of building something to donate, now would be a really good time to get started.

I am very excited and looking forward to what 2017 will bring and hopefully I will have the opportunity to meet a few new faces and maybe even share a camp with some of you. I plan on attending a few of the traditional archery events being held this spring and summer so make it a point to say hi and introduce yourself. Finally those of us on Council really would like to hear from our members regarding their ideas, concerns or anything you feel important to PBS and bowhunting, so don't hesitate to call, email or contact us. Here's to a great 2017!

~ Rob B.

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Chaplain's Corner

by Gene Thorn

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Aligned!

I remember distinctly the alignment process I went through on the first deer I ever killed with the bow, over 40 years ago, in 1976. I was hidden, standing on the ground, in an old fencerow on a long abandoned farm in Canaan Valley, West Virginia. The snow was very deep, up above my knees. I looked out through the woods and here came a doe on a trail that crossed a decrepit post and barbed wire fence 35 yards out, as I later determined. I did not know the distance at that time. She went through a gap in the fence and stood broadside in the open, her dark reddish-brown coat contrasting against the stark white snow. Her breath was misting in the sharp cold air. I drew the sharp Bear Razorhead tipped arrow back to the anchor point at the corner of my mouth. I remember at that moment in time sighting down the arrow, and just before I released I raised it up over her back. It felt right. I released and watched the orange fletches spiral as the arrow arched across the distance to

the deer and sank to the feathers right behind the shoulder in the sweet spot.

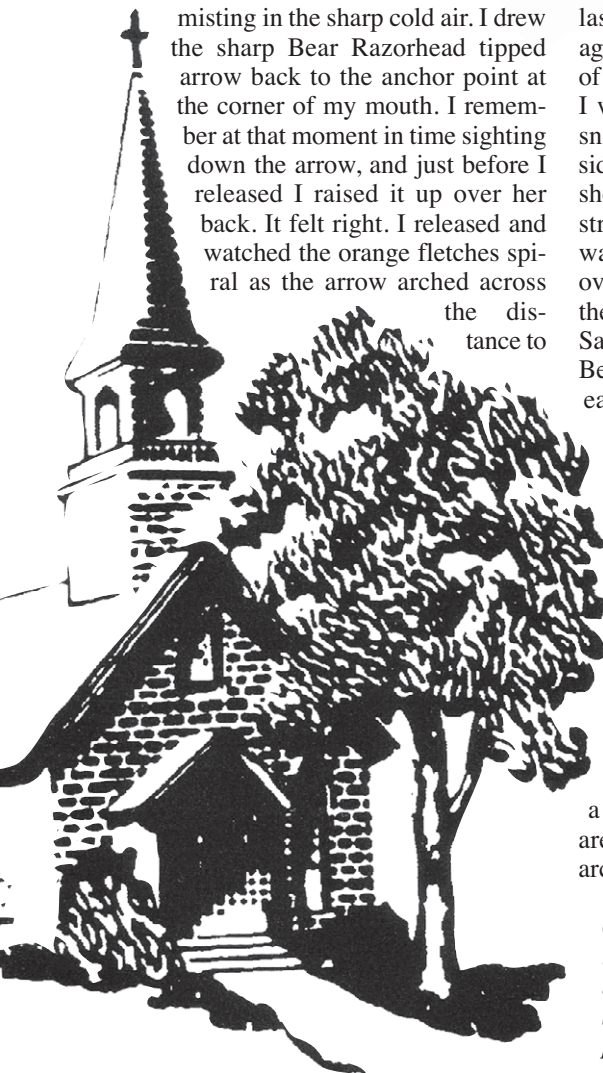
She ran a semicircle around me for about 60 yards, spray painting the snow and up on every tree she passed with bright crimson. The stillness of the woods was broken with the clack clack clack sound of the arrow hitting saplings until it broke off. I watched her stumble and collapse in a cloud of snow. I recognized then that had I not made a correction in alignment at the last second, I would be experiencing the agony of a miss instead of the ecstatic sense of accomplishment I was feeling. I felt like I was floating above the deep blanket of snow till I reached her lying still on her side. I tapped her eye with my bow tip and she didn't blink. I reached down and stroked the sleek coat on her ribs and a wave of sadness for taking her life came over me for awhile. I thanked the Lord for the bounty of meat she would provide for Sandy and me in our first year of marriage. Being a college student at the time, we were eating a lot of macaroni and cheese and spaghetti. The squirrels, rabbits, ruffed grouse, venison, and trout I provided from nature's bounty were our protein source. We were forced by reality to align our eating habits and grocery buying habits to stretch the money I had saved by working landscape construction the previous 3 summers, so it would pay tuition, books, the rent on our apartment, bills, gasoline and International Scout maintenance and parts, and last to buy groceries, for the 9 months of my senior year. Alignment is a very important concept in life in many areas as well as in the shooting aspect of archery.

Galatians 5:24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

As Christians we must align our actions and lifestyle with the Word of God. We have to "crucify" our flesh, with its passions and desires. In other words, not let our human nature rule us. The Greek translation to verse 26 tells us that "we must align ourselves to the Spirit", and that is connected to not provoking and envying one another. In other words, our first duty is that we not let our egos create divisions between us. We must "align" ourselves; we must all learn to go in the same direction, towards God, rather than wandering off in our own personalities and pridefulness, as if we, rather than God, were in charge. Aligning ourselves to the Spirit is the fine tuning of our actions, just like I adjusted the alignment of that arrow so many years ago. Paul makes it clear that living in the flesh leads us to mill about in confusion and sin, each of us following our own desires and in conflict with others. Living in the spirit leads us to move in one precise direction, facing towards God; not varying, in perfect harmony, living our lives pleasing to God and working to build His Kingdom.

We as PBSers tend to be individualists by nature, but we have to set aside our own way for the greater good of a common cause. I am encouraged by the awesome spirit of cooperation and respect for one another that I have seen in PBS of late. People coming together and setting aside their egos is what it is going to take to meet the challenges ahead.

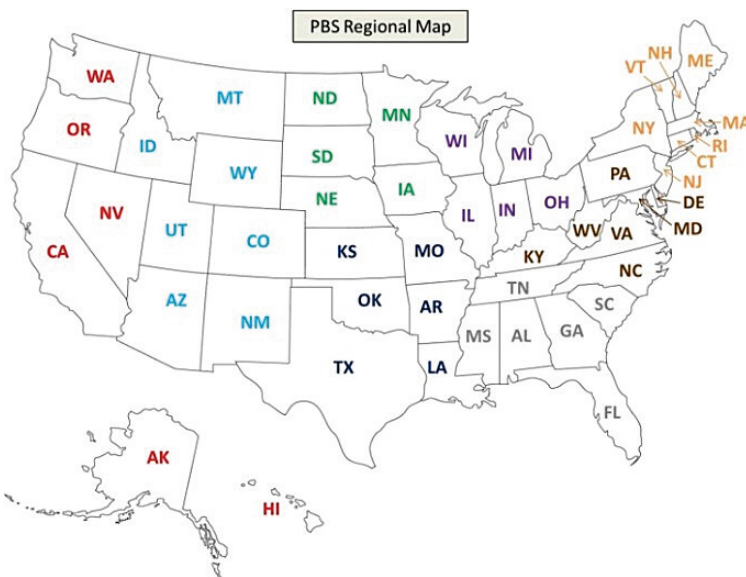
The Bible admonishes us as Christians to examine ourselves before we take communion lest we eat and drink unworthily. Let each one of us go even further and daily examine ourselves. If we have lost our way and need to adjust our course, let us ask God to forgive us of our sins, and set our feet on the right path. From time to time we have to take our vehicles in to get the wheels aligned. Then the ole "Meatwagon" runs so much smoother, and the tires then wear evenly. The potholes of life many times do the same to us, misaligning us. We need the Spirit of God to align us. Let us live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit and be **ALIGNED!** *



PBS – Regionally Speaking

By Jeff Holchin
First Quarter 2017

PBSers are hitting the ground running for 2017, with two membership hunts already completed in January and three more in February. Many PBSers think that these membership hunts are the best thing we have going right now, in terms of providing benefits to our members and recruiting new members. If you have hosted a membership hunt in recent years, thanks! If you have not participated in a membership hunt, what are you waiting for? If you are considering hosting one, please do it, no matter how small. They do require some planning and work, but if you start small and build from there, you should be fine. Contact me if you are thinking about hosting a membership hunt and have questions. If you have any relevant bowhunting-related news from your state or region, send it to your state or regional rep, or to me. Also, we need your current contact information – PLEASE email your regional representative with this information and get your state representative's contact information in return. We need to build our member database to more effectively communicate between members and representatives of each state and region. We need more activity within each state and region, such as gatherings, fundraisers and hunts. There are at least two Odd Year Gatherings planned for 2017 with another being considered. Check out "PBS Regional Programs" and "PBS Membership Hunts" forums on our website – we need more activity.



South Central - Russell Lantier (russelllantier@bellsouth.net)
Southeast – Ron Herman (rchermanjr@hotmail.com)

Pacific West Report (Washington, Oregon, Nevada, California, Alaska, Hawaii) by Tom Vanasche – Regional Representative

The winter for most of the West has been wet and cold with either lots of rain or snow. Hopefully a good spring will be kind to our herds of deer, elk, and antelope. The moisture should bring lots of new growth and get rid of some drought situations. The hunting fees have all doubled in Alaska for 2017, though if you bought your 2017 tags in December you could have got them for the 2016 price. That window is closed now and good luck to all of you that are heading to the North country this fall. As this is written you should be analyzing and preparing to put in for the western states drawings for tags. You can't draw if you don't put in!! In Oregon, we held off the crossbows another year and remain the ONLY state where they are not allowed in any season. Hopefully we can continue that tradition. With Jim Akenson from PBS and Traditional Archers of Oregon leading the way we are trying to reinstitute some old-time deer rut hunts for traditional equipment in the Cascade mountains. We shall see if the game commission is cooperative.

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

The January 2017 Arizona PBS Members Hunt hosted by Rick Wildermuth is in the books. Rick says "2017 Arizona Members hunt was another successful gathering. The first day of hunting resulted in 2 javelina down. Did one person shoot the others javelina? More to come on that story. On the third day another javelina was carried into camp. Several bucks and many does were spotted. And once again, food may be the reason this hunt continues. Great chefs in camp whipping up pork roast with

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

The current Regional Representatives are as follows:
Chairman - Jeff Holchin (jeffreholchin@gmail.com)
Appalachian - Gene Thorn (pethorn@hotmail.com)
Great Lakes - Ron Lang (rlang46@gmail.com)
International - Richard Flett (deerhunter_4life@hotmail.com)
North Central - John Vargo (john1597@aol.com) and Mark Viehweg (mark@v-testequipment.com)
Northeast - Terry Receveur (Terrance.Receveur@taconic.com)
Pacific West - Tom Vanasche (tomvanasche@mac.com)
Rocky Mountain West - Dan Mathis (dml.mathis@yahoo.com)



mashed taters & sauerkraut, made-on-the-spot pineapple pie, prime rib and etc. Did I mention great camaraderie & story telling? We just might have to do this again.”

For more info: www.iowabowhunters.org.

The Coon Rapids traditional 3-D shoot is held Father's Day weekend each year, June 16-18. This shoot is hosted by the Rapids Archery Club in Coon Rapids, MN. This is a big shoot with lots of shooters and dealers. For more info: www.rapidsarchery.net.

Great Lakes Report (Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Missouri) by Ron Lang

OJIBWA BOWHUNTERS 2017

PBS Odd Year Gathering July 14th, 15th, and 16th

Friday 14th Pot Luck - Bring a dish to pass.

Saturday 15th Pig Roast

All Raffles to Benefit PBS! Food and Beverages Available

Free Camping with Electric

3 Ranges Unlimited Shooting

Novelty Shoots \$15.00 a Day

\$25.00 for a 2 day pass • \$30.00 for a 3 day pass

Address: Clubhouse 3045 S. Johnson Rd. New Berlin, WI

For information contact: Brian Tessmann 262-389-6319

Jerry Levelle 414-852-2923

This is one heck of a gathering so put this one on your calendar! These Odd Year Gatherings are extremely important in raising money for the PBS and your donations and attendance is greatly appreciated. Besides it is fun and a perfect family event for this summer.

Northeastern Report (New York, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut) by Terry Receveur

No report.

Appalachia Report (Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina) by Gene Thorn – Regional Representative

**** The Baltimore Odd Year Gathering was rescheduled due to weather. Check the PBS website for details. ****

This fun weekend will feature 3-D target shooting, seminars, raffles and auctions, chili cook-off and fellowship. Check the PBS website for details, or contact Larry Schwartz at 443-994-1098 or larryschwartz@comcast.net. Come out and support your PBS.

Kentucky (Scott Record) – The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is currently in the process of setting season dates and regulations for the 2017-2018 season. Several important changes are up for consideration that may effect bowhunters. KDFWR is proposing to reduce the length of the quota elk season to help increase population growth in it's eastern KY herd. This will likely reduce archery season length, in particular the January cow season. An additional proposal will establish a minimum 3 antler points per side for legal bull elk harvest. A regulation requiring wounded elk to be counted towards the bag limit and establishing strict penalties for hunters and guides convicted of violating this new regulation is also up for proposal. A much needed wanton waste policy is being established for deer, elk and bear hunters. Elk hunting is by quota draw only with no preference point system. The quota entry dead-

~ cont. on page 10

Great Plains Central Report (North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota, Iowa)

by John Vargo (IA, TX, MN, OK) and Mark Viehweg (SD, ND, KS, NE) Regional Representatives

From Mark Viehweg: I am planning on the weekend of September 23 - October 1, 2017 for a group of (6) PBS members to hunt western South Dakota. This is the opening weekend of the archery deer season and last week of the archery antelope season. All non-resident archery tags are a guaranteed draw. Paul Ladner,



Mike McKnight and myself plan on attending leaving three slots open. Don't be surprised with two teenage children and my wife working full time if my time in the field isn't limited. I will be relying on my good friend Paul Ladner for assistance. This place offers good opportunities for mule deer and whitetails - Paul killed a nice buck here in 2016 and everybody had chances - there might have been a few misses...Please feel free to contact me

at mviehweg99@yahoo.com or my cell phone at 847-828-4413 with any questions or to save a spot.

From John Vargo: From John Vargo – The Iowa Traditional Bowhunters Association has their rendezvous shoot the last weekend of May of each year. Last year it was hosted by the Pine Lakes Archers just north of Eldora, and we anticipate it will be held there again in 2017. Two 3-D target courses are set up. Traditional only - no compounds. Meals and snacks are served at the clubhouse. Primitive camping at the club. Camping with full hookups at the nearby state park. For more info: www.iowatbs.com.

The Iowa Bowhunters Association has their summer rendezvous the first weekend in August of each year. It is hosted by the Pine Lakes Archers just north of Eldora. Two 3-D target courses are set up. Traditional and compounds are all welcome. Meals and snacks are served at the clubhouse. Primitive camping at the club. Camping with full hookups at the nearby state park. Some vendors will be present. We usually have a group of 5-10 PBS members camping and shooting at the event. Come join us.

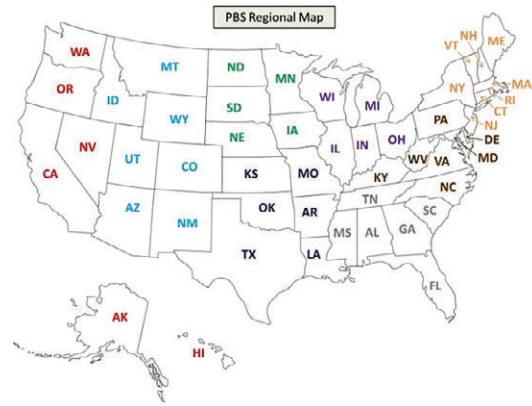
PBS Regionally Speaking

~ continued from page 9

line is April 30th so apply now for your opportunity to hunt the biggest elk herd east of the Mississippi. Kentucky has a growing bear population and hunting opportunities have been increasing over the past several seasons. Bear hunting in KY is residents only and the bow season will likely be the 4th week in October. In deer hunting news, KY harvested a record of nearly 140,000 deer with all weapons. Archery comprised 14% of that total. For comparison crossbow and muzzle loader accounted for 3% and 8 % respectively. Kentucky continues to have a nearly 4 month continuous archery season with ample opportunity for deer hunting statewide. Proposed changes to allow the use of barbed broadheads for large game have been discussed as well as a push to remove the 15" minimum deer antler spread requirement that still exists on a several Wildlife Management Areas. Biologists have determined, through several years of data collection, that minimum antler spread requirements have not changed the age structure of the deer herd. Originally established to protect the 2 1/2 year age class, this regulation has actually served to high grade this age class and resulted in the incidental take of smaller bucks that may not have been recovered or reported in the harvest. Hopefully, this minimum will be removed as Kentucky's statewide 1 buck limit has served to produce trophy class deer in all regions. For detailed information on season dates, regulations, license fees, quota hunts and public hunting opportunities see fw.ky.gov.

Maryland (Tony Sanders) - Maryland hunters reported taking 35,078 deer during the state's most popular hunt, the two-week firearm season. The total was 12 percent greater than last year's harvest of 31,304. Fair weather and a reduced harvest in September and October contributed to the increase. Over 4,300 deer were taken on the two Sundays during the season. "Deer hunters got off to a slower start than normal earlier this fall however they came out in force during the annual firearm season and the harvest rebounded accordingly," said Wildlife and Heritage Service Director Paul Peditto. "Sunday hunting also played a valuable role in the strong harvest totals." Hunters reported taking 22,407 antlerless white-tailed deer the season, nearly double the total of antlered white-tailed deer (12,671). Focusing the harvest on antlerless deer remains a fundamental component of the department's effort to manage the state's deer population. In western Maryland (Region A) hunters reported taking 4,018 white-tailed deer, a slight increase from last year's harvest of 3,965. The region's harvest was comprised of 2,462 antlered and 1,556 antlerless deer. In the remainder of the state (Region B), the white-tailed deer harvest increased 14 percent from last year's harvest of 26,364 to 30,000 deer this year. That region's total included 9,722 antlered and 20,278 antlerless deer. The harvest of sika deer also increased this year with hunters reporting 1,060 deer (487 antlered and 573 antlerless) compared to 975 (392 antlered and 583 antlerless) in 2015. "Hunters have responded favorably to the recent liberalization of bag limits for sika deer," Peditto said. "We modified those limits to help reduce and stabilize the deer population, especially where it has caused significant agricultural damage." Young hunters reported taking 2,443 deer in November during the Junior Deer Hunt Days, slightly below last year's harvest of 2,534. They registered 1,557 antlered and 886 antlerless deer.

Maryland's winter turkey hunting season will be open Jan. 19-21 statewide, allowing hunters that didn't bag a turkey in the fall another opportunity. The season was established in 2015 to provide hunters an opportunity to harvest turkeys outside the tradi-



tional spring season. "Our state's turkey population is healthy and continues to grow in nontraditional areas," said Wildlife and Heritage Service Director Paul Peditto. "This additional hunting season provides another great opportunity to get outdoors during a time of year when other popular hunting seasons are closed." Maryland hunters can use the following weapons during the winter turkey season:

- Airbows
- Crossbows and vertical bows and
- Shotguns loaded with a No. 4 shot or smaller.

Hunting hours are from a half-hour before sunrise to a half-hour after sunset. The bag limit is one turkey of either sex. Hunters who already bagged a turkey in the fall season may not harvest one in the winter. Please remember that it is illegal to hunt turkeys with the aid of bait. Hunters may check in their harvests via phone at 888-800-0121, online or via the Maryland Department of Natural Resources mobile app.

Pennsylvania (Tim Denial) - The Pa. Game commission lost out on raising the hunting license fee; they have not had an increase in about 18 years. The License fee was not approved in the General Assembly 2016 session, yet was supported by almost every sportsman's group in PA such as the Federation of Sportsman's Clubs, United Bowhunters of Pa., Quality Deer Management Assoc., NWTF, PA.Trappers Assoc., Western Pa. Conservancy, D.U. of PA. and the list goes on. The agency will be facing an eight million dollar shortfall for the coming year. Two pheasant farms are closing and 14 employees furloughed. This latest bill expired in the House of Representatives despite near unanimous approval by the senate.???? Mark your calendars: ETAR is July 27th-30th.

West Virginia (Gene Thorn) - WVDNR stocked 24 elk from Kentucky in Logan Co WV in December 2016.

Virginia (Randy Brookshier) - There are several bills headed to the 2017 Virginia General Assembly which, if passed, would change bow hunting in the Commonwealth. Baiting, as well as supplemental feeding during hunting seasons, has been illegal in Va. for over 80 years. A proposed bill would allow hunters to put out bait or salt during hunting season for the purpose of attracting deer. This is a controversial topic and a position not supported by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Currently hunters are required to wear blaze orange while hunting when any firearms or muzzle loader season for deer is open. This affects bow hunters who choose to bow hunt during firearms season or during the periods of time that muzzleloader season and bow season overlap. A proposed bill would allow hunters the option of blaze orange or blaze pink. The fastest growing segment of hunters in Va. is the females and the option of wearing pink would support this group and maybe encourage more women to take up hunting. Another proposed bill would allow hunters the option of carrying an elec-

tronic copy of their hunting license as well as bear, deer and turkey tags on their smart phone instead of having to keep up with the paper copies. With recent changes in licensing and tagging requirements Virginians currently have to carry several sheets of folded up paper instead of the simple license that formally could have been folded up in their wallet. There is also a proposal to authorize the use of a slingshot to hunt small and big game when a hunter is licensed to hunt with a bow and arrow. A slingshot is basically a slingshot that is modified to fire an arrow. All of these proposed bills will be studied by the V.D.G.I.F. and go through the public comment period prior to being voted on by the General Assembly.

Southeast Report

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

by Ron Herman – Regional Representative

Alabama: Alabama Conservation Advisory Board (CAB) will held its first scheduled meeting of 2017 on Saturday, Feb 11, to discuss stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama resources. Learn more at www.outdooralabama.com. Wildlife food plots in Alabama have suffered because of the recent drought and some hunters are trying to increase their chances of harvesting a deer by disregarding a long-standing law. Hunting game over bait is illegal in Alabama, but the Alabama Department of Conservation

and Natural Resources continues to receive calls asking if the law has changed. "There is a rumor being passed around that we're allowing hunting over bait because of the drought, and that is absolutely not true," said Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Director Chuck Sykes. Sixteen were arrested for transport, release or possession of live feral pigs. An investigation by Conservation Officers in the Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF) has led to arrest warrants issued for 16 people in seven Alabama counties and two other states for the illegal transport, release or live possession of feral pigs.

Georgia: Campfire restrictions have been lifted from WMAs. Hunters Helping Farmers is a new private lands initiative opportunity that seeks to match up hog hunters in the same county with farmers that need assistance with hog removal. This initiative is a partnership effort between the Georgia Department of Agriculture and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in order to help landowners manage the damaging impact of feral hogs georgiawildlife.com/HHF. The coastal hog membership hunt hosted by Jeff Holchin occurred at the beginning of February - check the PBS web site for details. Hopefully the PBS membership hunt on historic Blackbeard Island will happen this coming December, after hurricane Mathew caused the 2016 hunts to be canceled.

Florida: Hunter Safety internet completion courses being offered in February. Those interested in attending a course can register online and obtain information about future hunter safety classes at MyFWC.com/HunterSafety or by calling the FWC's regional office in Lake City at 386-758-0525.

Mississippi: In past month, Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) Conservation Officers have made nine different cases on illegal importation of cervid carcasses. Some of these cases originated from concerned citizens and through cooperation with other state and federal agencies. In May 2016, the Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks passed 40 Miss. Admin Code, Part 2, Rule 2.7 Prohibition on Cervid Carcass Importation, to Protect Mississippi from Chronic Wasting Disease. "Hunters who are hunting in a CWD positive state need to be aware of these new regulations before they bring their trophy back to Mississippi," said Col. Steve Adcock, MDWFP Chief of Law Enforcement. "Our officers are working diligently to prevent CWD from entering into Mississippi."

South Carolina: SCDNR announces the launch of two new blogs. For freshwater fishing,

~ cont. on page 13 ~

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- Winner receives a **\$1,300 CREDIT** toward a custom Blacktail bow. For more details, visit www.blacktailbows.com.
- **Membership Drive** begins April 1, 2017 with winner announced at drawing during the **2018 PBS Biennial Banquet** — Madison, WI.
- A 'drawing entry' will be assigned to the purchaser of each new member enrollment during the **PBS Membership Drive** period.
- No limit of entries. The more new PBS members you enroll, the greater your odds of winning!

PBS Regionally Speaking

~ continued from page 11

hunting, and other recreational activities, check out scnaturalresourcesblog.com/. Writer David Lucas, former editor of South Carolina Wildlife Magazine, kicks off the launch with a series on the impressive heavy machinery needed to maintain SCDNR properties – and the people who operate them. For saltwater fishing, marine biology, and other coastal fun, visit sccoastalresources.com/. Join Erin Weeks, MIT-trained science writer for SCDNR's marine division, as she explores the mysteries of sharks, sea turtles, and other strange sea creatures – and interviews the world-class researchers who solve them. SC Deer Harvest program to change for 2017 seasons. The changes not released officially as of yet but the bill signed last year is due to generate changes that one official calls "historic" for deer harvesting in state. It should include uniform limits on antlered bucks across the state and all must be tagged whereas before only does were tagged. The bill was signed by Gov Nikki Haley on June 8 and takes effect July 1, 2017. The new law a hunter will be issued eight date-specific individual antlerless deer tags, valid only on specified days and three buck tags at no charge. For more visit www.dnr.sc.gov

Tennessee: TWRA requesting public input for 2017-18 Hunting Regulations. Comment period is open through Wednesday, Feb 15, 2017. World record pending for non-typical deer harvested in Sumner County. Boone and Crockett officials spent several hours on Monday (Jan. 9) scoring the 47-point buck tabbed the "Tennessee Tucker Buck" at the Nashville headquarters of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. The buck was harvested by 26-year old Gallatin resident Stephen Tucker. - See more at: <https://www.tn.gov/twra/news/47885#sthash.3k9IF04S.dpuf>. The deer rack scored 312 3/8 in the Boone and Crockett tabulation. The tabulation was held after 60 days had passed since the original "wet" score indicated that the buck was a potential world record. As it stands, the score will break previous mark of 307 5/8 set by then 15-year old Tony Lovsteun in Albion, Iowa. - Read more at <https://www.tn.gov/twra/news/47885>

South Central Report

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

by Russell Lantier – Regional Representative

Louisiana: In the majority of areas in the state, Louisiana's archery season ended on January 31st. In the southern part of the state temperatures in the upper seventies and lower eighties were not uncommon. That may seem like a nice break from the cold for some of our members above the Mason-Dixon line, but those are extremely warm temperatures, even by our standards. During the early part of March, several PBSers gathered in Baton Rouge and later headed down to Port Sulphur, near the tip of Louisiana's boot for a couple of nights of bowfishing from airboats in our coastal marshes. It's a wild ride! We'll have some photos and stories in the next publication.

Texas: Bill Graves hosted a rather unique primitive hog/javelina hunt in the rugged Davis Mountains of west Texas in January 2017. How many hunters have used pack horses to access remote and rugged country for a week of pig and javelina hunting? Bill took in five adventurous PBSers and a great time was had by all. Several javies and one pig were arrowed - check out the thread on the PBS web site for details and some photos of awesome



scenery. Bill plans to do this hunt again, but you had better be quick on the draw! On a special hunt like this with only a few spots available, they go quickly - you need to monitor the PBS web site every day! Several notes about this hunt: If you are vertically challenged, Shetland ponies can be had for an extra \$20/day; if you hate horses, a Sherpa can be had for an extra \$30/day plus he gets half of your allotted food, and if you prefer to ride side-saddle, well this hunt might not be for you.

International Report

(Australia, Canada, England, France, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, All Other Countries)

by Richard Flett – Regional Representative

No report. ☹



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RUSSELL LANTIER

MAKALAAN@BELLSOUTH.NET

BOOKING LIMITED NUMBER OF HUNTERS FOR 2017

PBS Publicity Committee Report

1st Quarter, 2017 – Ethan Rodrigue, Chairman

The publicity committee has been focusing on using social media to increase our presence within the bow hunting community through several social media venues. We have started an Instagram account and post images daily of individual member hunts, as well as our membership hunts, and various images taken by our membership. If you have not already checked us out, please look us up and “follow” us and if you have any cool pictures that are representative of PBS, please submit them! You can go to our website and post them up or just email them directly to probow-socialmedia@gmail.com.

We have also started a PBS Youtube channel. Thus far there are a handful of short videos of hunts and tips and tricks. This is a work in progress and we are actively seeking more material. Most of us have some handy tricks or techniques we use in our hunting activities that would be of value to other bowhunters. You simply take a short video on your phone explaining how you tie on string silencers, mount broadheads, set a nock, stump shooting, you name it! There is a ton of people looking for exactly this type of simple instructional

videos and this will give us valuable exposure. According to *Global Reach*, “youtube reaches more 18-49 year olds than any cable network in the US”, generating millions of hours of videos and billions of views. Videos between 3 to 5 minutes long are ideal, and no matter how simple or basic you may think a video will be there are literally tens of thousands of people viewing them. Again, you can email these to the above mentioned email address.

Lastly, we are always looking for content for our Facebook page. Joining this group is very easy and everyone is encouraged to view and post on here regularly. We currently have 1,527 group members.

We have seen a great uptick in activity on FB lately and this is another great way to reach thousands of people, showing them what we’re all about or share something interesting or unique in the out-

doors.

All of these platforms are free, and if utilized correctly can reach more people in a week than traditional methods can in a year. I would like to reemphasize that one way you can help tremendously is by simply “liking, sharing, or following” our posts in their respective forums.

I would also like to thank PBS’ers Rob Patuto and Dan Mathis for their efforts with these endeavors as well as all of the PBSers who have made media contributions to the site. With your continued support we can gain exposure, maintain our values and keep pace with our contemporary world!

Archery Golf

**Following the Great Lakes Region
Odd Year Gathering July 16-17**

I want to extend an invitation to anyone attending the Great Lakes Region's Odd Year Gathering at Ojibwa Bowhunters, New Berlin, Wisconsin to shoot archery golf. There is an archery golf course about two hours north of the OYG and I thought since members may have come from a distance, and like to take an extra day to shoot a great archery golf course. I would be happy to help make that happen.

They have a nice campground with electric hook ups, out-house, and water. I am thinking that I will head up there Sunday July 16 and stay until Monday afternoon. I can provide food if needed and loan out camping gear also.

For any questions and to let me know if you are interested my contact info is: gszailewski@yahoo.com, 262 853 4648

Check out their website at www.archerygolfwi.com!

Greg Szailewski

OJIBWA BOWHUNTERS 2017

PBS Odd Year Gathering July

14th, 15th, 16th

Contact: Brian Tessmann 262-389-6319

Jerry Levelle 414-852-2923

Registration Times: 8am to 4pm

Friday, 14th • Potluck bring a dish to pass

Saturday, 15th • Pig Roast

**All Raffles to Benefit PBS ~ Food & Beverages Available
Free Camping w/electric**

3 Ranges Unlimited Shooting

Novelty shoots

\$15.00 a Day

\$25.00 for a 2 Day Pass

\$30.00 for a 3 Day Pass



Clubhouse 3045 S. Johnson Rd, New Berlin, WI

www.archerygolfwi.com



2017 PBS Legacy Program

Members often ask what they can do to help PBS and supporting the Legacy Program is one of the easiest ways to do that. Funds will go to the General Fund and help support the redesign of the PBS Website, the production of the PBS Magazine, the 2018 Gathering and numerous marketing efforts that will help us grow. No amount is too large or too small and all donations are appreciated. Businesses donating at the Diamond or Gold are entitled to a free quarter page ad in a PBS issue of their choice and all supporters of the Legacy Program will be acknowledged in the 3rd Quarter Magazine. Please make checks out the Professional Bowhunters Society and send to PBS, PO Box 246, Terrell NC 28682.

****Diamond Level \$3500***, Custom Doug Campbell Knife,
Invitation to the Paradise Legacy Hunt*

****Gold Level \$2000***, Invitation to the Paradise Legacy Hunt*

****Silver Level***, \$500 CRKT Larry Fischer Memorial Knife

****Sponsor Level***, \$100 PBS T-Shirt

The first eight Diamond or Gold Legacy supporters will be invited to a 3-day PBS Legacy Hog hunt at The Paradise Hunt Club in south Georgia. The hunt will take likely take place in early May and will be a great chance to chase critters and discuss PBS with fellow supporters. Food will be provided. In the event that a supporter cannot make the hunt, they are welcome to request the Larry Fischer Memorial Knife by CRKT.

Please check with your accountant to confirm that your donation is tax deductible.

My Good

Memories Tree



The Redemption Buck

A doe walked past my tree at about ten yards. She wasn't browsing, just walking with her tail raised and off to the side. A few minutes later a burly buck that I recognized followed her grunting with every step. I shot him when he offered me a quartering away shot. The buck fled into a thicket and disappeared. I didn't hear him crash so I decided to wait an hour before pursuing him. While waiting before tracking the buck I recalled previous hunts from my "Good Memories Tree".

Why my tree helped create good memories

My favorite tree stand is located on a five acre tract in a subdivision of similar sized lots. Some adjoining landowners allow bow hunting; some do not. My tree is on a knoll at the corner of an overgrown fence line. Deer frequently travel along the fence within bow range. I only hunt this stand during the rut in November. I don't over hunt it and only hunt it with a favorable wind. I don't shoot antlerless deer from this tree in order not to contaminate the area. As a result of the location of the tree and my precautions, I've been reasonably successful in killing bucks there. I've also enjoyed observing other wildlife from my tree. I've seen many sunrises and sunsets from my tree and hope to see many more.

A cold Thanksgiving hunt

One of my earliest hunts from my favorite tree occurred on a bitterly cold Thanksgiving morning. Shortly after daybreak a doe fed near my tree. I opted not to shoot her, hoping she would attract a buck. My gamble paid off. A buck spotted her, lowered his head and trotted toward the doe. The doe tried to escape, but the buck blocked her every move. The deer circled my tree several times. I was concerned the

buck would see me switching my bow from one side of the tree to the other as I tried to get into a shooting position. His preoccupation with the doe cost him his life. I shot him when he momentarily stopped.

He fell within sight. Suddenly I forgot about the frigid temperature and biting cold.

The cooperative buck

On yet another cold November morning (there has to be a lesson here) a large buck passed near my tree and I shot him. He wheeled and ran downhill toward my vehicle. "Why don't they all do that?" I thought. I heard him fall and saw him lying on the shoulder of the road. I got down immediately and moved him into the brush where I field dressed him. He would have passed for a road kill were it not for my fletching protruding from his back.

I cleaned up my field dressing waste and then dragged the buck thirty yards to my Jeep. Luckily, the landowner was nearby and graciously helped me load the deer into my vehicle. I wish more of my hunts ended like this one.

Fox and Hound

A resident red fox entertained me on several occasions as I sat in my tree. The nearest landowner had an overweight Dalmatian hound that roamed free. The fox would approach the house upwind and wait

By John Stockman

for the dog to get its scent. A chase would then ensue. It always ended with the exhausted hound plodding back from yet another fruitless chase. I always smiled and envisioned the wily fox doing the same.

Cold front buck

On a cool November afternoon I checked the local weather and learned that a cold front was approaching. I quickly drove to my hunting area and climbed my favorite tree. The wind picked up and the temperature plummeted. My tree was rocking so much I felt nauseous and I questioned my sanity for staying in the tree. Leaves were furiously swirling and limbs were snapping off trees. I saw a buck on adjoining property (where I couldn't shoot) acting nervously at all the noise and motion. When a limb broke off a tree and struck him, he ran toward an opening in the fence line near my tree. When he crossed the fence I shot him at five yards. He piled up just a few yards from my tree. I quickly descended my tree and field dressed him. Sleet began pelting me and I was drenched within minutes.

I dragged the buck to my Jeep. He was heavy and I was old and weak – a bad combination. I couldn't lift him into the vehicle so I decided to get inside the Jeep and pull him in. That didn't work either so I cut him into two pieces and then loaded him. I tried to call my wife to tell her that I was going to our country home to process the deer. My cell phone was dead (naturally) so I stopped at a nearby shopping center to use a public phone which was located near the exit of a busy store. It was still sleeting and a crowd had gathered under an awning near the phone. As I approached the phone clad

in wet, muddy, bloody camo, the crowd parted to allow me to pass. I wondered what they were thinking. I just smiled; I was feeling good.

The hawk and the squirrel

One evening I was watching a chattering squirrel high in a hickory tree near my tree. I quickly learned that something else was also watching the rodent. A red tailed hawk dove at the startled squirrel and knocked it from its perch. The squirrel fell about thirty feet to the ground screeching all the way. It landed with a thump and was promptly pounced on by the hawk. It seems I wasn't the only predator hunting that evening.

Thanksgiving eve buck

At dusk on Thanksgiving eve a doe approached my tree. I allowed her to pass hoping a buck would follow. My hope was rewarded when I saw a high racked eight point trailing her. When he presented me a broadside shot, I sent a STOS broadhead through his lungs.

He sprinted thirty yards, stumbled and fell dead. He died in less than five seconds. Once again, I was reminded at how quickly a well placed broadhead works. The buck fell in a clearing and left me with an easy downhill drag. As I always do, I thanked God for the privilege of hunting such a cap-

tivating animal.

Jim Rebok arrows

A few years ago Jim Rebok of J&M Traditions donated six absolutely gorgeous arrows for a PBS mid-year event. When I saw the arrows, I complimented Jim and said I hoped I would win them. I bought tickets and dumped all of them in Jim's rifle bucket. I learned later that Jim bought tickets himself and deposited them in his own bucket with the intention of giving me the arrows if he won them. What a guy!

I won the arrows and told him I would kill a buck with one of them and send him a picture of it and the arrow used to kill it. I kept my promise thanks to my "good memories tree" which allowed me to shoot a buck at ten yards. I almost, but not quite, felt guilty for shooting such a beautiful arrow.

An ethical dilemma

Several years ago I saw one of the largest bucks I've seen in Virginia. He was within bow range, but was on property where the landowner prohibited hunting. The landowner had told me that he would be on vacation for two weeks if I needed to retrieve a deer in his absence, I had his permission.

Virginia is not a trophy deer state. Pope and Young bucks are a rarity and I was

looking at one. I desperately wanted to shoot that buck. My bad conscience said I could shoot the deer and no one would know, besides I was on property where I had permission to hunt. Only the deer was on the property where I wasn't allowed to hunt.

My good conscience argued that I would not only be breaking the law, I would also be violating my integrity. I didn't shoot.

End of the trail

When my self imposed waiting period of one hour passed, I began tracking the buck I had shot. The blood trail was

easy to follow through the thicket I was hunting. The thicket ended where the manicured lawn of a mansion began. The buck had died on the mansion's lawn. The owners prohibited hunting but allowed retrieval. I went to the owners to tell them I'd like to remove the deer I had shot on adjoining property.

I returned to the deer and sat quietly with him for a few moments. We had a relationship that spanned three years and I had ended it. I had conflicting emotions. We were both past our prime. Age and life's experiences had taken their toll on both of us. We had both suffered injuries and wear. He was gray and I was grayer. We had a lot in common.

Our relationship began three years earlier when I skimmed his back with a broadhead at 15 yards. It was one of those shots you would like to have again and can't forget. I saw the buck several times each year after our initial encounter, but was never able to get within bow range of him.

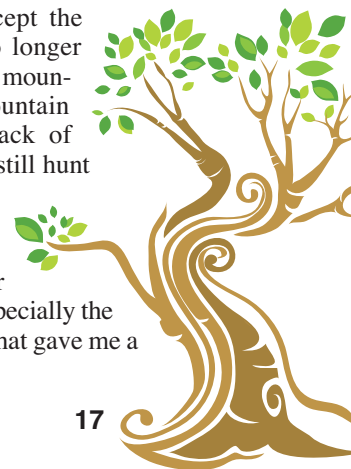
Several times I saw him thoroughly whip other bucks and chase them out of his home range. On one occasion, I saw him breed a doe three times within twenty minutes. I'm glad he passed on his genes.

As I sat with him I could see that his antlers were considerably smaller and less symmetrical than they were three years earlier and his body weight was lower. He was, however, still a heavy deer and I knew I faced a difficult task dragging him to my vehicle and loading him. After field dressing him, I cut him into two pieces and still struggled to get him to my Jeep. The thought entered my mind that it would be poetic justice if I had a heart attack dealing with him. There are worse ways to die I concluded.

Several true friends (all younger than me) have told me to call them for assistance in situations like this one. I truly appreciate their offers but I feel that if I can't take care of a deer after I shoot it, maybe I shouldn't shoot it in the first place, so I persevered — alone.

I am 82 and don't plan to stop hunting deer anytime soon. I'm realistic enough to accept the fact that I can no longer pack elk out of the mountains or chase mountain lions behind a pack of hounds, but I can still hunt whitetails.

If I never kill another buck I'll always remember the ones I have, especially the redemption buck that gave me a second chance. ♡



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Backcountry... Back East!

By Ethan Rodrigue

every year. While I won't disclose the exact location, I will say east Tennessee is full of places like this where the thought of hiking in to bow hunt never crosses the minds of the average resident. I can't tell you how many times experienced and seasoned hunters look at me like I've gone crazy when I mention the general areas we hike into. "How do you get a deer out of there?" is the usual question that follows. Perhaps it's because we are blessed with an abundance of places to hunt both private and public that just doesn't require the effort it takes to hunt backcountry areas, but the thought of quartering an animal up and packing it out on your back is as foreign to a lot of these hunters as voting for certain presidential candidates! But I digress....

I'm quite certain one of our favorite places to hike into have deer that die of old age and never see a person, with the exception of that occasional hiker. These places are steep, rugged, and choked with vegetation. They also offer great mast crops for food and plenty of security and water. Often times, if you search hard enough you can find old homesteads from generations gone by that have fruit trees and wells or springs nearby. Throughout the years of neglect they have developed some great edge cover that many animals actively seek out. Personally, I like the "little things" that add subtleties to the hunt and the enjoyment I take from my time afield. I often ponder on the history of such places. Who originally settled this land, who came with the migration westward, and what were their lives like? These are only a few questions that run across my mind when I am quietly observing these places waiting for an encounter.

The place in particular that comes to mind as I write this was once inhabited by the Cherokee Indians. History tells us that many battles were fought between the Cherokee and the Shawnee for hunting rights to this land. According to legend, this fight culminated in a violent lacrosse match between the two tribes near modern

This area in east Tennessee has more caves per square mile than any other region on earth. The caves provide perfectly cool places to hang meat during early hunts that would otherwise dictate packing it out immediately.

Every bow hunter should experience the adventure of chasing elk through the backcountry of the Rocky Mountains at least once in his or her life. That is, after all the essence of the backcountry bow hunt in most hunter's minds. I have been fortunate enough to chase them on three different occasions and it is an experience I hope to repeat many times throughout my life. The backcountry offers many things for the adventurous Bowman. Simply being able to get away from everything in our fast paced lives and experience nature in an untouched and unmolested setting is reward enough for the effort it takes to reach such places.

Living in Tennessee makes it hard to experience those elk hunts more than once

every year or two. But fortunately, we have an abundance of backcountry right here in our own state. In fact, most states offer areas with very little if any "improvements" brought on by modern man. Often times these places are visited only by a few people each year. The overwhelming majority of these visitors are out for a day hike, maybe an overnigher and not in search of adventure with a bow in hand. Very few of them visit in the time frame that coincides with hunting seasons, making it very possible to experience a true backcountry bow hunt without having to drive across the country to the majestic Rockies!

A few friends (that are all PBS'ers!) and I go on at least one of these adventures

day Chattanooga, Tenn. The victor won the hunting rights to the land. The match lasted several days and even claimed a few lives! Guess they were serious about their hunting grounds! Long before the Native Americans lived and hunted here the land was inhabited by bands of nomadic hunters. They left many cave paintings throughout their time here. This area has more caves per square mile than any other region on earth and many of these caves bare the artwork of these people, with the oldest ever found in North America being just a few miles north of our "honey hole". I often wonder how many hunters long ago have patiently waited in the same saddles, draws, and oak flats that I now do. There is something special in knowing that if those same hunters were suddenly transported to the present in those spots it wouldn't seem too foreign to them even now.

We have happened upon ancient stone walls, old homesteads, wells, old logging camps and equipment in our travels. We sometimes even happen on unsuspecting game! The caves in the area provide perfectly cool places to hang meat during early bow hunts when the weather would nor-

mally dictate packing it out immediately.

Most of these places can be a little difficult to hunt. It is all big timber and naturally, there are no agricultural fields to draw and hold game close by. So while overall numbers may be a little less than in other places, the animals are still there. It just requires a little more knowledge of the areas and the travel/feeding patterns of the local inhabitants. Glassing won't do you

reliable wind directions. It is often good to be able to remain somewhat mobile and change locations accordingly. That does not always lend itself to waiting out deer, but it is often a reality that has to be dealt with.

Thick cover, food sources, and water are never very far apart in these places. A deer can obtain all three and rarely needs to travel far at all. Like anywhere else, we

John Muir once said
"In every walk with Nature
one receives
far more than he seeks..."

naturally see more animals during the rut, and it's always "a good time to spend some time" in these areas.

I sometimes wish more hunters would take advantage of these special places, but not nearly as much as I am glad they do not! They have served as a sanctuary for generations of animals and man alike. I relish every moment I can spend in places like this, whether it's in wilderness areas in the Rockies, uninhabited regions of Alaska, or the deep hills and hollows of East Tennessee. John Muir once said "In every walk with Nature one receives far more than he seeks..." I hope I never stop seeking. 🍂

much good in this country as it is thick with typical eastern hardwood forests on top and filled with ancient hemlocks, ferns, rhododendron, and mountain laurel down low giving the canyons an almost temperate rainforest feel.

As in all mountainous terrain, wind can be fickle. There are many hidden benches and saddles that are excellent places to wait in ambush. But as thermals shift late mornings and early evenings, so do (somewhat)



Memorable Hunt

By Joe Ellsworth

All of us old guys can look back and remember a few hunts that stood out from the rest. This is one of those. I don't know if it's my most memorable hunt, but it's close. My two hunting buddies, Gary Bowen, Carroll Johnson and I traveled to Alaska's Brooks Range in 1998 for a caribou hunt and then we were to be picked up by float plane and transferred south to a river for a float trip for moose. Carroll and I had hunted this area in 1992 so we were familiar with the terrain and caribou movement in that area. We were flown in from Bettles, Alaska by a DeHavilland Beaver float plane to our little lake (called Joe's lake) for our caribou hunt. The lake is on the northwest corner of the Brooks Range and the caribou migrate from the North Slope south through Howard Pass and come through this area. There are many other good lakes to land on in this area, but we were familiar with this area and we had good success there in 1992.

Carroll, Gary and I had hunted elk together for many years so this was a very comfortable situation and I could not imagine going on a hunt like this with anyone else. You want to make sure when you are in the wilderness for this long that you can trust your life to the people you are with because you may have to. Back then, there was no way to communicate with the outside world and we were two hundred miles inside the Arctic Circle. The area, at that time, was so remote that we never saw another aircraft of any kind for the two weeks we were on that lake. Not even a jet condensation trail.

As the migration got going, we saw more and more caribou with groups of large bulls. The terrain is all tundra with few places to set up ambushes, except a few areas with rocks around some hills and along the creek banks. The creek banks work well because of the willow brush along the banks. Picking the spot where

they are going to cross is the problem. It seems to work better to pick a spot and stay there instead of moving around.

Our favorite spot to set up was a fork in the creek with good willow brush on both sides about two and a half miles north of our lake. It seemed to have the biggest concentration of caribou coming through this area, so we played the odds. The problem with hunting the creeks with the willow brush is that the bears tend to follow the creeks: also we have always had lots of bears around us! I don't really know if they are brown bears or grizzly bears, but I can tell you we have seen some giant bears in that area. They look something like a UPS truck out on the tundra. We are only about five miles from the Noatak River, which is a salmon river, so I am assuming by the size of the bears they are brown bears. To counter the problem of getting surprised by a bear at close range in the willows, we would sit on the high ground a 100 yards or so from the creek and willows so we could spot bears. It would usually allow us time to get set up on any caribou coming our way. After you get a few gut piles around the area it also changes everything with the bears. It usually doesn't take long for a bear to show up.

Toward the end of our stay on Joe's Lake, Carroll and I had filled our caribou tags and Gary was still out looking for a good bull, having passed on smaller ones. We had gotten some good video of a wolverine on a caribou carcass a few days before and Gary got back to camp late in the afternoon and said that while he was in the willows waiting on a bull coming his way, he had that wolverine at 15 yards and was at full draw (it's legal to kill wolverine on a caribou tag). When I asked if he had killed him, he said he let it back off because it was game day and he couldn't kill a wolverine on game day. I said "What?" He said it was Saturday and the University

of Michigan was playing football that day. I told him he may have been the first traditional bow hunter to kill a wolverine. He didn't care, it was game day. That's taking being a Michigan fan to a new level. I guess it wasn't that important to him.

One of the strangest things I have ever seen happen in all my years of bowhunting happened the last day on our lake and the last day of Gary being able to fill his tag. It was a beautiful warm day with no wind and Gary and I were sitting on a sloping hill on the south side of our honey hole glassing the horizon for caribou. It was late in the afternoon and this was the first day that we had not seen even one caribou. It didn't look very promising for Gary's chances to fill his tag. All of the sudden, a lone large white maned bull showed up on the other side of our willow creek walking parallel to the creek about a hundred yards out. He had somehow shown up without us seeing him. We didn't know if Gary could get down to the willows without being seen, but he took off on a run as the bull was moving and there was no time to waste. The first thing that is strange is you will hardly ever see a lone bull. They almost always come in bunches. It was also extremely strange that he was the only caribou we had seen all day. The second strange thing is that Gary got to the willows across open tundra without being seen. Usually a caribou's wolf range is only about 75 yards. But something running across the tundra at him should have gotten his attention. Gary was concealed in the willows but the bull was walking west and he needed to turn ninety degrees and head south. I was video taping the whole thing from my spot above them. I was talking for the camera, "Turn you SOB, turn!" I must have said that a half dozen times.

Now the next thing that is strange is that bull had to turn ninety degrees and he had to do it now. If you have ever hunted cari-



**Carroll Johnson and Gary Bowen
with Gary's caribou harvest.**

bou, you know that is something caribou hardly ever do. They are usually lined out and travel in somewhat the same direction. This must somehow have been destiny and Gary's reward for staying with it to the end because the bull turned and walked directly at the willow clump that Gary was hiding behind. As I watched I thought, this will present Gary with a challenge as there is no way to take a head on shot. But there was no way he was going to let this opportunity get away either. When the bull was only a few yards away, he bolted and Gary stepped from behind the willows and shot the bull with his trusty Widow as he was running away. Luck got him into this position, and experience and skill did the rest. I watched through my field glasses as the bull walked down towards the fork in the creek and lay down. We gave him some time and then proceeded to take a closer look at Gary's miracle destiny bull. The

odds of Gary getting a shot at that bull were about a hundred to one and he got it done.

The next day our float plane flew us to our destination for our moose hunt, which was a beaver pond just off a tributary river north of the Kobuk River. The pond was so small that the Beaver could only take off empty and with a minimum of fuel. They had landed a smaller Cessna there earlier in the day and dropped off our raft and five gallons of fuel so the pilot of the Beaver was assured of having enough fuel to make it back to Bet-

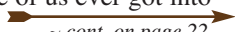
tles. There was no way to get picked up from this location, so the plan was to portage to the river, which this far up stream was the size of a large creek, and float to the Kobuk and then float down to a spot in the river called Kobuk International. This was simply a spot in the river that was deep and straight enough to land a Beaver and take off fully loaded.

It was getting dark when we got dropped off, so we spent the first night camped there. When the pilot had banked the plane at low elevation to come into the pond we saw two 60" plus moose standing very near our camp site. Talk about encouragement coming into a spot you had never been to before!

The next morning we inflated the raft and moved our gear through a series of beaver ponds and over dams to the river. That would be our camp site for the next six days. We were on the edge of what was

hill country and the river bottom stretched north and through a valley and up into some mountain country. It looked perfect for rutting bulls. The blueberries were abundant and so large and heavy, that they were actually pear shaped. I have never, and probably never will, see blueberries like that again. You could pick them by the hand full. There were places that you could see where a bear had sat down and there was a 6' circle with no berries. I'm sure there were bears around there with bellyaches. We found a trail of runny blueberry excretion on a sand bar by the river that was unbroken for 27 paces. Now we don't know if that bear was walking, running or standing still but I'll bet he had a bellyache. It was hard to keep your mind on hunting when you are walking through blueberry patches like that. You almost had to stop and eat them.

The bears weren't the only ones with bellyaches. One day we all took off in different directions and midafternoon, I saw Gary on a hill not too far away and went over to see if he had seen any moose. When I got there he asked if I had any toilet paper as he had used all his, plus his shirt tails, and was about to cut off his sleeves. I had an ample amount with me and was glad to share. That night Gary had a bellyache and went to bed without supper and he was pretty sure there was something seriously wrong. Carroll and I diagnosed it as blueberry belly and the next day we were correct and Gary was fine. I'm pretty sure we could find some spots in blueberry patches where Gary had been the day before with 6' circles with no berries.

The moose in this area for non-residents had to be 50" minimum and we saw a legal bull every day. None of us ever got into position for a shot.  ~ cont. on page 22

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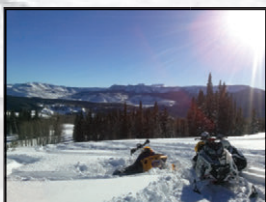
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Memorable Hunt

~ continued from page 21

It was just one of those hunts where it just did not come together. It was very beautiful country and we wished we had more time, but the weather can turn nasty up there in a hurry. We had several days of floating ahead of us and planned on keeping the bows ready for a chance encounter on the way out.

We started out with our Avon raft in the morning and the river was getting bigger and faster with every turn. We secured our bows and equipment with ropes as the danger of getting overturned by a sweeper was very real. The water was fast, deep and cold with many sharp turns. We were all a little nervous about the inability to control a raft fully loaded in these types of rapids. Especially Carroll, as he was from Colorado and I don't think anyone from that state knows how to swim.

After a day's float, as we got further down the river, the country flattened out more, and the river became wider and slower. We were not sure how far from the Kobuk River we were but we thought we must be getting close. It was getting dusk and probably around 7:30 when we saw a large bull crossing the river ahead of us. He was grunting as he walked and the river was covering about one third of his body. We were closing the distance as the bull climbed out of the river and crossed the open beach area and stopped in the willow brush to take a better look at the odd site he was seeing. I'm not sure if that bull had ever seen a human before but he sure was not afraid. I jumped out of the raft and approached him and he never moved. He stood broadside in the scattered willows looking at me and I'm sure he was wondering what I was.

We later paced it off and it was 27 yards. It's incredible how big a mature bull is. The top of their antlers is a foot higher than a basketball net and they stand seven feet at the shoulder. As I came to full draw I was talking to myself, "Don't hit a branch, don't hit a branch." I released and the arrow hit him in the ribs a little above center. He walked onto the beach with the arrow buried in his chest and squared up to me. At 27 yards from me and actually staring down at me, he had that look in his eye that I have seen bears have. It was an evil



Joe, wet and cold with his bull.

stare. At that moment I said "Uh Oh" out loud, and it startled me that I said it out loud. I was pretty much screwed. I had been told that the local Alaskan's are more afraid of moose than they are of bears because the moose kill more people every year than bears do. I was very much aware of this and knew I was in a lot of trouble. My buddies were down river a couple hundred yards and I was alone with no gun and no place to go, and waiting for the charge. Luckily, the bull turned and walked out into the river and started up stream. About that time Gary ran up to me and the bull started to wobble. All of a sudden 1600 pounds hit the water. I turned to Gary and said "That's one of the coolest things I have ever seen." It was cool until the bull started to float down the river. Gary and I jumped in the river to go get him with 17" boots on and four feet of water.

The air temperature was eight degrees, which we didn't find out until a day later when we met some other hunters on the Kobuk. Now Carroll is an old mountain man and he immediately saw the danger Gary and I were in. Before he even got us a rope, he threw some wood in a pile and poured Coleman fuel on it and lit a fire. I think our wool clothing may have saved our lives that night. My boots were full of water and my feet eventually warmed up

somewhat as the boots must have been acting something like a wet suit. We had two small block and tackles and after gutting the moose we tried to pull him onto the shore. He was too big. We had to venture back into the water and cut him into three pieces to make it manageable. By the time we had the entire moose on the beach and our tent pitched, it was around 11:00 PM. The threat of a bear attack was very real as the moose meat was about 20 yards from our tent. Not exactly bear safety 101. The hypothermia situation was a little desperate at that time and we needed to be in our sleeping bags. We kept our shotguns close at hand and knew we would have a major problem if a bear showed up. We figured that getting a bear stopped at that close range would be a challenge and someone was probably going to get mauled before we would get him stopped. Again luck was with us and it was the only night of our float trip that we didn't see or hear a bear.

It's amazing how fast a large animal can be taken down with good traditional equipment and a well placed shot. I was using my Black Widow with 67 lb. limbs and a Graflex arrow with a two blade Zwickey Delta head that in total weighs about 625 grains. The broad head was sticking out about half way on the far side of the moose. That's great penetration. We figured the

moose died in about 30 seconds.

Most of the next day was spent cutting meat and caping the bull. By 3:00 in the afternoon, we had the raft loaded and proceeded on our journey. After a few days, we came to Kobuk International and pitched our tent and waited two more days for our float plane to pick us up as the weather turned rainy and overcast, making flying impossible. The Kobuk

River is probably around ¼ mile wide at this point and it was raising ¾" of an inch per hour. That's a lot of water coming in from the higher country.

We were finally rescued and it took two Beavers to get the moose and our gear back to Bettles. I know the aircraft has weight limits but it seems like if it will fit in the plane they can take off with it.

After arriving back home to Michigan, I looked up a guy I know from a town near us who is an official scorer for Pope and Young. His name is Leroy Hansen from Greenville, Mi. After drying, Leroy kept the antlers for a week and scored them every day to make sure he got it right. Now I have never cared about entering any animals I have killed in the record book but Leroy really wanted me to. I still wasn't going to do it until I looked in the Pope and Young Record book and saw that my name



**Gary and Joe on Brooks Range
packing Gary's bull.**

**Fully loaded and ready to continue
floating downstream to the pickup point.**



would be next to Jay Massey's forever. My bull scored 213" and Jay's biggest bull scored 212 7/8". I thought that was very cool, so I let him enter it in Pope and Young.

We have been back to our caribou area two more times since then and I feel very blessed that I have had those opportunities and the great friends to share it with. Our last trip was in 2016 and I am pretty sure that was our last. On that trip, we stayed one day too long and spent 3 ½ days in our sleeping bags waiting out a terrific storm with white out conditions and gale force winds. When the storm cleared, we were about one day away from being picked up by search and rescue helicopters as all the lakes were frozen but ours.


A lot of people don't think things like this are fun. *

*Joe Ellsworth, Regular Member from Stanton, Michigan;
joe@cespanels.com*



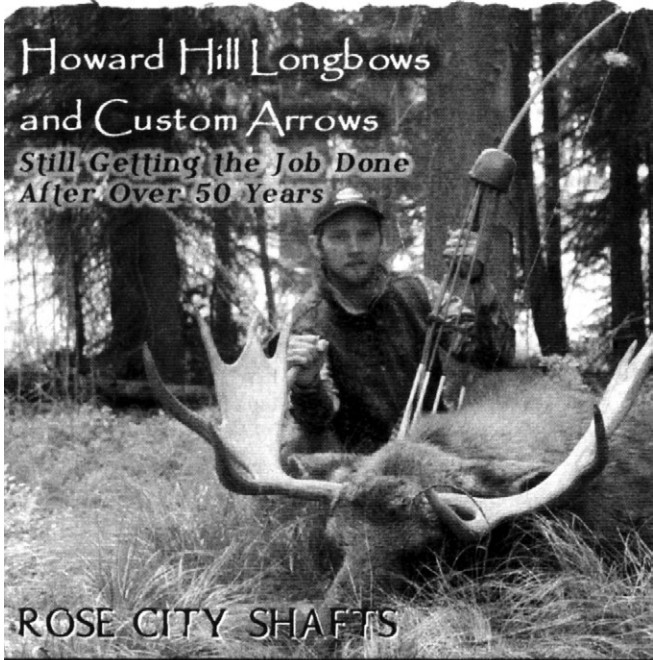
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The Six

By Pat Cebuhar



In late 2015 I was presented with an opportunity for early retirement. It didn't take long to discuss it with Susan and decide that we could get by. She always said, "Everybody will be happier when you retire." Don't know exactly what that's supposed to mean, but I'll go with it. It was a good opportunity and I signed the paperwork Oct. 1st, opening day of the 2015 Illinois archery season. However, getting a replacement person relocated, providing him break in time and training, my effective date wasn't until Feb. 1st of 2016.

With high anticipation and lots of hunting time in 2016, I applied for and received the second, fourth and fifth season permits for Illinois spring turkey hunting. Along with those turkey hunting plans, Steve Miller and I had reserved our spot on a Quebec caribou hunt the last week of September.

Opening morning of the Illinois second spring turkey season my stage was set up with turkey decoys in a familiar successful field corner. The morning was cool and the birds must have been cold as they obviously were not nearly as excited as I was to be there. The morning dawn was quiet, except for my occasional poor attempt at sounding like a turkey. My only thoughts of my past work life was that it was true, what they say, "The worst day hunting is still far better than the best day at work." Man this was great! In-between reading articles in *PBS* and *Traditional Bowhunter* magazines, I'd peek out of the blind, just

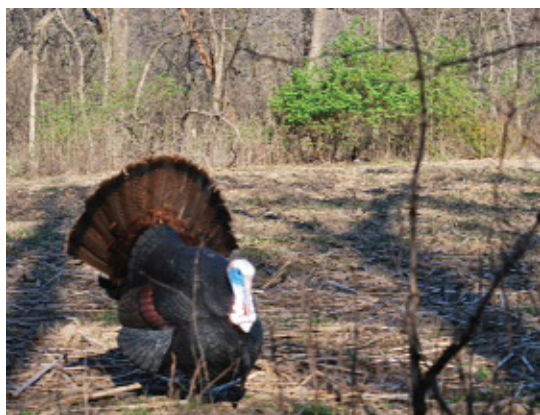
to check and see what was there and if the decoys were still upright. To my amazement at about 8:15 three gobblers and two hens were coming in totally silent along the field edge. They were only about 20–25 yards away and closing, moving in a zig zag fashion. Each of the gobblers was trying to out maneuver the other two as they approached the decoys. At 15 yards the shot was good. The gobbler made it across the field about 30 yards and all was quiet again. Sitting there quietly taking in what had just happened with great gratitude for many things in my life that had allowed this total experience to happen, reflections passed through my mind of a long bowhunting history, an understanding wife, a previous reasonable work life balance, bowhunting mentors who have long passed on to happier hunting grounds, and years of trial and error acquiring the skills to craft my own bow, arrows and some equipment. It was within that thought, looking across the field at the fallen turkey, an old idea resurfaced. In years past I had fletched arrows from turkey wings I had harvested but they were mixed in with other good hunting arrows. The result being not knowing really what events happened with those arrows, at least in my long term memory, which if I remember right is getting worse. I decided to use the feathers from that turkey to fletch as many really good hunting arrows as possible.

I'd hunt with those arrows and see what could be harvested with the wing feathers from that turkey. As bowyers and arrowsmiths work away, we daydream of the creatures great and small that may meet their untimely demise to stick, string and steel. Visions of caribou danced through my head along with a couple maybe three whitetail bucks would fall prey, as I put my best into these arrows. Working with confidence, but all the while knowing the reality of bowhunting is, things don't always go as planned.

I went to work crafting those arrows. Upon completion of splitting, cutting and grinding the feathers I found that there were enough leftwing feathers to fletch six really good arrows. Sorting and selecting the best cedar shafts I had, I cut and stained them, ground the tapers, put the nock on, crested them and burned the feathers to shape. A hand sharpened old Bear broadhead was my final piece of tradition. The #1 of six arrows was tipped with the same Bear broadhead used to take the April 16th gobbler that involuntarily donated the feathers for these arrows. The "Six" were ready to go before the fourth spring turkey season opened. Arrow #1 of 6 was placed in the quiver, not that there were any real expectations of taking another turkey. Harvesting any turkey with a traditional bow is truly a rare blessing in my book.



The entire fourth season along with the first four days of the fifth season passed without seeing a single turkey. On occasional days distant gobblers made me think there wasn't a turkey anywhere close to the property I was hunting. Those long mornings in the blind had me thinking about getting the boat and equipment ready for carp shooting. The morning of May 9th was different. Things happened like bowhunters think they should happen. As two owls talked back and forth to one another, roosting gobblers sounded off before even a hint of daylight. As the sky lightened on the eastern horizon, I made a few soft calls. My





Harvesting this spring gobbler and deciding to use the feathers to fletch as many really good hunting arrows as possible started Pat Cebuhar on his journey of "The Six".

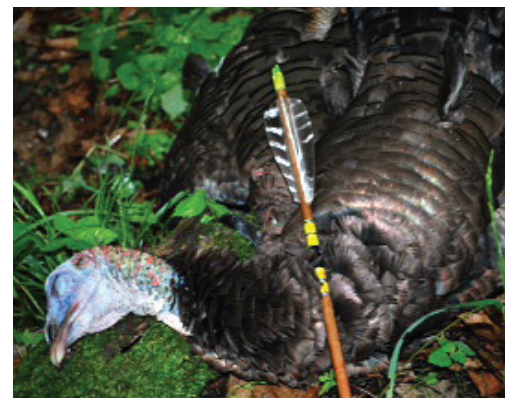
calling had not improved, but the turkeys were in the mood, and like the hoot of the owl, gobblers responded to my noise. They were roosted down the ridge to the south like they are supposed to in some big oaks. Eventually the sound of the gobblers changed and I knew they had flown down off the roost. Gobbling continued and it sounded like they were following the ridge trail which led right to the awaiting decoys and my blind. They were coming in and gobbling all the way. Then that unmistakable thumping drumming sound, the one where you can just feel it reverberating around you like thunder. They were close, behind spitting distance of the side of the blind. They were coming in to kick some ass. Yep, three jakes with an attitude. They strutted and milled around the decoys, each staring into the eye of the guy with the hen, sizing him up for a fight. Yep, they were sizing up the situation, wanting to start something, but a little afraid to attack, each kind of hoping one of the others would take the first swipe, and they could join in the fight or run off with the lady. The tension outside as well as inside the blind was high. At 7 yards the arrow cut the tension, things erupted into instant excitement. They all exploded not knowing what just happened.

The arrowed turkey made it 15 yards flipping and flopping, while the others stood in amazement and excitement. Now they were not so sure if they wanted a piece of that gobbler with the hen or not. He had just kicked their buddy's ass and bad. They hung around a bit on high alert but thought it better to go on their own way. Arrow #1 of "The Six" had done it's work, with the help of the same broadhead used on the April turkey. This was a very unexpected, but rewarding result. Using a turkey tote made from a piece of deer antler and given to me by a late friend and barber Morris Ford, I began packing the turkey toward the truck. Reminiscing along the way about Morrie's

tall hunting tales from the barber shop made me smile. The bigger his tale the less hair you had when you left. You never wanted to go to the barbershop if you knew Morrie had had an exciting hunt recently.

With great anticipation waiting on the fall caribou hunt, the hot summer seemed long. Confidence was high that two of "The Six" would get a chance at a caribou. After all, you rarely if ever hear of someone going caribou hunting who doesn't get one? Well again in bowhunting, "Things don't always go as planned." With five days of constant rain and very few caribou sightings we only got close enough to even think about getting a shot a couple of times. So on that Canadian adventure, the only flight those five remaining arrows got was on an airplane.

By the time we got back home it was only a couple days until the Illinois archery season opened and Missouri's season was already in full swing. The evening of Oct. 2nd hunting in Illinois the first deer of the season was sighted along with a mangy coyote. Literally, he had little hair on his tail, face and chest that I could see. He was busy catching mice in a bean field and paid no attention to my critter in distress call-



Arrow 1 of 6 found it's mark with the help of the same broadhead used on the April turkey.

ing. Three weeks later, the morning of Oct. 24th hunting a stand about 400 yards away from the tree hunted Oct. 2nd, a doe and two yearlings followed later by two young



Pat's turkey tote.

year and a half old bucks came by my perch. The young bucks silently walked by in the morning sun, close well within my limited shooting distance. I figured that was likely my excitement for the day but wasn't nowhere near ready to call it a morning. Round about 8:40, coming down the deer trail the bucks had used was Mr. Mangy. He

seemed to be tracking those bucks or at least that was my impression. He quickly turned and departed with arrow #2 of Six protruding from both sides. He went down an extremely steep hill ending up in the creek at the bottom. He was wet and mangy and I wasn't too crazy about picking him up for a picture, but I did. He certainly wasn't going to need skinning, there was nothing pretty about him. Makes me itch just thinking about

~ cont. on page 26 ~



Arrow 2 of 6 found it's mark on a mangy coyote.

The Six

~ continued from page 25

him.

Within a week I was off to Missouri to hunt a few days. One morning a coyote came trotting along but cut my track, smelled where I walked in, and Wiley high tailed it out of there. Later another one came and he just kept coming until my arrow hit him. That's when all hell broke loose. His reaction was one of the top two or three most violent reactions of anything I've taken with a bow. He barked, growled, spun around biting at the arrow, howling, growling as he rolled. He was mad and wild. He eventually rolled, and spun himself into a dry creek bed. At 35 yards, which is a par 5 or 6 for me, I sent a Bodkin tipped squirrel arrow at him. The arrow just barely missed and stuck in the bank right beside him. Still barking and growling it was impressive how fast he bit the cedar arrow in two with the fletch end flying through the air. Two hours later I got down and followed the blood trail down the dry creek where it promptly turned leading inside a washed out culvert. Not seriously expecting him to be alive, I got down flat on the ground to look inside. Two wild eyes were piercing back at me ten feet inside the



Arrow 3 of 6 found a rather exciting mark with Pat's second coyote.

16" culvert.

It's kind of hard to lay your bow down parallel on the ground to shoot. Figuring it was a trick shot, all I had to do was shoot in the tube and I'd hit the coyote. Well it worked, it really got exciting for a minute as he lunged forward a few feet, as I re-

treated. In the end, laying down flat reaching as far as I could, I could just reach the nock of the arrow to retrieve the coyote. Fortunately this coyote had a nice coat of fur. Arrow #3 of 6 was exciting.

Again with high anticipation the rut was finally here. I'd put the hours in on the stand but was only seeing about half the deer as in past years. The herd in both Illinois and Missouri is definitely smaller than in recent years according to my records. I had seen very few bigger deer, and had been passing up some smaller bucks. Now it was just a few days until the parade of orange would overrun the timber and there would be 100,000 less deer running around the state the next week. Deciding big or small I'd shoot the next buck or two that gave me an opportunity. It was only three days before gun season and it is slim pickings after that around here. It was a cool crisp morning, one that had the deer moving. A nice little eight point was looking for does. I could see his breath in the early morning air 65 yards down the draw on the east side of the ridge. He went on about his way to the south but must have circled around. He came past at 14 yards on the west side of the tree offering a perfect quartering away shot. Arrow #4 of 6 caused the buck to fall within 45 yards. He stayed on top of the ridge and it was an easy drag to the truck.

Two days later, the last morning before gun season, I was running late getting to the woods. The evening before there was a huge natural gas explosion on the square in Canton, Illinois. It took me a few minutes to gather up a shop vac, brooms, gloves dust pans etc. for Susan to take to work to help with cleanup of the store, which was about a block away from the main explosion that leveled at least one building, killing one unfortunate utility worker and injuring several other people. It was light enough to see going in, stalking my way slowly and quietly seemed the best approach. When I got in



Arrow 4 of 6 found it's mark on a nice eight point buck.

the tree, I pulled my bow up, put an arrow on the string and before I even started to pull up my day pack a small nine point was coming. He too like the previous buck seemed to be preoccupied searching for does. He walked past the same stand at 13 yards on a different trail. I don't think I had been in the tree five minutes. Again the

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Arrow 5 of 6 found its mark on a nice nine point buck.

shot looked good and the two pieces of arrow #5 were laying on the ground within feet of the shot. This guy however like most, made a dead run downhill all the way to the creek bottom. He was laying in the water and it was a long uphill drag by myself. I was paying my dues for the easy drag two days before.

No official record book deer but with the deer I had been seeing and the effort put forth, I was proud to have taken them for my book.

With five animals taken thoughts kicked in, there was one arrow left of the "Six". Could I actually harvest an animal with each one of those six arrows all in the same season? Something I had not considered to start with, thinking it would take two or three years to accomplish the task. Of course then the next thought was, "You're gonna screw up this last one." Thinking about this was putting unnecessary pressure on myself, which usually ends up not so good. A bad hit, a bad miss could be the end of arrow "Six". I hate to think of the times I've fouled up thinking about the end result or possible outcomes when focused attention needed to be paid to what was going on at the time.

When the second Illinois gun season comes in, it's back to Missouri. It was now December and the Missouri regular firearms season was over, deer were skittish, cold and hungry. It's usually feast or famine this time of year. There was a good acorn crop in 2016. Deer sign was obvious in a sandy bottom with a group of oaks concentrated on the south side of a little creek. One evening found me perched on

stand in a forked black oak tree overlooking "The Spot". It was cold, things were frozen, and the leaves crunchy. It was one of those cold, calm, grey December evenings, where sounds of everything seem magnified. I could hear the familiar sound of deer hooves chopping through the leaves and cracking ice. A doe with two yearlings was headed to this spot. With cautious intent they were slowly making their way toward the patch of oaks yielding the bounty of acorns. Just when I thought everything was going to work out right, a deer somewhere started blowing at something. With the wind direction it couldn't have been me. Looking through the timber out in the bean field two additional deer were the cause of the ruckus alerting all the deer. Those two ran into the timber as the first three deer watched on high alert, statue still, eyes focused, nose in the wind and ears rotating in all directions to pick up the most minute sound from any direction. Never did figure out what the two were blowing at unless it was the first three deer. The groups were not sure they wanted to tolerate one another, but after awhile they were kind of merging together as they worked my way ever so cautiously. They acted like there was a boogeyman behind every tree. Those old does were especially nervous, but wind was in my favor or it would have long been over. Deciding to use arrow #6 of Six, I would shoot one of the younger, smaller deer if given the chance. The group of five deer continued to work their way toward me browsing along the way. The center of "The Spot" the golden pot of acorns if you will, lay just in front of my stand. It was the perfect setup, the deer were going to walk right under me. Well that is until they got about 15 yards from my oak tree, the old lead doe decided to turn and walk toward the bean field. She was broadside headed toward the bean field, I passed the opportunity waiting for the next one which didn't offer as good a shot. I waited on the third one. At 14 yards broadside, arrow #6 was on it's flight. The arrow stuck in the ground. I thought the shot was low and a near miss, only clipping off some white hair. The deer didn't act as if anything had happened. They went on about their business. Looking back at the arrow, there was a bunch of white hair on the ground all around the arrow, but I couldn't see any blood even with binoculars. There was enough hair around the arrow that it kinda looked like I shot a small white paper plate. With binoculars I could see a spot of blood on the side of the deer out in the bean field. At this point the deer showed some signs of maybe being hit. The young doe separated herself

from the others when she walked into a small draw between two small bean fields. It was plenty cold and not knowing exactly what happened I elected to wait until morning to go look for the deer. I knew it wouldn't spoil and I didn't want to jump it up if it laid down. If left alone it would likely be right there in the morning, which it was. In the morning I found that the razor sharp Bear broadhead had only sliced down the side and underside of the deer never entering the body cavity. The broadhead had completed the work it was designed to do. Arrow #6 of 6 had completed the quest for the half dozen. Arrow #6 of Six was the only arrow to survive intact.



Arrow 6 of 6 found it's mark on this nice doe and completed Pat's journey.

As we bowhunters gravitate into the "Sportsman Stage" of our hunting life, trophies are not always measured in inches of antler, beard, or counting coup, but rather one of personal accomplishment as seen by the eye of the beholder. The journey is long for most these days to reach that level of understanding and appreciation. Others following the main channel in the stream will never ever find the path to a slightly different trophy definition, one where all trophies don't come in wooly mammoth size proportions. Looking back over the last 40 plus years, and the memories of times past, and skills learned made this adventure the trophy, the story above. Although these were all "solo" hunts I never felt alone. With me were those who were there before me, showing me the right way, freely passing on their skills. Arrowsmithing skills learned from Harold Gardner and Gary Orwig owners of long ago home town mom and pop type archery shops were a big part of this particular tale. The bow used was one the late Jerry Pierce and I glued up over 20 years ago. Last but not forgotten, thanks to all those mentor bowhunters who I've been fortunate to have hunted with over the years that willingly shared their "Knowledge Through Experience". *

Eucalyptus Antelope

By Allen Clark

I sat in the blind on day one watching the occasional big rig go by on I-25, just south of Kaycee, Wyoming. My thoughts went back to how this trip had come to be. My usual hunting partner and I had a caribou hunt planned and paid for to Alaska. Preparations had been made and plane tickets bought. All that remained was the wait till our late September departure.

Then in early June my partner had a little setback and physically would not be able to make the rough backpack trip required. Since it would not be a good idea for me to continue solo, we put the trip on hold until his health improved.

In early July, I started looking for a plan B. Contacting a friend in Wyoming, I was able to put together a solo hunt on short notice. The antelope season opened August 15. Even though I hadn't put in for a tag, leftover permits were available. Arriving August 13, I checked into my room, and went to meet the rancher. The rest of the day and the next were spent scouting water holes. Two locations really stood out and a blind was soon set up on each.

Opening day dawned warm at 62 degrees with a wind gusting to 53

mph. A single doe and her fawn were sighted in the distance. The blowing wind was causing trouble by collapsing the sides of the blind. Even though they were firmly staked down, it was a constant battle pushing the sides back out. I intended to sit the blind all day if necessary due to only having a short three days to hunt. My bow on this hunt was a new Big Jim take-down longbow. By mid-day the wind finally won. Having only one small buck come to water and constantly fixing the wind-blown blind, I decided to move to the other spot. It was a more secluded water hole, small at 5x6 feet, but down in a draw. Upon arrival this spot looked more promising with tracks all around. The blind was set up 15 yards down wind of the water, just right for the close shot I was looking for.

By mid-afternoon, the weather cooled off as cloud cover moved in. I watched five does and a large buck travel across the far ridge before dropping out of sight. Hopefully they would be back for a drink later. With sundown came the end of any opportunity for opening day.

Dawn of day two, the 16th of August, was a calm 56 degrees. I returned to the blind I had sat during the previous evening. Just after sun up two large bucks trailing six does came in to the water. I readied for a shot. The antelope approached the water's edge before starting to act uneasy. Something about the blind made them nervous. Slowly, the whole bunch moved away without offering a shot. After they left I did some work on the front of the blind by adding pieces of clothing to restrict the



amount of light coming through. This made the interior much darker. Two bucks arrived shortly thereafter. They approached to within 12 yards, however there was no shot opportunity. That would be bow hunting, not bow shooting.

Mid-morning found a doe and fawn coming in for a quick drink before moving off. The sun climbed higher and temperatures increased. By 11:15, it was 88 degrees. I could only hope the antelope would want to have a drink soon. After eating a sandwich I drifted off. By the time 12:30 rolled around, it was 92 degrees. I awoke from my nap and looked out just in time to see a nice buck charging down to the water.

I grabbed my bow and nocked an arrow just as the buck slid up to the hole. I got ready though he was facing me, directly across the water. Waiting, he finally turned broadside and I eased up on my knees to shoot. After two gulps, he spun around and left the way he came. Just like that he was gone with no shot. I remained hopeful that the heat would drive them to drink. An hour later I heard footsteps running from behind. I quietly readied my bow.

Four does came trotting in from the left, going right to the water and drinking without hesitation. While watching the does, I heard more footsteps. Out of the corner of my eye, I spied a large buck coming right in to the does. He stopped, centered in my shooting window. Waiting until he put his head down to drink, I recognized him as one of the bucks from earlier. The distance was right at 12 yards and he was conveniently broadside. His head went down and I slowly drew my bow, leaning to the left to avoid some brush. I watched the arrow take him right in the shoulder. He jumped up, snapping the arrow and then departing in a shower of water and dirt. Out and up, over the bank, his run carried him 50 yards to where he faltered. Just like that, it was over.

Even though I had two tags and one more day to hunt, I believed I shot the biggest buck in the pasture and the overall number of animals seemed to be down. The buck is my personal best to date. He has 15" horns and they hook way over.

After my good fortune, I loaded up my truck and headed south to Colorado where my taxidermist lives. I had work for him. As the miles went by, my mind wandered. I was pleased with the performance of my longbow. It was made from a Eucalyptus tree; pulling 62 lbs. and shooting a 680 gr. arrow tipped with a two blade Magnus broadhead. I look forward to many more adventures that await us. 🏹



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Why I hunt BAREBOW!

By Dennis Dunn

On September 17th, 2004, I was fortunate enough to become the first archer in history ever to complete the North American Super Slam of big game with no sighting devices of any kind attached to any of my bows for aiming purposes. Though some of the 29 different species were harvested with a compound, some with a longbow, and some with a recurve, all were taken by means of purely instinctive shooting. Throughout my lifetime, I have never hunted any other way.

In 2006, I went back to my roots and put away my compound bow forever. Long before the compound reached commercial production, I had been hunting with stick bows of different types and makes — taking, among other species, during the 1960's and 1970's — mule deer, Columbia black-tails, whitetails, Rocky Mountain elk, Roosevelt's elk, and one Rocky Mountain goat. All were harvested in my home state of Washington.

WHY did I decide to return to my roots in traditional archery, as I began to follow those hunting trails wending their way into the so-called “retirement years” of my life? I guess the answer boiled down to something no more complicated than this: I simply derive more personal joy and pleasure from launching arrows that way, and from hunting with the more primitive weapons that require you to get much closer to your quarry before an ethical shot can even become possible. Even during the numerous hunts I did take with my compound bow in hand, I never used any sights, release-aids or triggers — only three fingers on the string (one above the nock, two under).

The challenge of aiming an arrow accurately, at whatever distance you find yourself from your quarry, has always been for me the single most fascinating part of archery. Much of the romance of the sport seems to lie in the exhilaration of watching the arrow in flight as it completes its arching trajectory to its target. The slower the speed of the arrow . . . the greater the arc, and the longer that sense of exhilaration and anticipation lasts. With high-tech archery gear today, and arrows often trav-

eling well over 330 fps, sometimes one can't even see the arrows in flight — especially in weak lighting conditions. With such equipment, some bowhunters can routinely hit a grapefruit at 80, 90, or even 100 yards. In such cases, our beloved sport becomes less one of hunting, and more one of marksmanship.

Have you ever noticed that when rifle hunters boast about their kills in the field, it's almost always about how long a shot they made? 382 yards. 469 yards. 591 yards? And is it not true that, whenever an archer brags about a kill, if — indeed — he or she does, it's usually about how close the bowhunter got before taking the shot? Regardless of choice of weapon, I submit that — the longer the shot taken — the more it becomes a challenge of marksmanship, and the less an exercise of one's hunting skills.

And don't ever forget this unalterable truth: Bowhunting is the near-perfect embodiment of Murphy's Law — namely, that, if something can go wrong, it usually will. From 100 yards distant, at the crack of a rifle, a deer cannot relocate its vitals fast enough to avoid the lethal shot. Yet with a high-tech bow — even with the fastest bow with the lightest of hunting arrows — an animal that goes into motion at the instant of the bowstring's release will almost always turn a “perfectly aimed” shot into a poor hit, or a total miss. That can even happen at 20 yards, let alone 50, 80, or 100 yards! If I do miss at 25 yards or less, I'm usually close enough to be able to see whether I missed or not, OR — if I got a poor hit — to see where the arrow struck my quarry, so that the follow-up can be more wisely planned. The bottom line is that the longer the shot, the more uncertain I'm likely to be as to what really happens when the arrow arrives in the vicinity of its target. Barebow-hunting forces the ethical hunter to take shorter shots, thereby augmenting his or her instant knowledge of the shot's result — and therefore, also, increasing his or her chance of recovering the animal.

Hunting for me has always embodied my attempts at time-travel backwards, to

reconnect with my Paleolithic ancestors. The more primitive my bow and archery tackle, the more easily I've been able to merge myself into that identity of Everyman, from ages buried in the distant past. As for the challenge of getting within bow range of wild animals, my many decades of hunting them in the wilderness areas of North America have taught me a lot about their natural defense systems. Most big-game animals possess what I call a “red-alert zone,” which extends to a radius of about 50 yards all around them. Penetrate that invisible “wall,” and it becomes a real challenge to remain undetected for long. Yet, depending on the size of your quarry, an ethical, fair-chase, barebow hunter will usually need to get within 15 to 30 yards, before a shot opportunity is possible. And even then, at such close range, it may be necessary to lie in wait for long periods of time — perhaps hours, on occasion — before the bedded or feeding animal rises or enters your only available shooting lane. OR, finally gives you the chance to sneak closer.

The above paragraph describes what for me is the supreme thrill of the hunt: being able to observe a wild animal at very close range, without that beautiful creature knowing that any danger is present. Their senses of sight, hearing, and smell are so very much keener than our corresponding human senses that escaping detection at close range by a mature wild animal, for any length of time, is a huge victory all by itself — regardless of whether you ever get to release an arrow or not. If things finally do come together to afford you that shot you are so ardently hoping for, by then it is often almost anti-climactic!

For a modern archer who chooses to use sight-pins for aiming, he or she is not necessarily required to penetrate that buck's or bull's red-alert zone in order to achieve success. I guess what it comes down to is breaking hunting into its component parts and prioritizing which elements of the hunt give each of us the most pleasure or personal satisfaction. For me, that prioritization has always dictated that I hunt with a

bare bow — devoid of any sighting mechanisms — precisely because I know I must get much closer to my quarry than I would otherwise need to. Add to that the fact that fast target acquisition and the pure speed of instinctive shooting are the best way to hunt in brushy terrain — and at very close ranges, if a person is willing to put in the time it takes to develop such skills.

Whether one hunts with sighting devices, or purely instinctively, there are — needless to say — a number of advantages and disadvantages to whichever choice one makes. The advantages of hunting with high-tech archery gear are pretty well understood by everyone: draw-poundage let-off, faster arrow speed, flatter trajectory, greater killing range, more frequent pass-through penetration, more frequent returns home with meat or trophy.

However, I'd like to discuss several distinct drawbacks to hunting with modern archery equipment, as opposed to hunting with traditional bows. First, during foul weather conditions, you may suddenly find, just as you come to full draw, that your pins have been rendered unusable by snow, ice, or a big raindrop that has stubbornly taken up residence inside your peep-sight. Second, in the excitement of the moment, or in your haste to come to draw, you may unwittingly use the wrong pin as you quickly get the shot off. Third, those golden shot opportunities are often very fleeting and may not give you time to get a reading from your rangefinder. Thus, you must sometimes either guess at the distance (risking a wounding) or pass on the shot altogether. Also, should you happen to accidentally sever your bowstring while on a wilderness hunt, you're royally screwed with a compound — unless you happen to have brought a bow-press with you (or else a backup bow). With a traditional bow, you simply bring out your backup bowstring, and you're quickly in business again.

Lastly, I learned the hard way some years ago, while on a moose hunt up in the Northwest Territories of Canada, that hunting with a compound can sometimes actually cost you a trophy animal that you otherwise would have harvested with a traditional bow. The following excerpt from my book, *BAREBOW!*, describes those frustrating circumstances in graphic detail:

"Through our binoculars, we watched the bull gradually work himself (with a little help from us) into an absolute rage. Pretty soon he was using his powerful neck and antlers like a scoop on a D-6. His scoop, however, was spring-loaded! Deadwood debris of all sorts started flying through the air. Whole lodgepole spars

were uprooted and tossed aside. This was one agitated bull! Or else a master actor! Richard and I couldn't see any cows around him, so he must have figured we had some, and he was fixing to come and get ours!

"And come he did! First, however, the intimidation card had to be played to the fullest. Once he figured his awesome display of power had sufficiently intimidated his rival, the rush was on. There was certainly nothing slow-motion about this approach! 300 yards and closing fast. A few paces in front of us was a small clearing — perhaps 18 yards in diameter. Richard urged me to "set up" quickly on its back margin, while he would retreat 50 yards to do some soft "grunting" under cover — all the while keeping me between himself and the oncoming bull. I barely had time to kneel at the edge of the clearing and nock an arrow before the bull suddenly landed in my lap, so to speak.

"The giant animal arrested his motion directly across the little clearing from me. Heaving hard, red-eyed, and drooling at the mouth, he was so ready for a fight it made my skin crawl! As I gazed upward from my kneeling position at his massive antlers rising nearly 10 feet off the ground, for the first time in my life I was feeling truly intimidated by a wild animal. The bull's eyes were looking right over the top of me, trying to find the "other bull" he could not see. Since the wind was in my favor, and since I was wearing a camo head-net over my face, as well as similar gloves on my hands, I knew he would not likely notice me — unless I made some slight motion. I even tried to forgo blinking. My bow was vertically upright, ready to shoot, with the lower wheel resting on the ground. And thus the static drama continued on hold for several minutes, with neither of us budging a millimeter. He simply had no idea I was on my knees there in front of him — even though we were facing each other directly, only 18 yards apart.

"I found myself wondering if I could possibly come to full draw on him without triggering a charge. Did I dare take

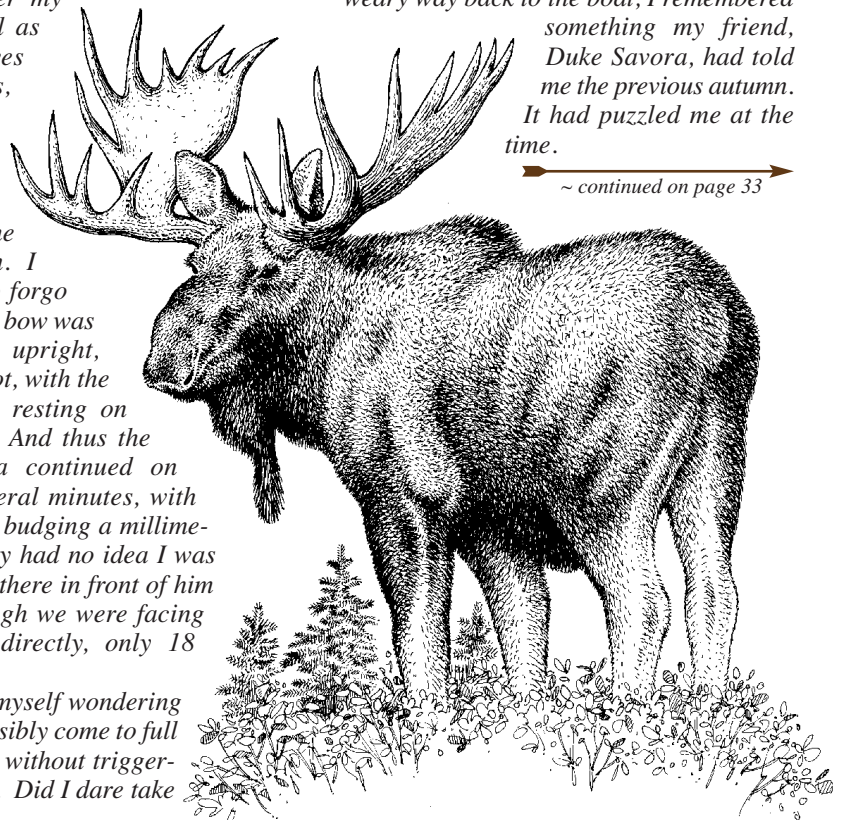
the chance? As I tried to screw my courage to the "sticking" point (please pardon the pun), I suddenly noticed that about five feet in front of the behemoth was a willow sapling rising to the base of his neck. No more than an inch in diameter, it nonetheless cut his brisket exactly in half as viewed from my fixed vantage point. Were I to attempt a front-entry shot directly into his "boiler room," the arrow might well glance off the side of the sapling and be deflected into one shoulder or the other. The chance of merely wounding the bull was not one I was eager to take. The big fellow was already angry enough without my further inflaming his rage!

"Waiting for my opponent to turn and give me a broadside shot seemed by far the more rational thing to do. IF he would only turn! The standoff continued for several tense, agonizing minutes — each of us searching for something we could not find. Then, suddenly, with no signal or warning, the bull wheeled on a dime and trotted straight away from me. As soon as his motion began, I started my draw, but it was too late. By the time the wheels of my compound bow turned over and I "lurched" into my anchor position — so I could then stabilize and take proper aim — his last rib was disappearing from view, leaving me with only a rump for a target. I never got the shot off at all.

"The sense of disappointment was crushing, to say the least. So near and yet so far! While Richard and I made our weary way back to the boat, I remembered

something my friend, Duke Savora, had told me the previous autumn. It had puzzled me at the time.

~ continued on page 33 ~



Trail Cam Tidbits...

Big Ones That Got Away



"The Big One"

As told to Kurt Feller by Weston Schmidt

The story of this buck is much too big to condense into a paragraph or two. He amazingly evaded many hunters for years, yet we have photos and shed antlers from almost every year of his adult life. I finally met up with him on January 4, 2013 while checking beaver houses. He had apparently been taken down by coyotes. His teeth aged him at over 9 years old, a true rarity in heavily hunted northern Wisconsin where bucks normally live under 3 years.

When we first learned of his existence, he had 13 points. Six years later when he died, he had 15. Although he peaked two years with 20 points, his main frame was usually 14 points and typical. Gross scores were always in the 190's and nets in the 170's.

In our many conversations, we always referred to him simply as "The Big One." Even though we did not get this giant, we always rooted for him to make it through another season. We always got excited to find a shed or see him again in a new trail camera photo.

Two years after his death, my brother, walking behind me, got really excited as I literally stepped over a chewed, faded row of tines sticking out of the snow, another reminder of this great buck's life story.



Editor's Note:

Our regular column Trail Cam Tidbits has seemingly morphed into a feature of "Big One's That Got Away". Its always fascinating to see how many big bucks, boars and bulls live right under our noses in undeniable existence, allowing us to play our little games that seldom interrupt their daily routines as much as some people think.

PBS members are encouraged to participate in this new feature by sending in photos of big ones that slipped through our fingers. Include a few sentences about each animal, close encounters with them and other interesting information.

Send photos to our magazine editor, Jack Smith at probowhunters@roadrunner.com





By Bill Terry

I was actually in my stand for both of these pictures. I chose not to shoot the fox and it's illegal to kill bobcats here in CT.



By Barry Wensel

In 2015 he was a great 5x4. I had him at 25 yards, on the ground in my ghillie suit when he walked by me cruising for chicks. He was broadside at 25 yards but there were several 1-2 inch saplings in the way making for a risky shot. So I let him walk off. I then watched him walk within 10 yards of the treestand I was heading for. I guess I was about fifteen minutes late that afternoon.

Fast forward to 2016. Right at the end of October he came by me following a young doe past another treestand a half mile away. Although he was standing broadside at 27-28 yards I didn't feel comfortable with the shot. I promised myself I wouldn't shoot at anything over 15 yards this season because of my inability to practice until mid-Sept after heart surgery. I hope he's still around for the 2017 season. His G3s are curved and a lot longer than they appear in this TC photo. Beautiful prime stud buck.



BAREBOW!

~ continued from page 31

“‘Someday, Dennis,’ he had said, ‘you’ll go back to traditional archery and hang up your compound for good.’

“Not understanding the thinking behind his statement, I asked, ‘And why will I decide to do that?’

“‘Because someday you’ll miss your chance at a superb trophy animal simply because you won’t be able to get your shot off fast enough,’ was the reply.

“I reprocessed Duke’s explanation through my mind a couple more times, and then it hit me: I had just lived through the precise situation he’d predicted! Had I had in my hand that day,

on the edge of the little clearing, a long-bow or a recurve, I’d have been able to slip my arrow in behind that last rib before it disappeared. There was no doubt in my mind that Duke had been proven right. His larger prophecy, however, did not come about till the fall of 2006 — at which time I finally did retire my compound for good.”

— (Page 281; Excerpted from a story titled, “Compound Trouble at Skinboat Lake”)

I missed my chance at this giant Alaska-Yukon bull, because I had the wrong type of bow in my hand for that particular situation. The spread to his rack was easily over 60 inches, and he had very long, broad palms, with lots of

points on each side. Neither my guide nor I had much doubt about his being an all-time Boone & Crockett trophy animal. Those “once-in-a-lifetime” chances are called that for good reason; namely, because you almost never get a second opportunity at the same animal, or even at another trophy animal of comparable quality.

For those of our members who have family or friends currently “on the fence” as to which type of bow they really want to commit to, as they continue to pursue their passion for the hunt, I urge you to pass this article along to them. I believe it may help to open many eyes, and to “convert” many hearts. ♣

THE TRACKERS' ART

By Gene Wensel

I knew the moment the string slipped from my fingers. Although only 20 steps away, the zebra was walking faster than I anticipated. Time stood still as I hopelessly watched my neon green feathers pass completely through the stallion's midsection with the sound of a marble dropped onto an over-ripe watermelon. As much as I wanted this zebra, I wished I could reach out to pull that arrow back to me.

The African sun was nearing the horizon, offering another beautiful sunset that somehow seemed out of place in the north-western sky. I walked over to the impact area, examined my spent shaft, and lowered my nose to the odor I knew I would find. Turning away in disgust with myself, I marked the spot and headed toward camp.

Some nights on the bushveldt seem longer than others. The stripes on my new zebra rug were quickly fading.

At first light I returned with two native trackers. They quickly picked up the spoor. After a quick conversation and some pointing, they started walking at a fair pace.

There was no visible spilled blood.

The red, sandy soil was peppered with thousands of tracks of all sizes, shapes, ages and species, mostly just seen as pock marks seemingly headed in four different directions at once. Over the years, I learned to hang back, trying to gain some wisdom from these fascinating people while trying to stay out of their way. We walked for several hours, the sun soon reminding me of my bald head. I eventually began to doubt their ability, as I always seem to do, surmising they were in fact just putting in time to make a conscious effort on my behalf. Every so often, they would stop to point at something on the ground that I could never see. We continued walking more miles, me following more than looking now.

Then, long after giving up any shred of hope, one of them stopped, turned to me and simply said, "There," as if he was pointing to a bird or tree. And "there," my friends, indeed laid my long lost zebra, deader than the proverbial doornail. I was aghast in amazement. Unreal!

Someone in camp asked me how far the

zebra went. I could only answer the distance it took us to walk a crooked trail for four hours. The blacks had lost the track twice but quickly found it both times. My PH later told me they were "only momentarily confused."

I think most hunters like to think they can personally track with the best. Years ago I started to read a book by a guy from New Jersey who claimed he could track grasshoppers. Then I got to the part where he claimed the "ultimate track" was a skull found in the woods. Right... Maybe, I thought, having a very vivid imagination was part of being a great tracker. Like the Michigan guy who claimed he tracked a huge buck for three years by a chip in the deer's left front foot. Now, I have to ask, when was the last time you even thought you could identify a chip in a deer print? Right. Not to mention the fact deer hooves grow just like other mammal's feet. Chips grow out just like your wife's broken fingernails. After all, we're not talking about "Ol' Three Toes" the rogue grizzly bear here! Like I said.... Some vivid manure is occasionally spread.

I grew up in Vermont. Many of you may have heard of a family of trackers by the name of Benoit. The late Larry Benoit of Duxbury, Vermont, was a legend in his own time. Multiple books and magazine articles have been written about the Benoit's extraordinary tracking skills. Barry and I have known the Benoit family since we were kids. They are the real deal, but without snow, they are disabled, like craftsmen without tools.

We've already talked about the superior tracking skills of many native black Africans. I've witnessed a dozen or more of them do their thing but I'm here to tell you a few of them weren't worth a hoot. Some white PHs are better than the blacks they hire. That being said, the best black trackers are in a class by themselves. The best are not common even in Africa, but to watch a good one at work is a real treat.

Most of you know I've been on a lot of blood trails. I simply feel incompetent around any skilled black tracker. More

often than not, I feel I'm just in the way. I've learned to stay back, trying to drink in some of their skill. The best of them key in on subtle disturbances missed by others. A pock mark in sand is still only a pock mark, but its relationship to others in size, gait or direction quickly falls into place.

A tracker's age means very little after they reach puberty. One of the best blacks I've ever followed was only 21 years old at the time, which lead me to the assumption that at least part of their knowledge is hereditary wisdom.... deep genetics combined with intense interest. Experienced trackers often learn to clasp their hands behind their backs for lumbosacral support. Others carry a stick the size of a long arrow, using it to turn over understory vegetation that might be blocking clues or swinging the tip of the stick from one track to another to establish gait.

The best trackers can predict animal behavior, often spoken to their boss PH in native tongue. Never weigh statements such as, "He will lie down soon," or "He is not dead yet but will die soon" with doubt. More often than not, they are right on the money. The finest African trackers speak little or no English. Someone told me too much schooling in civilized environments quickly dulls natural born senses. I've seen enough examples to believe in this theory.

I once hit a big warthog too far back. I had a fine young tracker with me named Lucky. He spoke broken English and smiled more often than not. Since blacks often don't understand that an arrow kills by hemorrhaging, many have to be stopped from following a wounded animal too soon. Lucky had a hard time understanding why I wanted to leave the trail for a few hours before taking the track. Frankly, I'm not sure he ever did grasp my logic.

Ol' Lucky needed a pair of shoes almost as much as he needed a bath. Later in the day I finally turned him loose on the pig track. He showed me his white teeth and took off at a steady clip.

The ground here was made up of hard gravel more than sand. Time and again, Lucky would point to the ground and move

on. I would look closely at every spot he pointed to.

Nothing.

Thirty yards further, he would point again. I would look even closer.

Still nothing.

This went on for hundreds of yards, Lucky pointing inches from the ground seemingly at nothing, then pressing forward. I began thinking he was taking me for a walk. So help me, there was one stretch of almost 150 yards of solid rock with minimal gravel or sand. I saw not a single track anywhere. Still, Lucky pushed onward, dutifully noting a dozen more places where I saw nothing but solid rock. Finally he pointed to something I could actually see. It was a speck the size of a pin head. Picking it up, I rubbed it between my fingers and sniffed. Stomach juice. No question about it.

A little further on, Lucky proudly announced in his best English, "Pig lay down here." Sure enough, "we" had found a spot of pink liquid the size of a dime. To make a long story short, we finally came upon my dead warthog. I got my pig and Lucky got his new shoes.

People from the northern half of the United States often take snow for granted. Talk about a learning tool! Not only does a couple inches of fresh snow cancel all but the latest sign, but a fresh white blanket also helps determine gait, size, gender characteristics and several other important factors. But in truth, the art of tracking is often an accumulation of assumptions and interpretations more than actual facts. How an animal places its feet, often covering the front foot prints with those of the rear, can't help but suggest confusion that may or may not be intentional.

A hard rain washes out tracks in most soil types, essentially wiping the slate clean. The ground looks and even smells fresh. One of my favorite pastimes is tracking various species after a rain storm in the sandy yet firm soil of southern Texas.

I've often wondered why man is the only predator that actually studies tracks or even pays much attention to them visually. Of course many species track by smell but only humans scrutinize the ground, constantly looking for clues. I once watched a wrinkled African stand in one spot for a timed 17 minutes without taking a step forward. The man refused to advance until he found good reason. Like hunting, good tracking is often a game of patience as well

as observation. A tracker often offers good examples of maximum human attention spans.

The real negative side of the trackers art is the solemn fact that without final proof, conjecture is often one person's word against another's. For example, I could take many "city people" to a bleached skull lying in the woods, recreate a death scene and even "back track" sign supposedly made many months previously, pointing out multiple subtle signs no one could really see except by using their imaginations. Loads of people would actually buy my story if I was convincing enough in the delivery. It would be like me tracking a grasshopper, finally jumping one, then turning to you and saying, "There he goes! Yep, that was him all right...I recognized his face." Right....

Because a broadhead kills by hemorrhaging, most bowhunters routinely get in more practice tracking than almost any other form of outdoor activity with the possible exception of search and rescue personnel. Even standard scouting procedures don't take into consideration singular tracking skills as much as studying accumulated evidence. The real trick seems to lie in not only thorough observation, but one's ability to find and sort out the real clues from those of our imaginations. Confusion is a major factor to consider. Half a dozen deer using the same area daily make enough tracks to boggle the mind of someone who doesn't know any better. Years ago, while trout fishing with a friend, I walked through an open gate where a flock of sheep had recently passed. The guy with me got all excited about hanging a stand there with so many fresh "deer" tracks!

Years ago, I was guiding golfer friend Jack Nicklaus. He had hit a nice whitetail buck quartering away one October morning. Penetration was adequate but Jack's arrow hadn't passed completely through the deer's body cavity. Body fat had quickly clogged the entrance wound, causing mostly internal bleeding and a poor blood trail at best. After a hundred yards or so, the buck took a sharp left turn to cut down over the bank of the Milk River. I turned to Jack and said, "Your buck went left here."

"How do you know?" he answered.

"Don't worry about it, just follow me."

Being the type of guy Jack is, he said, "No, really....how do you know that? There's hundreds of tracks here and no

blood. How do you know my buck turned left here?"

Looking him right in the eye, I said, "I just know stuff like that....That's why I'm a legend and you're not!"

Another time my brother had booked a bowhunt at a lodge in Alabama. Gun season was open. Barry arrived a day early and was unpacking his gear when three gunners came back to camp. One of them had shot a buck too far back. They were looking for help after several frustrating attempts at trailing. They recruited Barry. Back at the scene, they played out the scenario for him.

No blood.

Barry took the track and found where the buck had taken a sharp left turn. Coincidentally, Barry was getting over a wicked head cold that week and his sinuses were running rampant. Being bent over at the waist made his nose run even worse. Constant sniffing brought murmurs from the three guys following him. After covering several hundred yards sniffing regularly, one of the guys couldn't take it any longer. He said, "Hey...are you trying to tell us that you're...." Just then, Barry looked up to see the dead buck laying ahead. The rumors back at the lodge were legendary.

"You should have seen it....you had to be there. So help me, Wensel took that track, put his nose to the ground like a beagle hound and walked right to the dead buck!"

How legends are made!

What is it about the tracker's art that fascinates people? I think it's the same fascination and admiration we have for people with artistic ability. Some people can draw well, others can't. A person might get better with art lessons, but few ever become really fine artists. Some people are musically inclined, others aren't. Although almost everyone knows good music when they hear it, a much lower percentage of folks are actually able to produce it. The same goes for tracker's art. It is a gifted but developed skill not unlike that of the finest concert pianist.

As for me? I still can't play any instruments nor do I draw very well either. And my feet are starting to hurt me too. After all, a guy named Lucky ran off with my shoes! ♡

2016 Kodiak Membership Hunt

By Mark Ulschmid

The Kodiak membership deer hunt was first held in 2015 after Steve Hohensee (known as “H” from now on), with his ear to the wind and nose to the ground, sleuthed out a fishing and hunting lodge on Kodiak Island called Zachar Bay Lodge that specialized in deer hunts from mid October to mid December most years. The 2016 hunt took place from October 29 to November 5, a week earlier than the 2015 hunt. This seemed to coincide with pre-rut activity along with surprisingly mild weather, and both H and Ben Pinney, repeat hunters from the year before, seemed to think deer encounters were up from 2015.

This years group consisted of H and Ben Pinney from Alaska, Don Seibal from California, Bubba Graves from Texas and the Idaho delegation of Coby Tigert, Doug Chase, John Mulberry and myself. The reason we ended up with four hunters from Idaho was because every time one of the hunters who originally signed up backed out, H would email me to see if I knew of anyone who might be interested, so I volunteered our elk hunting crew.

The lodge itself is a former cannery built in the early 1900’s. It passed through a number of owners over the years, changing missions from salmon to herring oil. Most of the old equipment is still there, but no one really knows how it all worked. Marty and Linda Eaton purchased the cannery in 1989. Marty is a retired Alaska fisheries biologist, who, after retirement,



The 2016 Kodiak membership deer hunt was held at Zachar Bay Lodge on Kodiak Island. The lodge itself is a former cannery built in the early 1900s. This years group consisted of (in no particular order) Steve Hohensee, Ben Pinney, Don Seibal, Bubba Graves, Coby Tigert, Doug Chase, John Mulberry and Mark Ulschmid. Below is a view of the cannery from the dock.

wanted to mainly cater to fishermen but saw an opportunity to host deer hunters from the lodge after the fishing season. They eventually added a number of cabins, a home for themselves and another for their son Andy, who runs the day to day operations of transporting hunters out and back and keeps things running smoothly. Their main clientele are Alaska resident rifle hunters, and with a limit of three deer each, quite a bit of venison gets taken out every year. Marty said they have taken well over two thousand deer from the area since 1989. They have a website with all of the pertinent information, including cabin rates and availability.

When you envision late season deer

hunting on Kodiak, you might think of small tents, high winds, cold, wet, long dark nights and prowling bears looking for your deer meat. That, by the way, is pretty much how Monty and Bryan and crew enjoyed their hunt the same week we were there on a lake not far from us. We, however, stayed in a heated cabin that slept nine in four bedrooms, had a kitchen and roomy living room with a couch that was a foot too low for old folks and there were clothes lines around the fuel oil stove that was always on to dry out things if they got wet. It was kind of like staying at a farm for a week in the upper midwest. Just down the hill was a heated bath house with flushing toilets and a high power shower that removed what little hair Bubba had left on top of his head and cleaned old food residue from his beard like an industrial wet vac. The trail going to it was kind of a goat path, but we weren’t adverse to a little





hardship on this hunt.

In the planning stages of the hunt, H sent out a meal planner and asked for volunteers to bring the main course essentials. Ben brought halibut and moose tenderloins along with some backstrap. Coby and Don brought elk burger and elk Italian sausage. It should be noted that the elk meat Coby brought was from a dandy 7x7 bull his wife, Linda, called in and killed with her longbow six miles from the truck in late September. I brought eight 22 oz. ribeye steaks from a local Idaho ranch. In addition to the moose, halibut and ribeyes, we had a spaghetti night and a taco night, and on the last night I made a venison pot roast with potatoes, onions and some other vegetables from the buck I killed. H found some loaves of sourdough that we put in the oven for ten or fifteen minutes, and they were really good, but you would have been well served to have a hacksaw to get through the crust. Breakfasts were a leisure affair. The generator started around seven, the coffee got turned on, Bubba made a peanut butter and bacon sandwich for lunch and we had bacon, eggs, pancakes, breakfast burritos and even French toast. The only hitch was H's inability to master cast iron skillet but he was duly replaced with better talent.

Andy would come up in the evening to discuss the weather and what our hunting area preferences were for the next day. There were six rifle hunters in camp beside us, and he did a good job of keeping us separated. After breakfast and about the time it started to get light, a group of four of us would head down to the pick up spot on the beach. Our transportation was a landing craft Andy built with a bow ramp that dropped down making it easy for hunters to get in and out and easy to load deer. It has a 225 hp outboard that really made it

View from the dock. The guys, below, waiting for their morning boat ride to their hunting spot. Andy's boat, right, was outfitted with a bow ramp to make it easy for hunters getting in and out and loading deer.



haul on plane. Loading up, Andy would ferry us to our hunting spot for the day and tell us when he would be back to pick us up, usually around five thirty or six that evening. From there we would split up into groups of two for the rest of the day, although some days we would just hunt alone.

H, Ben and I were the only ones who had hunted deer on Kodiak before. The first time I went, the area was a lot more open and spot and stalk hunting was the norm. The area we were now hunting has mature cottonwoods at the lower elevations with a lot of timbered benches, gradually opening up the higher you went with tall grass and alder thickets. This made for excellent calling opportunities as you moved along the benches. Andy told me that you couldn't really hunt there until after a couple of frosts, as the vegetation was too thick. Calling was pretty simple. Find an open area on a knob or ridge, get set up and give a few bleats on a rubber band call. If deer re-

sponded, they at times came in almost instantly or sometimes they took their sweet time and got there up to ten or twelve minutes later, so we usually tried to stick it out for fifteen minutes before moving on. I'm not sure what the bleats meant to the deer, but we did hear actual deer making the same sounds.

After three mild winters, the deer population is on the high side. Imagine looking around and every place a deer could step had a deer track or deer turds, and I think you could hunt for a week and never leave an



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Kodiak Membership Hunt continued

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established deer trail. They went in every direction possible. That being said, you could still go all day and see very few deer if you stayed in the thick stuff close to the beach and they weren't responding to the calling. The deer, however, could be found from the beach on up to the highest ridge. Ben and Bubba had an affinity for getting up into the high country where you could glass a lot of deer, but seeing deer and killing deer are two different things. By the way, I think that ridge climbing urge is hereditary in flatlanders.

And then there is the part about killing deer, which is why we were there in the first place. H killed his first ever Sitka blacktail by what could be called a drive by shooting of a preoccupied buck in some guy's yard, no less. I wasn't there, but witnesses said Andy pulled the landing craft up on the beach next to the deer, a buck chasing a doe, and H and Ben stormed the beach while the deer hopped over the berm and were on some guy's driveway (the shore has lots of houses and cabins) and H spined the buck at twelve yards. Some quick pictures and Andy took the buck back to the lodge after dropping the guys off. Later that day, Ben and H called in a couple of spikes and Ben got his first buck. Doug got the first deer of the hunt on the first day after he and Coby called in a young buck. Later that day they called in a couple of mature four points and Coby got one of them. It should be noted that

a four point would be an eight or ten point in Texas, something we had to school Bubba on. As the week progressed, Ben added another spike to the collection and I added a mature two point. On the last day, Doug got a two point at two yards and Coby and John called in a big four point that Coby shot at three yards. That left us with eight deer for the week.

As for my buck, John and I were standing on an open knob early one morning, giving an occasional bleat, and after about ten minutes a buck came around through a saddle in front of me and headed right for us. I had already taken my arrow off, so I got it back on and at fifteen yards the buck stopped to look at us, decided he needed to get around me and veered to his left and kept coming. When he was under ten yards I shot him, the arrow went through and stuck in a bush, the buck flinched and kept walking for about twenty yards. He then stopped, looked around and started to come back when he lost power. I turned away, so I didn't have to watch him die. We weren't too far from the beach, so I dressed him out and we dragged him down and covered him up with driftwood and grass to keep the eagles off.

Everyone got at least one shot at a deer, but there seemed to be quite a few misses along the way. Maybe it was because fifteen yards was a long shot and it was hard to shoot low. A few deer ended up with bad haircuts. It was easy to tell who missed that day by observ-



Steve Hohensee with his first sitka deer.

Photos from the top down: Doug Chase with the first deer of the hunt; Bubba Graves with a beautiful cross fox he got; and Coby Tigert with his two bucks.

ing who got out the files and sharpeners that night at the cabin. It got so bad for Bubba that he lost his touch with a file and we had to do an intervention to prevent injury and get his broadheads sharp. He did manage to hit a cross fox with a beautiful pelt. There was also a witness report of a bow being slammed to the ground in disgust after a bad shot. No names need to be mentioned, just that it wasn't me.

The close shots were due to the behavior of the deer when coming into the calls. On the first day, not knowing any better, I tried to shoot a buck at thirty yards. John was calling from behind me and a doe came running up and stopped about eight yards away and stood looking at us. A buck followed, but he walked behind her to an open knob and stood looking around. The arrow took a tuft of hair off the top of his shoulder. He and the doe left and as we walked over to get my arrow, a spike and doe came out at fifteen yards and looked at us, then went back into the brush. A large buck then headed for us from the next knob but he saw us and went back to the doe he was following. While we watched him, another buck walked up behind us to within ten yards, but he turned and left before we could do anything. He was directly downwind and we were out in the open, so the lesson learned was to keep your head on a swivel, as the deer seemed to come out of nowhere. Not all deer were interested in the calling. Some would get curious but keep their distance and just watch or circle downwind to check things out, these usually being mature does, and some would just mind their own business and ignore the calling completely. Ben also used a fake deer head his wife made to trick deer, and witnesses verified it did work, but I never saw it in action. It looked like Mickey Mouse with extra large ears. One of the rifle hunters called in a buck by rattling with some shed antlers he found, so it seems something might work sometimes but not every time.

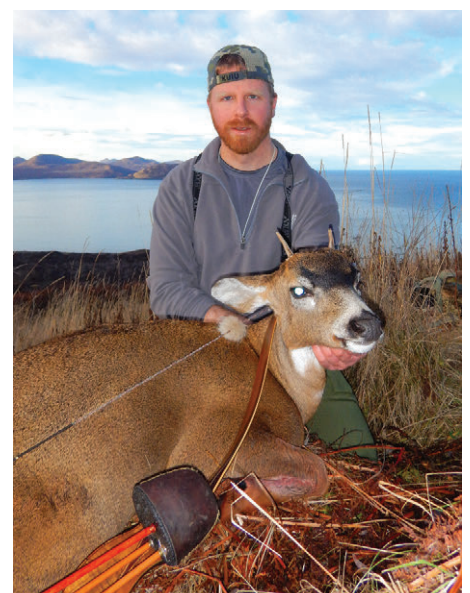
Of course, once you got your hands on a deer you had to get it down to the beach. If it wasn't too far, the best way was to drag it whole, then cover it up so the scavengers wouldn't find it. Coby dismantled his first buck and he and Doug carried it out in the

backpacks. Ben and Bubba did the same with Ben's second spike, although Bubba said it took up a lot of time and they already had full packs, so it was a good load. Coby cut his second buck in half and he strapped the front half to his pack and John took the rear half and they packed it a mile down to the beach. I visited with the rifle hunters who left the day we arrived, and they drug every deer whole to the beach, thirty five bucks total. All of the deer were hung in the meat processing room for skinning, boning out and freezing.

They also had a lot of good advice on how to hunt the area, especially after they brought out a half gallon of Pendleton and passed it around, but it applied mostly to rifles. One group was an outfitter and his guides on a vacation hunt. They did travel light with small packs and prepared for any emergency by taking a pack loaded with a tent, sleeping bags, stove, food and a radio and stashed it on the beach where they were dropped off. This gave them the protection they needed if the weather turned and the boat couldn't get to them.

Kodiak is known for more than deer and fish. It has those big fur ball things called Kodiak brown bears. We bowhunters didn't have any serious run ins with them, but one of the rifle hunters did. He had just finished dressing out a buck and went back to his pack, set some distance away, to get a bag for the heart. When he turned around, a bear was on the deer and was looking at him. He grabbed his gear and ran. Andy said the bears home in on ravens and to a lesser extent gunshots. Ben and Bubba encountered a sow and cub on the hike back to the beach one evening and had to alter course, leading to Ben getting lectured about not being in the right spot at pick up time. They ran into another bear a few days later but avoided it. On the last day, John and

~ continued on page 40



Photos from the top down: Mark Ulschmid with his buck; and Ben Pinney with the two spikes he got. The center photo is a bear trail high on a ridge.

Kodiak Membership Hunt continued

~ continued from page 39



Coby were set up calling in the morning and could hear something crunching through the frozen leaves, headed for them. They expected a deer to appear, but a bear appeared at twenty yards, looking for them. They left the area.

One day I was hunting by myself along a cottonwood ridge with a major deer trail going down it. Sitting on a moss covered hump against a tree, I blew on a homemade deer call I had borrowed from Ben and about ten seconds later a large bear came up out of the alders on the left and reached the trail about twenty yards from me. He looked around a bit, then sat down like a dog, facing away, and pointed his nose straight up in the air, sniffing the air currents and swinging his head from side to side. Satisfied, he plopped down on a moss covered log and went to sleep. Not what I was expecting.

Back home in Idaho, people at times get bit by grizzly's when they interrupt the bears sleep, so I figured to just let a sleeping bear sleep. While he was snoozing he was in a pretty good position to take an arrow through the lungs if a person happened to be bear hunting, but even twenty yards seemed a bit far for pinpoint placement on a big furry target without a distinguishing spot to aim at. I had plenty of time to think about this. Eventually, though, he was going to wake up and do something different, and there was that can of bear spray in my right front pants pocket, ready for action. Easing it out, the next problem arose when the shooting glove finger wouldn't fit through the trigger hole, so the glove would have to come off. I need to relay this information to the manufacturer. The glove, of course, has a velcro wrist strap. Velcro is useful for a lot of things, as long as noise isn't a factor. Pulling it apart sounds like dropping water into a frying pan of hot oil, lots of sizzle. The bear had been snoozing for about fifteen minutes or so, without much movement, so I gently tugged at the strap just a fraction. With that little scritch, the bears head popped up and he looked right at me. Getting to his feet, he took a step or two in my direction and without really thinking I just

stood up. That's about when we made eye contact and he went rigid like a pointing dog and got a concerned look on his face, then simply went back into the alders where he came from. The rest of the day was uneventful.

I think everyone had at least two deer tags, and Ben, Doug and Coby made use of them. After shooting one, I decided to just spend the next day skinning it and boning it out. The weather was sunny and in the fifties with no wind, so it was a pleasant day working on the deer, visiting with Andy and exploring the cannery and getting the moose tenderloins wrapped in bacon ready for that evening. We pitched in on the last day to help Doug and Coby process their last minute bucks and so everyone was ready to go on the day of departure. The deer were surprisingly hefty, and we got about sixty to sixty-five pounds of trimmed and boned meat from each mature buck. Andy has the waxed cardboard boxes with a plastic liner that we would load up with about fifty pounds, and he would band the box shut and it would be ready for the airlines.

And speaking of airlines, plan to fly Alaska Airlines home if you're bringing meat back unless you want to pay outrageous baggage fees or can fly first class and get free shipping. Getting to the lodge and back isn't a leisurely affair because you will spend more than a day on probably five different planes, including a float plane, and that one will be weather dependent. The weather was marginal on the way in and we had to fly the coastal route to get to the lodge. Do yourself a favor and get a takedown bow or you will again be paying extra baggage fees. On the way up we ran into Monty Browning, Bryan Burkhardt and Wade Job in Seattle, who were hunting the same week in a different area, and we shared the same flights all the way to Kodiak and then spent a fun evening at the Best Western.

And so it ended too quickly. To see more pictures and additional stories, go the PBS website, get on Cyber Campfire and check out the 2016 Kodiak Invasion thread. ♣

Photos from the top down: Don and Ben; John Mulberry and Coby; Bubba taking in the view; Coby skinning deer while others help process the bucks.

Shining Super Moon

By Preston Lay

The evening of November 9th found me sitting in an internal funnel. As the evening narrowed I heard some rustling from down in a thick creek. These sounds were much different from the squirrels that had been playing tricks on me through the afternoon. Finally, followed by a buck grunt, I got excited. I saw two does and a nice buck giving chase to one of the does which was obviously hot. Eventually she came very near the tree in which I was perched and he was taking up the rear. As he came by at about ten yards I sent an arrow through his chest. He was down within 60 yards.

Two smaller bucks showed and continued the chase and one buck completed his mission with the doe about 40 yards in front of my stand.

On the morning of November 13th I was again sitting in a funnel connecting two large timber areas on a ridge. Just after daylight a nice buck came trotting through looking for does. My arrow found its mark on another ten yard shot. The buck was recovered, about two hundred yards and I punched my second and final Oklahoma buck tag. *



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Dr. Ed Ashby visited our camp and talked about his broadhead studies and the old days in Africa. We wrote letters thanking him!

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Pondering

By Barry Wensel



I question whether age or experience tends to make us think more philosophically. Maybe it's a combination of both. I know I've been thinking a lot recently about my many decades as an avid bowhunter. I've come to the conclusion I've truly been blessed with this life.

Regardless whether your hunting techniques mirror those of a canine, feline or raptor, we are basically all predators. I'm big on analogies and got to thinking how each of our hunting techniques and/or philosophies relates to sports. As youngsters we all have the opportunity to participate. We usually favor the sport or recreational activity we tend to be best at. We have team sports and we have individual athletes. Frankly, most team sports are dated. I mean, I genuinely feel sorry for kids who LOVE team sports. There's absolutely nothing wrong with them but it's somewhat depressing to know you have to give up certain sport activities when you are still relatively young. Because of physical limitations and changes most people can't continue to participate as an athlete in many of the physical sports.

Just using round figures, say our lifespan is 80 years old. A kid that LOVES football usually goes from sandlot ball; to high school; to college, and if they are really outstanding (love aside), they may even play in the NFL. But the cold hard fact remains by the time they are age forty (and often much sooner) they are done as an active participant. How would we like it if our love of hunting suddenly came to an end when we turned 35 or 40, forcing us to only watch hunting on TV, reading about it, or maybe being camp cook? My point is we as hunters are so fortunate and unique in the respect that as long as we can get around we can still participate. Sure, we can't tear up the mountains like we could in our youth. We have to adapt, slow down, using our heads more so than youthful brawn. But the fact is we mostly can remain in the game as participants. We may have to slow our pace; hunt with a "walking stick" (never call it a cane); limit ourselves to ground blinds and/or still hunting/stalking rather than elevated stands; lower the draw weight of our bows; and maybe limit our hunts closer to home. But we're still out there hunting, thinking, absorbing and participating.

We need to come to the realization we will likely not be able to hunt sheep when

we're eighty. And accept the fact we can no longer hike into the Rocky Mountains with a 70 lb. pack on our backs BUT, we can maybe hire a guide to help us some. We can adapt a little and hunt elk on less vertical terrain. Or sit a treestand over a waterhole and still hear the scream of the bull at first light. We must adapt but we're still in the game.

Additionally, I look at bowhunting as an individual endeavor versus a team sport. Recently I've seen bowhunters referred to as athletes. I don't know, maybe as an individual but not as a team. I never thought of bowhunting as a team really. I mean, just because you drive a Chevy doesn't mean you're the Heartbeat of America.

There's a big difference between being on a team and going it alone. I want to make it clear there's nothing wrong with team sports. Being on the winning team is fine, but I must say they don't have the same pressures as an individual athlete. My niece's father-in-law won a gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics back in the '60s. He was part of the four-man relay team that took the gold for America that year. I tease him saying, "well, YOU actually didn't win the gold, your team did. I mean, if you won the 100 meter sprint yourself or something I'd be impressed." Ha. He still likes me because he knows I'm kidding.

Bowhunting is mostly an individual sport. When I was younger I used to make hunting videos. You can get the best footage by having a cameraman film you. The set up includes a cameraman filming/taping over your shoulder. Twice the scent, twice the bulk; twice the noise; twice the work is involved. But the cameraman can pan and follow the deer as it moves, zoom in and out, center the picture, making sure everything is in focus. Filming yourself is really tough. We've always said either you're a cameraman or the hunter. Trying to be both is really difficult. Occasionally it'll all work out, but not very often. That was the main reason I stopped making videos for years. We plan the entire scenario, set up the situation realizing you are dealing with wild animals and will likely only get one opportunity. Here he comes... finally! Two more steps and he'll be broadside at 15 yards. And all of a sudden the cameraman sneezes. I can handle it if I mess up but I can't handle it when someone else messes me up. You get my drift. Therefore, in recent years I tend to

concentrate on trying to film myself. If I get the scene...great. But if I don't, so be it. I'm a hunter first and cameraman second. Not to mention if you should happen to miss on film/tape when alone you can erase it and no one knows the difference. I haven't missed since I dropped the cameraman deal.

Bowhunting has the unique attribute of being both an individual and a team sport. Frankly, I prefer to hunt alone. If I want to sit all day I can. If I want to go home and take a nap, I can. If I should screw up no one knows about it. That happened once but I don't want to talk about it.

But frankly, hunting with a partner is more fun. Not only will you be an inspiration for each other i.e., "hey...we need to sit longer this morning", but two heads are better than one. When we talk over a situation it's mentally gratifying to hear someone else's opinion either as another option or to justify your own thinking.

Not to even mention the safety factor involved. Accidents do happen. When you deal with the elements in nature you always have to consider hypothermia. Almost everyone I know has fallen. I've had to crawl out of the woods twice myself. Hunting with a friend or two won't guarantee your safety but it will guarantee someone knows exactly where you are. If I should happen to be hunting alone I ALWAYS leave a note on the table at home saying the time/date and what stand I'm hunting. I also have designated plans to call someone (wife, relative, or neighbor) at a specific time after dark so they know I got out of the woods okay. If I fail to call, someone knows where to start looking. Laying out hurt all night in freezing temperatures is deadly. We owe it to our families to be responsible.

Often when I hunt I start as a "team" (one or two other guys) then split up when we leave the vehicle, each going our own separate ways. So it's a combination of teamwork and individualism. Half the fun is sharing the adventure with others. Not only do you get to hear their stories firsthand but you get to share your tales right away. How many times I can remember thinking I can't WAIT to tell someone about what just happened or what I just saw. In the last few years though I've noticed when my hunting partner picks me up after dark I now tend to say, "You first... I'm out of breath." *

At What Price?

By Monty Browning



were usually measured in feet instead of yards.

Through long hours of dedicated practice and carefully chosen shots, the little successes started accumulating and each year trophies were hung on the wall. It was apparent from the first that good hits could not be taken for granted and I learned the valuable lesson of laughing off the near misses.

Shooting the bow was fun again and it finally filled a personal need for challenge in hunting as well as target shooting.

But everything comes with a price. For many, especially newcomers, the price is too high. Their need for instant success will not allow them to pay their dues. Hunting with a longbow or recurve is in effect making the statement that you don't have to kill an animal to enjoy the hunting experience. It says that matching wits with the animal more on his terms is more worthwhile than taking shortcuts to success.

And that can be tough because big game bowhunting today is expensive!

Armchair bowhunters have spent countless hours reading the thrilling adventures of the late-greats. From Pope and Young and Fred Bear hunting the great brown bears of Alaska to Howard Hill and Bob Swienheart hunting elephant and rhino in Africa, their tales of adventure keep us hungry for more. But for the average hard-working bowhunter supporting a family and saving for the kids' college fund, the price of a new dozen arrows can be a major cash outlay, not to mention a hunt that may cost up to a thousand dollars per day with no guarantee of success.

That in part is why outfitters and professional hunters are not swamped by clients with a stick bow in one hand a fistful of \$100 bills in the other.

Choosing the longbow or recurve over the compound is simply adding another rung on the ladder of personal challenge. Booking a high-dollar hunt with the idea of using traditional equipment can add another gut-wrenching rung to that ladder.

A bowhunting companion used to say that 90% of the game was taken by 10% of the hunters. And that is probably still an accurate statement. The bowhunter who pro-

duced with a compound will usually produce with a longbow or recurve. That is not to say that he or she won't go through a tough learning process. I know of one high-tech bowhunter who traded his compound bow, lighted pendulum sight and release for a longbow. After practicing all summer and through the entire fall season with the longbow, he, by actual count missed more than a dozen shots at deer! He finally switched to a rifle and filled his freezer. Everything come with a price.

To the beginner traditional shooter, it all looks so easy. Close range accuracy comes fast and false hunting confidence builds prematurely. Then the opportunity for an actual hunting shot presents itself and everything learned in practice is forgotten and in a panic riddled moment of confusion, no spot is concentrated on and the arrow sails harmlessly over the deer's back.

For the compound bow shooter who has just traded his wheels for stick, the initial shock of actually missing such an easy shot may keep him from thinking about the price he is paying, but he will. Put that same bowhunter on a high dollar out-f-state hunt for trophy whitetail and that may have been the only chance at a trophy buck of a lifetime. The end result is another unfilled tag. And while the experience is almost always worth the price of admission, it is much easier to justify the cost of a trophy deer hunt with a big buck.

I know few traditional shooters how can't relate a sad story or two about trophies of a lifetime that were passed up for ethical reasons. Or, trophies that were not collected because an instinctive shot lacked just a touch of instinct. I have learned as others have that personal challenge can be measured by the size of one's collection of unfilled tags. Everything comes with a price.

Last year I realized my lifelong dream of hunting Alaska on my own. I had bowhunted in Alaska twice before but there was always someone there, a friend or hunting clients. I was never really alone. I have always been a loner, but listening to a float plane fade in the distance 175 miles above the Arctic Circle gives new meaning to the word alone.

Days of fumbling ~ cont. on page 46

There is a small drawer just under the little cubby holes in my musty roll top desk where I store my childlike treasures of adulthood. Other than my passport, nothing in that drawer holds any real value. But everything from the claws of a camp raiding, Canadian black bear, a handful of elk whistling teeth, to the little orange Franklin spurs and the cape buffalo horn knife handle slabs from Mozambique have sentimental value. Over the years, that little drawer has become a shrine to the many pleasurable years spent shooting and hunting with the longbow. Every item helps the mind conjure up memories of past hunts, both successful and unsuccessful in terms of trophies taken or not taken.

In that same drawer is a collection of unfilled tags and game department permits that stretch from above the Arctic Circle in Alaska to the tall grass and savannas of Africa.

When I first made the decision to switch from a compound bow to the longbow fourteen years ago, I never once envisioned the total commitment that was attached to such a change. I had become accustomed to the easily attained success that a compound bow shot through a series of mechanical processes could produce. It was without a doubt a deadly weapon.

I knew that a longbow was a close range hunting weapon and that really appealed to my love of stalking. It also fit in with eastern tree stand hunting where shots at deer

A Gift of Moose from 'Sherwood Forest'

by Jay Massey



A quiver of broadhead arrows hangs alongside the author's home-made longbow in "Sherwood Forest".

One of my hunting partners often gets side-tracked when he is hunting moose in a certain type of ecosystem. This divergence always seems to occur in a particular type of forest habitat which we have jokingly come to call, "The Sherwood Forest." This type of forest consists of open stands of birch and spruce, interspersed with sunny glades, small meadows and birch-covered knolls.

"Sherwood Forest" is most often found in Alaska's uplands and along rivers in the interior region. It is an open, airy and pleasant type of forest but really not the sort of habitat where you would most expect to find a moose. Yet, whenever Dick Hamilton finds himself in "Sherwood Forest," he abandons his down-to-earth practical approach to moose hunting and becomes lost in the romanticism of archery. When he enters "Sherwood Forest" he goes into a sort of trance and will remain there for hours, wandering around and shooting hundreds of arrows at rotten stumps for no apparent reason other than to listen to the hum of the bowstring and the deadly hiss of the broadhead arrows shot from his 70-pound long-

bow.

I can easily understand why Dick gets side-tracked in "Sherwood Forest." The soft rustle of the autumn leaves underfoot, the stark whiteness of the birches in the morning sun and the pungent odor of cranberry, blueberry and Labrador tea combine to produce a hypnotic effect on the archer. Sometimes the forest almost seems to whisper of things of long ago – things only certain people can understand.

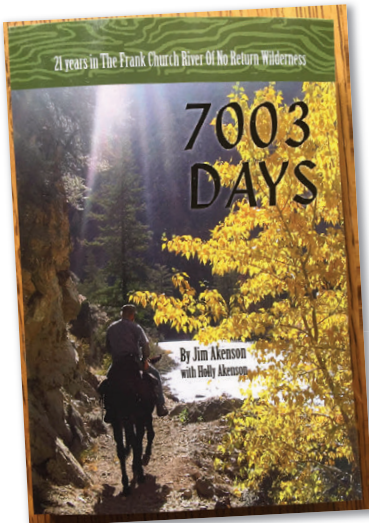
Of course, I have never admitted to Dick that I get as much pleasure from our "Sherwood Forest" adventures as he does. In fact, I chide him a great deal about his preoccupation. "Hamilton," I'll say to him, "you're a strange duck. You're probably reincarnated from the days of Merry Old England. I'll bet you were one of Robin Hood's longbowmen in your former life."

Dick's response is always predictable. He just grins and withdraws another arrow from his back quiver. "I sure like this kind of country," he'll say, drawing the bowstring to his cheek and aiming at a target which I'm certain he visualizes to be a fallow buck.

7003 DAYS

21 years in The Frank Church
River Of No Return Wilderness

By Jim Akenson with Holly Akenson



Deep in the Idaho wilderness the last vestiges of Old Idaho linger. In 1982, an eager young couple seeking adventure and challenge, Jim and Holly Akenson, moved to a log cabin in the back country to manage Taylor Ranch, the University of Idaho's wilderness research station. In 7003 DAYS, Jim describes their encounters with wildlife and nature: tracking wolves and cougars, using mules for transportation and ranch work, and introducing university students to life in the rugged Salmon River Mountains of Central Idaho.

Jim's bowhunting stories are tied to the first bowhunters in the region...the Sheepeater Indians, or "Tukudika."



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LOOKING BACK...

On one of our recent bowhunting adventures, Dick and I had become so enthralled with “The Sherwood Forest” that it was beginning to threaten the success of our moose hunt. We had spent four days of our seven-day hunt in the high country, roaming through the birch-and-spruce glades and hoping in vain to find a bull moose. We still had 100 miles of river to float, and only days in which to do it.

So far we had yet to see a single moose, bull or cow. However, we’d had a fine time roaming through the woods and listening to the autumn wind sing through the airy glades. We had also sharpened our aim through hours and hours of stump shooting. Dick was using his 70 pound longbow of Osage orange and hickory; I was carrying a sinew-backed, Indian-type flatbow which I had cut the previous winter from an old Osage fence post in eastern Oklahoma. The little bow was only 58-inches long, but it was heavily backed with moose sinew, pulled 75 pounds and had a wonderful cast. With its rattlesnake skin backing it also had a mighty businesslike appearance.

On the fifth day of our hunt the weather turned sour. First came the rain, and then the snow, and then the rain again. The onslaught of bad weather shocked us to our



Dick Hamilton takes time out from shooting “Sherwood Forest” to glass the surrounding hills for moose.

senses; we suddenly realized that time was growing short on this hunt. We left “Sherwood Forest” and began floating downriver in the rain and overcast. This wasn’t as pleasant as wandering through the sunny glades of “Sherwood Forest”, but I had to admit it felt more like a typical Alaskan moose hunt.

By the afternoon of the fifth day we had left the “Sherwood Forest” of the uplands far behind and were approaching the big timber country of the lower river. We were floating in fast water, and I was in the lead raft, with Dick following about 40 yards in the rear. As I approached a “moosey” looking willow bar, I made a single call to imitate the grunt of a bull moose. I had seen a nice bull in this very spot the last time I had floated the river.

Without warning, there came four quick, explosive bellows from the thicket on the right side of the river. I barely had time to grab my bow and nock an arrow when a

big bull moose with polished brown antlers came bursting out of the brush to the river bank.

My raft was in the swiftest part of the current and for a moment I didn’t think I would get a shot because the bull was quartering toward me, exposing little of his vital organs and offering only a shot at the bone-and-gristle frontal mass. But then he saw my raft and slowly started to turn away. I quickly drew the bowstring, coming to full draw at precisely the instant he was broadside.

The bull then did something I have rarely ever seen moose do: he lunged forward, panicking suddenly as he whirled to get out of there. Unfortunately, my arrow was already on its way. I vividly remember the crimson-colored fletching of my arrow streaking toward where the bull’s chest area had been only a thousandth of a second before. But when I last saw it, the deadly broadhead-tipped missile was heading straight for the bull’s left hindquarter. Then the arrow seemed to flip, as if passing by his rump by a hairsbreadth. I breathed a sigh of relief and began rowing toward slack water downstream. I wanted to retrieve my missed arrow.

I turned to Dick and motioned him over to the right side of the river. Dick seemed puzzled. “What happened? I heard a grunt and saw you shoot but I never saw the moose. Did you hit him?”

I told him I didn’t think so; that the last time I saw the arrow, it appeared as though it would strike him in the left hindquarter, but then seemed

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A Gift of Moose

~ continued from page 45

to pass by close to his rump. We walked through the willow thicket to look for my arrow.

But instead of finding my arrow, we found blood, and a fair amount of it. From the way the blood was puddled on the ground – dropped instead of squirted – I knew I had not hit a femoral artery. The splashes of blood, however, were aerated with small bubbles, which indicated the arrow had cut some smaller arteries.

In all my years of hunting moose with bow and arrow, I have never seen a gut-shot moose and only once before had seen a moose shot in the hindquarters. That bull had been hit accidentally in the ham by one of my hunting partners and we had retrieved the bull only after putting another arrow into his lungs. That bull, however, had been in the open country of the Alaska Peninsula. This one was in dense timber. I knew we had a difficult task ahead of us.

We trailed the bull for about two hundred yards and found my arrow, which was intact and bloody for only about 10-inches above the broadhead. The head, which I had made from tempered spring steel, was still almost razor-sharp. The bleeding slowed somewhat after the arrow had pulled out of the wound, but it was apparent the wound was bothering the bull. We found a bed with blood in it, but afterward could not find a single drop. Worse, the light was getting dim and moisture began

fall in the form of freezing rain. We decided to make camp next to our rafts and hope that the rain turned to snow during the night. With a trace of snow, we might be able to track down the bull the next day.

Wounding the bull bothered me, but it was not that I had caused him some pain. I knew from personal experience that a simple cut from a broadhead arrow could actually cause no more pain than a cut with a razorblade. Years earlier I had tripped on my own broadhead and rammed the head

deep into my calf. The sight of the broadhead deep in my leg had scared me because I knew the seriousness of a cut artery. Luckily, it was only a flesh wound. The injury actually caused me very little pain. In fact, I was walking around on the leg the next day.

What bothered me about the incident at hand was not that I might have caused the moose some pain, but knowing that I might have caused his death needlessly. As we lay in our sleeping bags that night I said to



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At What Price?

~ continued from page 43

around in grizzly country armed only with an Osage self bow and five heavy wood arrows led to a long careful stalk on a truly magnificent white maned caribou bill. It was a bowhunter's dream come true at forty yards, and I had practiced that shot each day for two weeks as I trekked the hills and valleys for moose and caribou. A small opening in the brush offered an opportunity for a shot but the bull caught the slight movement and turned and trotted to the top of a low hump fifteen yards farther and stood broadside. Picking a sport I drew and released and watched the big MAXI fletched wood shaft arc toward the bull's shoulder, then drop lower until the razor-sharp broadhead sliced through the

white hair just under the bull's chest. The bull wheeled and trotted away, then turned to glare in my direction again. That was when I realized that my arrow had missed the lower chest. Everything comes with a price.

Later that evening I sat alone in front of my fire as the sparks rolled into the black sky and relived the week's events. In the faint moon glow I could still see the top of the distant mountain where I had stalked the caribou. I remembered crossing the ice crusted river in the frosty morning air and how I had sweated as I climbed the steep birch and spruce covered mountain to get to the barren grounds above the timber. I remembered the small bulls that had fed by within a dozen yards and never knew that I was there and I smiled again.

I remembered that arctic grayling that

had eagerly taken my fly and the dall sheep that had watched me from their lofty perch as I climbed their mountain. I remembered the bull moose that I had watched for several days feeding in the shoulder deep water until the velvet completely shed from his bleached white rack.

At the end of the hunt I sat on the lake shore, surrounded by my gear, watching the ice slowly edging towards deeper water. I was reading once again the Jack London short stories that had fired my interest in Alaska many years before.

At the sound of the approaching float plane, I tucked the tattered, dog-eared paperback in my camera bag with my unfilled tags. The tags would go into the little drawer in my desk. The memories would take their rightful place among the others. And I thought with a smile, it was well worth the price. *

LOOKING BACK...

Dick, "This one could go either way. If the bull lies down quietly he'll be all right. But if he keeps moving around and keeps the wound pumping blood, he'll run out of gas."

I found it hard to go to sleep that night. Images of the bull moose kept dancing in my head. In one, the bull was lying dead in the river across from our tent; in the other, he was lying dead somewhere off in the forest. The opposing images were so persistent that I prayed. I didn't pray that I might actually find the moose, because I felt this was too selfish a request. So I prayed to be given some sort of sign. I prayed for an omen. *A sign so I will know whether this moose lived or died.*

Dawn came the next morning and it brought only a cold, misty drizzle. Without snow it would be virtually impossible to pick up the moose's trail. But I went out anyway, hoping against hope. After several hours of fruitless searching for the tiniest drop of blood I gave up. I returned to camp and we had lunch. We packed up camp and again began floating downriver.

We stopped several times along the way to make calls. Each attempt brought no response. After floating for about three or four miles, we rounded a bend in the river and I heard Dick caw like a raven from behind me. The raven call was a signal which we have adopted to alert each other to the presence of a moose.

I turned to look at Dick. He motioned toward a spot

~ continued on page 48



The fate of the bull moose was evident when Massey found him in the river. The cold water had cooled the meat off perfectly. Massey used a homemade Osage orange flatbow and homemade broadheads to down the 52-inch bull moose.



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A Gift of Moose

~ continued from page 47

further downriver and his arms over his head to indicate "bull". I looked down river and was surprised to see a large bull moose, lying on his side in the middle of the river channel. My first reaction was that the bull might have been shot and left by some other hunters who had floated the river before us. We rowed over to the moose and landed our rafts on the same gravel shoal which had snagged his antlers.

I took one quick look at the bull and turned to Dick, my mouth agape. "Dick, I can't believe it. This looks just like the bull I shot yesterday."

The bull was lying half-submerged in the river and I made a cut around the flank which was not covered by the water. There was barely a hint of warmth there. My pulse quickened. This could be the same bull! The odds of such a thing happening, I knew, must be enormous.

We opened up the moose's body cavity and smelled the meat. It was fresh and clean and cool, as though it had just been butchered and hung up to cool down. We removed the quarters, neck, ribs and saddle and leaving the hide on, put them into the rafts. In the process we did an autopsy on the bull. There was no internal bleeding and aside from some bruises on his ribs from fighting, there was absolutely nothing which might have caused his death.

Later, I began skinning out the left hindquarter. As I peeled back the hide the evidence suddenly lay exposed beneath my knife: it was a clean, single-blade slice which pierced all the way to the femur. The bull had been lying on his left side in the river, and apparently the water had

caused the arrow wound in the hide to swell up and go unnoticed.

The significance of what had happened here suddenly occurred to me. The knowledge that I had wounded this fine bull and yet retrieved him against impossible odds left me feeling humbled. I had not earned this moose; he had literally been given to me.

This moose was a gift. There was simply no other way I could explain it. *

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It shall be the purpose and objective of the Professional Bowhunters Society to:

- A. Promote and maintain fellowship among persons who have a primary interest in maintaining professionalism in the field of bowhunting;**
- B. Encourage and promote the taking of wild game by means of bow and arrow in a humane and sportsmanlike manner;**
- C. Share with others the experience, knowledge and skills gained through application of proper shooting skills and hunting techniques;**
- D. Practice and promote good and safe sportsmanship in the art of bowhunting;**
- E. Encourage and support sound bowhunting legislation and to oppose legislation which is not consistent with its purposes;**
- F. Develop and maintain an educational forum to teach and promote the wise and safe use of our natural resources, the conservation of wild game and the preservation of its natural habitat.**



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It is the purpose of the Professional Bowhunters Society® to be an organization whose membership consists only of persons who are considered Professional Bowhunters in ATTITUDE, and who vow:

- That by choice, bowhunting is their primary archery interest, and their ultimate aim and interest is the taking of wild game by bow and arrow of suitable weights in a humane and sportsmanlike manner;
- To share their experiences, knowledge and shooting skills;
- To be a conscientious bowhunter, promoting bowhunting by working to elevate its standards and the standards of those who practice the art of bowhunting;
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- To practice the wise use of our natural resources, the conservation of our wild game and the preservation of our natural habitat.

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