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PBS Magazine is assembled by the Charles City Press, Charles City, Iowa and printed by Sutherland Printing, Montezuma, Iowa.

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Cover Photo - Jeff Holchin

THE PROFESSIONAL BOWHUNTER MAGAZINE

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DECEMBER - 2020

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I compose this in my head as I sit in a tree perched above a water oak that doesn't drop acorns often but when it does the deer hit it hard. I can see two white oaks that have just begun dropping acorns so I know this tree I am in won't be good much longer. I've only hunted it once before, saw three bucks, and passed one that would have been in the top three I have ever taken,. However, in Georgia we get two buck tags and having filled one already with a decent 8-point, I just could not make myself tag out so early. It is very likely that I won't get another opportunity at a good buck all season, but I don't really care. A little forkhorn walks directly under me while I am thinking about what to write – it will be the only deer I see this afternoon. But it is so nice just to sit here and feel the breeze and watch squirrels, and birds and, I hope, more deer that won't come. The natural world doesn't care about divisive politics, elections, economic crisis, COVID, or anything else that causes a lot of us so much stress. Life just goes on. And when I am out here, it does for me, too. I promise myself not to take it all for granted. I hope you won't either and I hope you get some good time in the woods this fall.

President's Message

by Matt Schuster
matt@easterndynamicsinc.com

PBS continues to grow - we are picking up new members at a very nice pace, and if you are one of those, welcome! Second, if you possibly can, try to get to a PBS event whether it is a hunt, or an Odd Year Gathering (there will be several next year around the country). Because when you get around your fellow members, you will not only meet some great folks, you will get a better understanding of what PBS is all about. Several of the hunts have already taken place and I heard that the guys hunting in the Land Between the Lakes took three deer on public land on which they had never hunted previously – not bad, but not unexpected from PBS guys. We have twelve guys set up to go to Blackbeard so there should be some good stories and pics coming out of that one. I am not sure what happened on the rest, but no doubt a good time was had by all.

One request, and it is a repeat from a recent email blast. We are trying to get at least a dozen short interviews or other videos so that we can restart a PBS YouTube channel. Short is the operative word but you don't have to make a perfect video. All you need to do is interview a PBS friend or have them interview you, or film a hunt in some way. You can even do it yourself if you

know how. We can take the raw footage and do what needs to be done to it, and it can all be done with a smart phone. We won't start showing any till we have at least a dozen in the hopper. Every single one of you has an interesting hunting story or two, or a cool trophy room to show off – get creative, there is no formula. It will work best if we get a nice variety of stuff. One video might show our Vice-President pulling his hand out of a gator's mouth, another might show a father and son hunting or talking hunting. If we can get this going, it will really help us reach a younger generation and, I hope, either get them involved or further their involvement in the greatest lifestyle there is. Footage can be sent to Harmony at her email address. If you are one who knows how to edit, we can use help there, too. Right now, Shan Mandrayer is doing it, and he is a pro, but I hope this project gets big enough that he can't do it all.

It is hunting season, so I am going to keep this short. I hope you and all your families are safe and doing well and that you achieve each of your goals this hunting season.

Best,

Matt Schuster

We need your email address!

Want to be in-the-know about all things PBS? Join our emailing list for all the latest updates on your organization. If you have not received an email from the PBS President in the last month then we do not have your correct email address.

(Be sure to check your junk mail folder as well as sometimes your email system may filter them as spam.)

Please email Harmony your best email address at
professionalbowhunters@gmail.com to be added to our email list!

Vice President's Message →

by Terry Receveur

Terrance.Receveur@Taconic.com

I hope everyone is having a safe and successful fall hunting season. What a wonderful time of year to enjoy the great outdoors. One of the unique advantages of being a member of PBS is the opportunity to participate in Regional Hunts. It really is the best way to share Knowledge Through Experience. Be sure to recruit a young or new PBS member to attend one of these hunts with you. They will really appreciate the opportunity and will likely forge friendships that will last a lifetime. Mark Wang put on the Land Between the Lakes hunt this year and the

reports from the early season outing were nothing short of spectacular. Four hunters were successful in putting meat in the larder and all were successful in putting great food in their bellies. Mark puts a ton of work into planning the hunt and I personally want to thank him for all of his efforts to support and grow the sport we love. Thank you Mark!

I'm fortunate that I'll be able to enjoy a membership hunt on Blackbeard Island off of the coast of Georgia with several PBS members and even the Grand Poobah of PBS, President Matt Schuster himself. We will even be joined



by Council member Jeff Holchin. Jeff and Matt are killing machines so I expect they will be providing fresh meat for our dinners.

If you get a chance to go on a Regional Hunt or even host one, I'm sure you'll create memories to last forever.

Aim small and miss small.

Terry Receveur

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New Qualified Regular Members

We list the following names of members who have applied for regular membership in PBS and have been approved by the Council. These individuals have completed a lengthy application and are currently in their one-year probationary period. If you are a regular member and see any reason why any of these applicants should not be accepted, please send a signed letter stating your reasons to PBS Senior Councilman Tom Vanasche, 37731 NE Bond Rd., Albany, OR 97321.

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

-PBS Officers and Council

Associates applying for Regular status:

Ronnie Bauer, Baker, LA

Justin Falon, Baltic, SD

Tom Mills, Harrisburg, PA

Matt Steed, McCool, MS



We are a fraternal organization focused on bowhunting, with three basic means of getting together in person to discuss our favorite subject: BOWHUNTING. We used to only have the biennial gatherings, which occur around the country on the even-numbered years (this year's banquet was in Springfield, MO and the next one will be in Reno, NV, then we'll head east again). Often it was just not practical for members to travel across the country to attend them, so in recent years we've had a few Odd Year Gatherings. The 2019 OYG was hosted by Tim Denial at his farm in NW Pennsylvania and it was well attended, like a mini-Banquet according to many who were there. In 2021 there will be at least

Council's Report

by Jeff Holchin
jeffreyholchin@gmail.com

FOUR of these cool events across the country - see the OYG info elsewhere in this magazine; hopefully one of them is close enough for you to visit (and bring your buddies). Those two types of PBS gatherings are great but they do lack one important thing: actual BOWHUNTING! That is NOT a problem with our Membership Hunts, and in recent years we've had some really great bowhunts all over the country for many different kinds of animals. We're talking bowhunts in Alaska for Sitka black-tail deer, elk in Utah and Colorado, hogs in coastal Georgia, fat corn-fed whitetails in Ohio and Kentucky and black bears in the northwoods of New Hampshire, to name just a few! I've been blessed to have attended many a Membership Hunt and they are wonderful. The dang China Virus ruined my scheduled Alaska moose hunt this fall, so to get my revenge I will attend five Membership Hunts in the next five months, Lord willing and the creek don't rise! As I type this column, I am packing my bow and gear for the upcoming annual Virginia Blue Ridge Mountains annual hunt for deer, bear and turkey hosted by Randy

Brookshier in late October, then in December I will head down to President Matt's Blackbeard Island, Georgia bowhunt for hogs and tiny island deer. My son, Daniel and I will head out to Arizona in early January 2021 to chase rutting mulies and Coues deer, on this annual hunt hosted by Rick Wildermuth. In early February, I will host (with Tim Antoine) the annual coastal Georgia hog hunt, and later in February I will head to west Texas to chase hogs and javies on the annual hunt hosted by William "Bubba" Graves. It does help that I own my own small business and make up the rules about when to (or not to) work, but with some careful planning and getting your spouse or significant other a second job, you too can hunt like a fool and not feel guilty at all. Check out the listing of 2021 Membership Hunts in this magazine and on our web site to see if you can attend one or more; maybe even consider hosting one as well if you have a good area to share with a few PBS buddies. Good hunting to you!

Jeff Holchin



Time does fly as they say. Hard to believe when you read this that it will be December 2020. Hopefully we will see some light at the end of the COVID tunnel and perhaps our lives will be re-

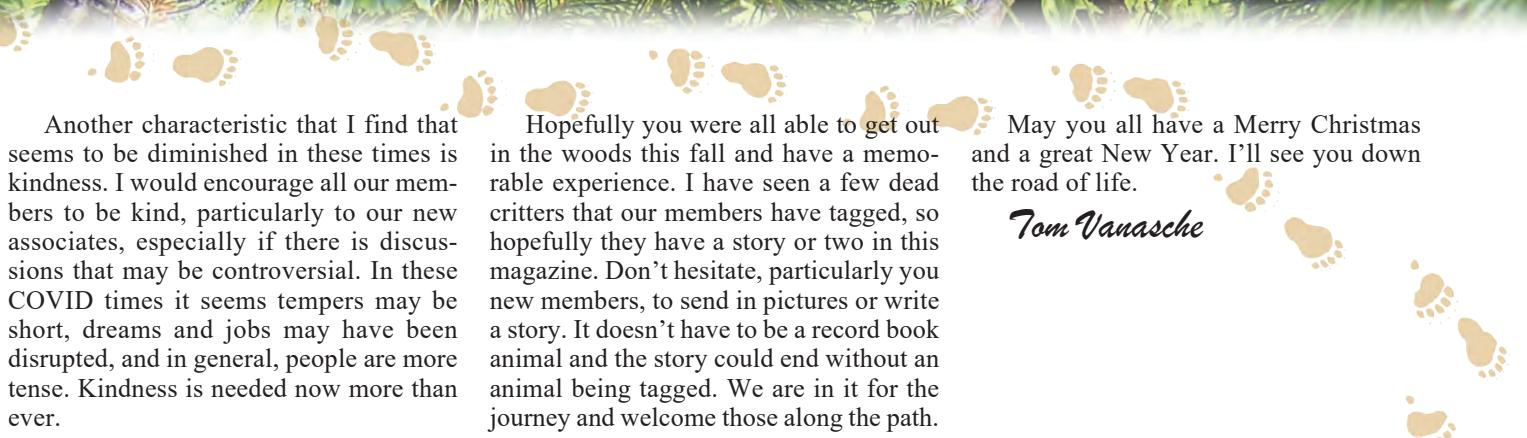
Council's Report

by Tom Vanasche
tomvanasche@mac.com

turning to normal. I know many hunts were canceled and I pray none of our members were physically injured by the pandemic.

By the time you read this, I will have completed my hunt on Terry Receveur's lease in Indiana. I was the high bidder on this hunt at our last banquet [and how fortunate we were able to get that in with the pandemic looming]. I write this however, two weeks before the hunt, so it is still a mystery to unfold. It is by the generosity of Terry and so many others that PBS re-

mains successful. I have never been in a group that is so caring, gracious [most of the time, lol] and generous. It is by these generous acts, that we remain a solid organization. We have added a host of new members in the last few years and I suspect that they are still on the learning curve of our finer characteristics. I want them to know that giving and sharing are welcome no matter how small the object, advice or personal contact that is involved. Be sure and share those thoughts with them. That is how we roll at PBS.



Another characteristic that I find that seems to be diminished in these times is kindness. I would encourage all our members to be kind, particularly to our new associates, especially if there is discussions that may be controversial. In these COVID times it seems tempers may be short, dreams and jobs may have been disrupted, and in general, people are more tense. Kindness is needed now more than ever.

Hopefully you were all able to get out in the woods this fall and have a memorable experience. I have seen a few dead critters that our members have tagged, so hopefully they have a story or two in this magazine. Don't hesitate, particularly you new members, to send in pictures or write a story. It doesn't have to be a record book animal and the story could end without an animal being tagged. We are in it for the journey and welcome those along the path.

May you all have a Merry Christmas and a great New Year. I'll see you down the road of life.

Tom Vanasche



As I sit and compose this report, I reflect on what a weird year 2020 has been. Even as I type this report we're in a severe drought in Oklahoma with unseasonably warm temperatures. Hopefully things will return to normal as we know it.

This is October and we are engaged in

Council's Report

by Preston Lay
longbow@cimtel.net

what we do as bowhunters. PBS members get it. The planning, preparation, and then the hunt. The journey is so important to us. Just like the seasons within the year we adjust, but never lose the desire to prepare for the next bowhunt. For most of us it's our way of life, all the time. It's very special to have a fraternal organization for like-minded bowhunters.

There are a few Odd Year Gatherings planned throughout the lower 48. I encourage you to attend one if possible. It's a chance to kindle the fire and maybe get the next hunt planned. I'm planning on attending the Wyoming gathering. More informa-

tion is available on the website.

I say welcome to the new members and I hope you have found the bowhunting group you were looking for. We are about bowhunting and the desire to keep bow hunting seasons intact so that we can continue to reap the benefits of our great passion. Don't be shy and feel free to reach out if you have any questions about PBS and what we stand for.

Merry Christmas to all and may God bless you and your families.

Preston Lay

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Chaplain's Corner

by Gene Thorn

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This Season!

The leaves were at their color peak this past week in West Virginia. Sandy and I have taken a couple long drives through the mountains just to enjoy the splendor. The leaves are particularly spectacular this year. Our state has the most diverse hardwood forest in America so we get tourists from many other states coming here to leaf peep. This year, with COVID raging, the numbers of people recreating in the outdoors has expanded rapidly. Hunting and fishing license sales are way up. Campgrounds all over WV have been full. One of the biggest camper dealers in our area sold every camper on their lot and ordered dozens of new ones to be delivered this fall. That has never happened before. I am glad people are turning to the outdoors in these trying times. The beauty of God's creation is just what we need to restore us.

PSALM 23:

- 1 THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.**
- 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.**
- 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.**
- 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.**
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.**
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me. All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.**

God's promises in this Psalm are really close in this season; the first part of this Psalm tells how the Lord uses nature to restore our souls. This restoration prepares us to go on with life and not be worn down. Verse 4 speaks of us walking through the valley of the shadow of death. I have had quite a few friends and relatives that have come down with COVID. Many of them have been very sick but all of them so far have pulled through. I have a friend that is on a ventilator right now – he has had the virus for two weeks and he deteriorated rapidly, the doctors discussed unhooking him today as he is not getting better. He owned an archery shop locally here for many years. I first met him, and bought a bow and arrows from him, in 1983 when I moved here and started working for WVDNR. He is a Christian and all is well with his soul. We do not have to fear evil when we are close to the Lord. He is walking with us. Verse six is our promise that we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. If my friend Tex's time is near,

it is a gain for him. There are many people praying for him, and God is still working miracles, so we are hoping he gets better.

It is so important to spend time with the Lord. Out in the woods is a place of peace and quiet, and it is easier to hear Him speak to us there. Jesus Himself went to the wilderness to get away from noise, distractions, and people to restore his soul. The first place He went when He started ministry at age thirty was forty days in the wilderness. I am going hunting tomorrow and I will talk to the Lord, and I will listen. That is what I do. Bowhunting is usually a solitary venture and we get used to sitting for hours and days waiting on an opportunity. We are patient. Our life in the woods has taught us patience.

When all nature is at rest, not a leaf moving, then at evening the dew comes down, no eye to see the pearly drops descending, no ear to hear them falling on the verdant grass, so does the Spirit come to you who believe. When the heart is at rest in Jesus, unseen, unheard by the world, the Spirit comes and softly fills the believing soul, quickening all, renewing all within.

– Robert Murray M'Cheyne

Robert Murray M'Cheyne (1813 - 1843) was the minister of St Peter's Church in Dundee, Scotland (1836 - 1843). He was a godly pastor and evangelist with a great love for souls. But there is another feature of M'Cheyne's life which is perhaps even more prominent than his constant longings for the salvation of souls. "Above all things, cultivate your own spirit," he wrote to a fellow-minister. "Your own soul is your first and greatest care. Seek advance of personal holiness. It was written about him - 'the real secret of his soul's prosperity lay in daily enlargement of his heart in fellowship with his God. Meditation and prayer were the very sinews of his work."

I love fall! The nights are getting crisp and the days are long sleeve and jacket weather which I like. Hunting season is getting cranked up and the deer are moving good this week. The dark phase of the moon has them nudged into daytime patterns. The food plot we sowed in mid-August is getting hammered. I went out after lunch to do some shooting. Two deer were feeding in our field mid day. This afternoon several does and fawns started feeding a couple hours before dark. We have some red oak acorns falling but it is not a big mast year. The bucks will be showing more interest in the does in the coming weeks. It is a good time to be in the woods. While we are in the woods, let us draw closer to God. Let us make the most of **this season!**

2021 Odd Year Gatherings

Hosted by
Tim Denial

Northwestern Pennsylvannia April 16th - 18th, 2021

Additional details will be forthcoming

Hosted by
Jeff Holchin &
Randy Brookshier
Contact:
jeffreyholchin@gmail.com
stykbaw59@comcast.net

Southwestern Virginia June 4th - 6th, 2021 Roanoke, Virginia

The 2021 southeast OYG will be held in conjunction with the annual STAR shoot at the Sherwood Archery Club near Roanoke, Virginia from Friday, June 4 to Sunday, June 6, 2021 (assuming that the China Virus mess is behind us by then – the 2020 STAR shoot had to be cancelled). The actual address for the archery club is 2720 Timberview Road, Roanoke VA 24019 and you can view their website for more details (<http://sherwoodarchers.org/s-t-a-r>). This will be an awesome weekend with everything that a PBSer could hope for: a great archery club with multiple 3-d ranges, a clubhouse with bathrooms and a kitchen that will be serving food, a camping area, the guys from The Stickboys podcast, raffle items, a seminar or two, contests for photos, shed antlers, your best buck, most chiggers on one leg, biggest tick, etc. and a church service on Sunday morning. There might be a hunting story or two told, and there is some awesome fishing available nearby for those who like to wet a line. Randy Brookshier (stykbaw59@comcast.net) and crew will be running the STAR shoot while Councilman Jeff Holchin (jeffreyholchin@gmail.com) will be running the OYG. Come one, come all, and bring a friend or three! These events are like mini PBS Banquets. Many of the Sherwood members are also PBS members, but with the usual large attendance at these STAR shoots, this could be a great recruiting event for the PBS.

Hosted by
Steve Hohensee
Contact:
steveh.alaska@gmail.com

Bighorn Mountains, Wyoming July 16th - 18th, 2021

Additional details will be forthcoming

Hosted by
Brian Tessmann

Midwest Region - Wisconsin August 6th - 8th, 2021

Additional details will be forthcoming

2021 PBS Membership Hunts

(more possible – these are the ones scheduled at this time)

By Jeff Holchin

In the past decade we have had some awesome Membership hunts all over the country, for animals such as hogs in Texas and Georgia, black bears in Alaska, Virginia and New Hampshire, elk in Utah, Colorado and Wyoming, turkeys in Virginia, and deer in Ohio, Kentucky, South Dakota, Arizona and Alaska. The PBS is fortunate to have members who are generously hosting these Membership hunts; some are limited to just a handful of PBSers while others can handle a dozen or more PBSers. Some of them fill up quickly so you need to plan accordingly. Many of the following hunts are held annually, while others are one-time events. Most are on public land with OTC licenses/tags while others require the application/drawing for certain tags. These hunts are great opportunities to meet your fellow PBS members and to bowhunt areas and/or animals that you might not get to do ordinarily. They could also be great recruiting opportunities for the PBS – if possible, consider bringing along a bowhunter that you think would make a good PBS member. We can always use more of these great hunts – contact me at jeffreyholchin@gmail.com if you have questions about these hunts or if you are thinking of hosting one yourself.

1 January 2021 Arizona javelina and deer (muley and Coues) – Rick Wildermuth (rwildermuth2@cox.net) is hosting this annual hunt again from the beginning of January to TBD. See the PBS website for details on previous hunts – it is full for 2021 so if you want to join it in 2022, contact Rick soon for full details.

2 January 2021 Davis Mountain Texas hogs and javelina (hunt 1) – William “Bubba” Graves (wiliamgraves187@gmail.com) will host his first hunt in late January, 2021 for a handful of hunters. Experience with pack stock is a plus. See the PBS website for details on previous hunts – this hunt is already full, so you should contact Bubba now if you want to try it in 2022. There have been several articles about this hunt in the PBS magazine.

3 February 2021 coastal Georgia hog hunt – Tim Antoine (blueroan@skybest.com) and Jeff Holchin (jeffreyholchin@gmail.com) will be hosting this annual hunt on the first weekend of February (5-8). A GA small game license is required and is very cheap. Boats are required to access these coastal islands and experience with tidal rivers is recommended. This hunt is limited to a dozen members and is already filled for the 2021 hunt. There have been several articles about this hunt in the PBS magazine.

4 February 2021 Davis Mountain Texas hogs and javelina (hunt 2) – William “Bubba” Graves (wiliamgraves187@gmail.com) will host his second hunt in mid February 2021 for a handful of hunters. Experience with pack stock is a plus. See the PBS website for details on previous hunts – this hunt is already full, so you should contact Bubba now if you want to try it in 2022.

5 April 2021 South Dakota turkey hunt – Steve Hohensee (steveh.alaska@gmail.com) and Mark Weihwig (mviehweg99@gmail.com) are hosting this hunt in western SD, unless the China Virus causes it to be cancelled. Luckily SD has a real governor who didn’t drink the coolaid and doesn’t want to be a dictator, so there is hope for this hunt.

6 October 2021 Land-between-the-lakes (LBL) Kentucky - Mark Wang and Scott Record (Scottnlori@hotmail.com) are hosting this annual hunt for whitetails and turkey. Cabins are available and you will eat well, guaranteed! KY tags are OTC and reasonably priced. 2021 dates are October 2-10 - reserve NOW if you want in.

7 October 2021 Rough Mtn memorial hunt – Rob Burnham (springbayouarchers@gmail.com) will host a memorial hunt for his long-time hunting buddy Ed during the third full week in October. This is a cool hunt with opportunities for whitetails, bears and turkeys plus small game – the terrain is steep so you had better be in shape!

8 October 2021 Blue Ridge Mtn hunt – Randy Brookshier (stykbbow59@comcast.net) will host this annual hunt during the last full week in October. This is a great hunt with opportunities for whitetails, bears and turkeys plus small game – Randy does all the cooking and has access to several nearby tracks of private land owned by PBSers. This hunt fills up fast so contact Randy now if you want to joint this hunt in 2021. Pro tip – hunt close to Randy because he is a magnet for all critters big and small!

Voting will be open for Qualified Regular Members starting in mid December for those who chose to vote electronically, and physical ballots will be mailed end of December for those who don't vote electronically.
Make sure home office has your correct email address.

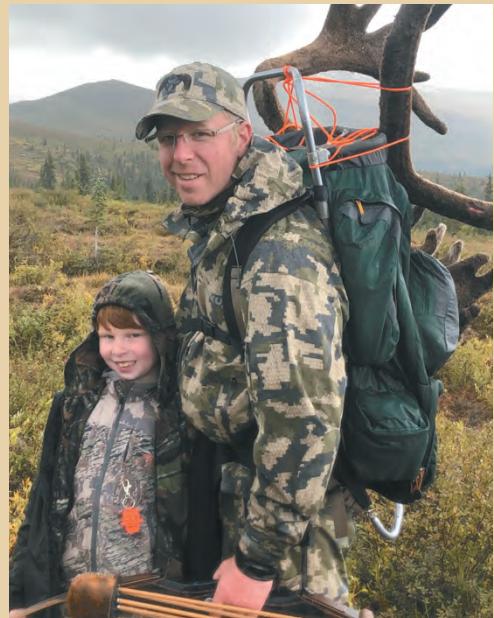
Ben Pinney

Hello, My name is Ben Pinney and I'm humbled to be asked to run for PBS president. I'm thirty-eight years old and I've been a member since I was sixteen. Twenty two years doesn't seem all that long and I guess it isn't considering I'm seriously looking forward to my next fifty to sixty years of membership. I grew up with many PBS mentors helping guide me on my life path. Steve Hohensee was certainly my primary mentor and it is amazing to think that he was younger than I am now when he first took me under his wing. I grew up in Wisconsin, migrated to Oregon for four years of dental school and have now settled in Alaska for the past decade. When I'm not out hunting or fishing I'm either fixing teeth as a dentist or enjoying my family. Fortunately my family enjoys hunting and the outdoors as much as I do and as my boys get older, we're able to go on more family hunting adventures. The last few years we've been able to do some remote fly in family hunts in the interior and sharing such wild experiences with my family has been very special. If I were to be elected, I would happily focus on maintaining the growth and energy that has resurfaced as of late. The last gathering in Springfield

was fantastic and left me very optimistic for the future of our group. I do believe that continued focus on who we are via membership hunts, social media presence and podcasts is where we will continue to see success. As serious bowhunters, we tend to be more soft spoken and humble but I do believe that we must not be afraid to show the bowhunting world who we are. I'm sure there are many potential members out there who would really get a kick out of becoming a PBS member. I also believe that mentorship is another fantastic way to help ensure the legacy of the PBS. This is clearly reflected in my own story, so I will always encourage the pursuit of being a mentor and sharing our knowledge and enthusiasm with new and potential members. Thank you for your consideration. It is truly an honor to run against Matt who has shown true leadership in bringing the PBS to where it is today.

In Gratitude,

Ben Pinney



— Candidate Profiles for Open President Position —

Matt Schuster

First, I appreciate both the privilege of serving as your President and all the support I have received from the current Council and the Membership over my term. Our organization is doing well, the current Council is strong, we are growing, we had a successful Gathering in Springfield and have strengthened both the membership and the financial position of the PBS over the last couple of years. It has been a team effort of Council, the Regional and State Reps, the PBS Office, and all of you and for that I thank you all. The Membership has really come through in supporting the PBS Magazine, the Membership Hunts, the I Am The PBS social media campaign, and our efforts in marketing at various archery events. Shortly, PBS will begin a YouTube Channel with short interviews each featuring one of our members talking about their passion for bowhunting. We are working on this now, but as with the I Am the PBS campaign, we will not start posting anything until we have a dozen or so short clips in our pocket. At that time, you will also get some guidelines on how to do a clip of your own or with the help of a PBS buddy.

One thing that will not change if I am re-elected is the emphasis on our staying a positive organization and promoting the values and traditions in which we believe. I would like to see us do a better job in reaching out to those who have not been exposed to our simple and satisfying way of bowhunting. Right now, with the virus sending more folks back to the land, and with shows like Alone on Netflix showing folks using recurve bows to survive, there has never been a better

time to do this. We all tend to preach to the choir and unfortunately there are so many that never get exposed to how we hunt and the satisfaction we get in relying on patience, experience, and woodsmanship. This must be done in a positive way, not by making fun or demeaning whatever equipment they are hunting with now but through showing how much success we have, and how much fun and satisfaction we get while achieving that success. The simple fact is that our society is driven by instant and easy results and hunting today is no different. Yet I believe there is a sizeable percentage of hunters who are just waiting for someone to show them the value of achieving something that is not all that easy. That takes time, patience, and experience to learn but that results in an immensely satisfying journey. We just need to find those folks who are ready and help mentor them along the way. No better vehicle exists for that than the folks in PBS.

I would also like to see us send more email blasts out letting the PBS Membership know about issues that may affect our bowhunting opportunities in the future. Abominations like the Airbow will keep being pushed by manufacturers who know the only way they can sell any is to get them legalized for bow season, and we need to keep expressing our wishes to keep bow season for bows. Luckily, many in the archery business are learning the hard way that real bowhunters do not use crossbows (and won't use the Airbow) and that folks buying these shortcut machines rarely buy much else and do not really support bowhunting in general. They buy once because most



are simply biding time until gun season starts. Still, the endless march of technology will eventually shorten bow seasons out west, and we need to do what we can to protect what is ours.

Let me close by saying that the PBS Membership, the PBS Office, and a great Council have made my job these least couple of years much easier than that of some of the Presidents who preceded me. The future of PBS looks great, and I look forward to seeing you all in Reno in 2022.

Matt Schuster

Terry Receveur

You are probably thinking that Receveur guy is a zombie! He just won't die and go away!

Yeah, I'm throwing my name in the hat to run for Vice President again. I'm just a glutton for punishment and love organizing Biennial Gatherings...wink, wink! At least you have a pretty good baseline to measure against. Our Springfield gathering was overall a pretty good event. Not everything went perfectly, but we tried to adapt and I've heard most had a nice time. However, if you believe Vance can do as good or better in the VP position then please vote for him. I and everyone I know in PBS want the best candidate in the positions. I don't think the PBS can lose with all of the amazing people running for Council. We have a bright future with any of the candidates at the helm.

COVID-19 has put a pretty big damper on many plans and I even had to cancel a bear hunt with my son in New Brunswick, but despite all the craziness, there have still been some wonderful activities among our PBS brothers. I know a group of PBSers went to Alaska to fish/hunt with Homer Ocean Charters and me and four other PBSers have gone to chase alligators in Florida. I know of many

trips being prepped for the fall hunting season and many a camp will be shared among PBS members. That's what we are all about!

PBS tends to lead by example. Being an example is also the best method for getting the message out about what we believe and cherish. Bowhunting is far more than just killing something. Our motto is Knowledge Through Experience and going on a membership hunt or accepting an invitation from another PBS member to shoot or hunt is how you gain knowledge. Better yet, invite a new guy and show him what the PBS is all about.

If elected, I will do my best to be an example and to help PBS grow into the future.

Take the time to appreciate your blessings and make memories that last forever.

Aim small and miss small!

Terry Receveur



– Candidate Profiles for Open Vice President Position

Vance Henry

I know what you're thinking... who in the world is Vance Henry and why is he running for Vice President? I will admit, my name is being thrown in the hat much earlier than expected, given the number of years (six) I have been involved with PBS. I was introduced to PBS by Matt Schuster while we were eating lunch at a now closed Ryan's Steakhouse in Thomson, Georgia. After hearing all there was to know about PBS, I couldn't join fast enough. Since joining I have attended three gatherings that have produced lifelong memories I will not soon forget.

Moving forward, I applied for Regular Membership after the required waiting period and consider being approved as a Regular Member to be one of my greatest accomplishments in my bowhunting career. I'll never forget being congratulated by not only Matt, but also Norm Johnson, Rob Burnham and Tom Vanasche. For those of you that don't know, Schuster and I are practically neighbors and we also spend quite a bit of time chasing hogs at the infamous Paradise in South Georgia. A couple years back I was asked to be the southeastern rep, which I accepted and still do today. So when Matt asked me to step up one more time and run for Vice President, given all that he has done for me, I didn't hesitate to accept. Well, maybe I hesitated a little bit. After all, I have only been a member for a few years, far fewer than many of you reading this profile. Although my tenure as a member is short, my clarity of what this organization is all about is crystal clear. Like so many of you, bowhunting with

traditional tackle is not a hobby, but a lifestyle for me. And at a time when technology seems to be taking over life as we know it, I can only look on with great admiration as Professional Bowhunters Society sticks to its core values. For example: with hard work comes reward, enjoying the experience and the journey while shunning the mindset of instant gratification, understanding and practicing the skill of being a good woodsman while teaching it to the next generations, and close range bowhunting, to name a few. Of course, the PBS slogan says it best, "Knowledge Through Experience", what else is there to say? I share these values as a bowhunter and proud PBS member.

Regarding the role of Vice President, let's be honest, Terry is doing a fantastic job in his current role as VP. That could also be said for the President, the entire Council and Harmony. What a great leadership team PBS has. I don't believe one needs to look any further than the success of the 2020 gathering, what an awesome event. Well done Terry and well done to the entire leadership team! So if the stars all aligned, or misaligned depending on one's perspective, could I actually do the job of being Vice President of PBS? The simple answer is, you bet! I'm currently the VP of the Traditional Bowhunters of Georgia and have held that position for about five years. My responsibilities at TBG are to make sure we have a successful annual banquet...check! I've been an official measurer for Pope and Young since 2010. In my professional life I run an industrial and commercial HVAC business



and have a staff of twenty-six. I've been President of business networking groups, currently involved in multiple civic organizations and sit on a local board. I believe my professional experience has greatly enhanced the skills necessary to be a successful VP of the Professional Bowhunters Society. I am here to help any way that I can and would consider it an honor to be your Vice President.

Vance Henry

Andy Houck

I am humbled and honored to be approached to run for Council. I am 30 years old and live in southeast Pennsylvania with my understanding wife Heather, our bluetick coonhound, Millie and a small flock of chickens. I work as a commercial asphalt paving foreman for a local contractor. Growing up, I was very blessed to have a father who is an avid hunter and cultivated a love for the outdoors in me. Spring turkey hunting is my father's passion and some of my fondest memories are of heading to our family cabin in north central Pennsylvania hunting turkeys. I can still recall riding down the dirt road in his '83 Dodge truck and seeing my first black bear in the grey morning light. Or the first time I heard a deer snort as we hiked up the steep mountainside before daylight. I remember going to the archery shop on my seventh birthday to get a bow. I cannot guess how many arrows passed over its shelf. It was the beginning of my love for archery. Fast forward several years and I had saved up enough money to buy a used Bear compound. I found success very quickly and remember drawing my compound back on a buck, leveling and aligning my sight picture, and touching the release. The buck ran a short distance and fell over in the corn stubble. I hung the compound on the hook and at that moment I realized the compound was not for me anymore, I wanted more from my bowhunt. I was running a trapline that fall and at the end of the season I sold my pelts and my compound and ordered a custom takedown longbow. As I heard Gene Wensel say, "It put the hunt back into bow

hunting." I went to ETAR where I joined PBS and I met Dave Watson. I spoke with him and he told me, "When you join you will get the quarterly magazine, but if you get involved you will get so much more than that." I took that to heart and since joining I have helped with the booth at ETAR, attended the Springfield Biannual and Appalachian Odd Year Gatherings, participated in the South Dakota Membership Hunt, hunted with PBS friends in Illinois, and forged many friendships all because I got involved. For over a year and a half I have been overseeing the Instagram page for PBS. For those members who are not familiar with Instagram it is a social media page that uses photos to connect people around the world and it gives us a way to advertise our organization for free. Social media has become an important resource for us to grow our membership. Especially targeting the younger generation that has seen the advancements in technology as well as those who are interested in the challenge of hunting with simple tools and relying on woodsmanship skills to get closer to game. It has been mentioned many times that our average membership age is greying. To see that this wonderful organization continues long into the future, let's pass along our "Knowledge Through Experience" to a growing bowhunter or someone you may encounter at a 3D shoot or even the youngster down the street. In the time that I have been a member I have gained so many things whether it has been adventure, friendships, experience, or



memories. I am truly thankful for doors that have opened to me through being involved in the Professional Bowhunters Society. I hope to be able to give back to the organization that means so much to me.

I appreciate your time and consideration.
Andy Houck

— Candidate Profiles for Open Council Position —

Sean Bleakley

I hope that everyone has been dealing with these crazy times as best as you can and that all have been safe and healthy. I'm very honored and humbled to have been asked to run for Council of the best organization that I've ever belonged to. I first joined in the late 90's early 2000's but I didn't quite get what the PBS was all about and let my membership expire. A chance meeting with Terry Receveur on a bear hunt in 2010 renewed my interest and opened my eyes to a little bit of what the PBS is all about. I joined right away and attended my first Biannual Banquet in Cincinnati. That's when I really got what it was about! Many of you know me, many of you do not. I'm married to the love of my life, Jill, and have raised my three step sons in the Hudson Valley area of New York state. I'm a retired police officer who is now working for New York's second largest commuter rail road where I hold the position of cable splicer for the communications department. I've been shooting a bow for forty years and hunting with one for thirty-nine. My bow has taken me all over North America, hunting ten states and four Canadian provinces. Many of which would have never been made possible if it wasn't for the PBS. This is why I want to give something back.

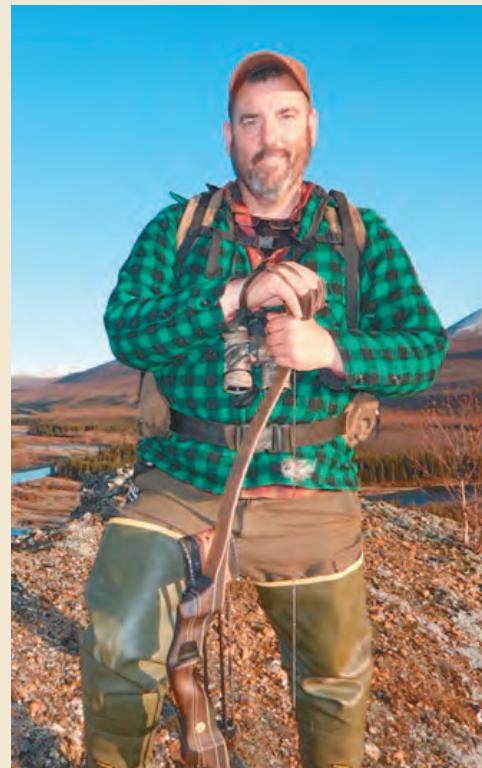
I would like the opportunity to help the PBS

continue its growth and to help its newer membership by offering my "Knowledge Through Experience," as well as finding new ways to expand our membership even more. If voted onto Council, I would like to continue to build on what the previous Councils have accomplished and continue to fight for bowhunters' rights and opportunities on any given forum. I feel that I represent the values of the PBS, as I feel all of us do, by placing self-imposed limitations and relying on skills and woodsmanship rather than modern technology and gadgets.

The PBS has become somewhat of a family to me. I've made lifelong friends by attending several PBS membership hunts and gatherings as well as being active on social media. Friends that will probably last a life time. Friends that I would not hesitate to share a hunting camp with, and friends who are there to help prepare for a hunt that they may be more familiar with. These are the things that make the PBS great. I hope to see the PBS continue to grow as it has over the last several years and we, as members, continue to recruit and mentor a new generation of hunters who will continue to carry on our values and traditions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sean Bleakley



Regional Profile

This is an ongoing segment in the magazine titled “REGIONAL PROFILE”. In this segment we will highlight one state and give a brief explanation of species available to hunt, out of state license fees, public land opportunities, and any other information that might be helpful to fellow members interested in taking advantage of that state’s hunting opportunities. This addition will probably be an evolving process so

any suggestions or comments are welcome!

Ideally, we would like to select a state in one region then move to another region altogether and continue the cycle until we have eventually covered all states. So please give some thought to contributing to the magazine in this small way for upcoming issues.



Arizona



By Rick Wildermuth

Quality of animals: Excellent

Variety of species: Excellent

Difficulty of terrain: Moderate, very few steep climbs required.

Weather: I love it

Welcome to Arizona. All big game animals are managed for trophy quality. The quality and size of antelope and elk is amazing, but this creates a huge issue, drawing a tag to hunt these fellas. Unless you are very lucky, elk tags take, typically, four to ten years to draw, pronghorn ten- plus. No worries, there are plenty of other things to chase with your bow.

The Pope and Young club record book lists many Arizona animals. #1 Coues deer typical and non-typical, #1 Bison, typical American elk at 412, the top four for non-typical American elk, top three and six of ten for pronghorn along with the top three for desert bighorn sheep. That is impressive. (Disclaimer: I did not have enough time for this research so I might be off here and there, but you get it.)

For big game, Arizona features elk and pronghorn, of course, along with turkey, mountain lion, bighorn sheep, desert and Rocky Mountain, two different herds of bison, (the world record shot) black bear, mule deer, the elusive Coues deer, and of course the fun-to-hunt javelina.

Interested in other things to chase? How about sandhill cranes, pheasant, coyote, badgers, bobcats, quail, squirrels and rabbits, ringtails, coati, and mountain lions roam everywhere. I know I missed something but you get the drift, a very large variety.

I believe the current non-typical Pope and Young elk score is 444 and shot in AZ. The record for typical was held in AZ until several years ago. Archery season is two weeks during the middle of September. And the good thing about applying for elk, the draw is held the end of February and early March so if you do not draw there is plenty of time to make plans in other states.

I have drawn one pronghorn tag and had a great hunt. This is a very difficult tag to draw and the archery hunt is around Labor Day making for very hot hunting conditions. You need knee pads for



crawling and an umbrella for the sun.

Turkeys can be hunted in the spring and fall. Lots of Merriam's turkeys in the state, but there are also Gould's and, introduced a few years ago on the Arizona strip in the Northwest area, are Rio Grande birds. And talking about the “strip”, if you can get one of the coveted deer tags for this area you will see huge mule deer. And how many places can you chase or try to get close to a Coues (properly pronounced cows) deer? Arizona has a good population of these little whitetails, most in the Southern part of the state. Have

Regional Profile



you ever been close to one these sprinters? Spook one and you will not see it look back in curiosity, they can run like the wind. And at seventy pounds they are a difficult target.

One of my favorite Arizona hunts is chasing mule deer on the Kaibab plateau. The north rim of the Grand Canyon. 8500' in elevation and a spectacular view of the Grand Canyon, when you want to be a tourist. They grow um' big there. And while you're on the lookout for your trophy mule deer, keep an eye out for turkeys there is a very healthy population, blue grouse and the beautiful Kaibab squirrel with its white tail. All are available during this deer hunt. These tassel-eared Abert's are the best looking rodent you will find, that is my opinion and I'm sticking with it.

And who does not enjoy chasing javelina? Lots of opportunity and usually great weather as this is a three-week season in January, in Arizona. But don't listen to me. I tell everyone to come for the weather and then it snows. What can I say? And while you're chasing javelina one of those antelope jackrabbits may appear. Up to twenty-six inches long and ten pounds, shoot one of them and you will have a heck of a drag back to your truck. Table fair you ask? I think the back straps are great along with all parts of the javelina. Forget those folks that say these animals should be buried after shot. Try it yourself. I think the meat is very good. I even smoked javelina ribs once. The meat was fine, but there's very little of it. I had fun trying.

To top this off, a PBS members hunt has been held seven consecutive years, in January, in the southern portion of the state. The location varies from year to year. We chase mule deer, Coues deer and javelina. And we have great times. More than forty different PBS members have ventured west, south and east to join in on the fun. Should you want a little more information on Arizona check out the game commission website at AZGFD.com or reach out to me at rwildermuth2@cox.net.

Happy hunting.





Zachar Bay Lodge.



ZACHAR BAY REGIONAL MEMBER HUNT 2015:

A PBS Adventure



Some of the antlers in the game processing area of Zachar Bay Lodge.



By Michael J. Schneider

Introduction:

In 2015 Steve Hohensee [AK/WY] was the PBS director for the PBS Region that included Alaska. I had been a PBS member for decades, but all I did was pay my dues and read the magazine. When I got the notice that this hunt was to take place on the west side of Kodiak Island at Zachar Bay Lodge, I signed up immediately. Steve was, and remains, a meticulous planner and organizer. We flew from Kodiak to Zachar Bay Lodge in two Beaver loads on Saturday, November 7, 2015. Steve had everything organized and we were set to go. The hunt ended up including Joe Lasch [WI], Paul Ladner [IL], Greg Szalewski [WI], Steve Anderson [MN/MT], Mark Viehweg [SD], Ben Pinney [AK], and yours truly [AK]. Most of what follows was written soon after

our trip. I hope this article encourages all PBS members to take advantage of PBS regional member hunts. No amount of money can buy such great experiences with such great people.

Close Encounters of the Brown Bear Kind:

Steve "Anders" Anderson drew the short straw and we were paired to hunt together for the week. Steve is bigger, younger, and stronger than I, and a really good guy to be with in the bush. He's a great hunter, and if he tired of my endless commentary on all things Alaskan, he was kind enough not to show it. The weather, while wildly variable, invariably sucked. Steve didn't complain about the weather, or anything else, for that matter.

It was the fourth hunting day, Wednesday morning, November 11, 2015. Steve and I were dropped off at the mouth of Little Zachar Creek for a day of bowhunting for Sitka blacktails.

There were a few inches of fresh, wet snow on the ground and tracking conditions were about as good as they get. We gained a few hundred feet in elevation, stopping periodically and calling as we went. And there they were. A perfect set of brown bear tracks skirting a patch of alders. The tracks were very fresh and captured every fine detail of the bear's footprint. The owner of these tracks was likely a bear that would have squared eight feet.

Steve is an avid photographer. He had been taking pictures of everything from fungi to sea otters to scenery. I encouraged him to pull out his camera and get some pictures of these remarkable tracks. To my surprise, Steve was completely disinterested and suggested a better idea would be to put a lot of distance between us and the tracks as quickly as possible.

Brown bears will come to a fawn in distress call, so we decided we would put off calling



Steve Hohensee take dangerous Zachar Bay game with single shot!

for a while and side-hilled into the wind. We had not gone far when I heard some brush crack and thought we may have bumped a deer out of the alder. I took a couple steps forward. Behind a set of big cottonwoods, I glanced the apparent owner of the aforementioned tracks, sized approximately as estimated, and foraging for food. Steve was behind me and we were crosswind to the bear. I inched backwards to be next to Steve. He is a big guy, and I thought our combined presence might help discourage the bear if it decided to make a play on us. Steve had seen the bear, too. He seemed quite impressed with it. His Glock was drawn. He encouraged me to draw my .454 Casull by excitedly repeating the mantra: "Pull out your gun!" Brown bears deserve great respect.

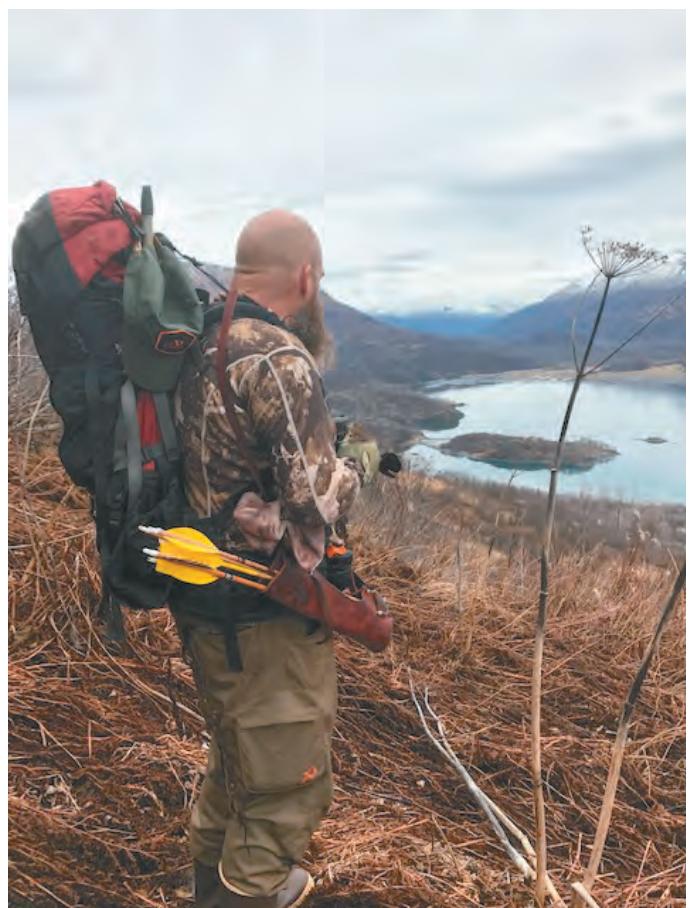
Shooting this bear was the last thing we wanted to do, and an absolute last resort. The bear was less than twenty yards away but remained hidden behind the cottonwoods. We held still and remained quiet. The animal eventually ambled away into the wind, and to my surprise, without ever noticing us. This was fine with us. We were relieved to see the bear leave. Steve remarked that he had seen grizzlies in the wild in Montana, but nothing even half as big as this animal. We were in its house, and we wanted out quickly and quietly.

We walked down to look at his tracks again. I wasn't making sense of where we saw this bear because the noise in the brush I heard earlier seemed to come from farther away. And then it became clear. Another fifty or sixty yards below us was a second brown bear. This bear had the blocky features of a male. It was the darkest brown bear I've ever seen in my life: literally black. It looked to me like he would square nine to ten feet. He was breaking brush and appeared to be burying a kill. The vote was taken quickly and was unanimous. We left at a good rate of speed going straight up the mountain. We put our deer calls away for the rest of the day. As we stillhunted we saw a couple of deer. It was a sobering experience to find ourselves within the personal space of a coastal brown bear, and enough excitement for one day.

Hope for the Old, Slow, Blind and Infirm:

The end of August brought with it my sixty-fifth birthday, I developed a case of "the crud" in September, only to have it return in October, and I hobbled around on a bad left ankle from the beginning of July to the end of September. I was the oldest guy in our group. It would have been an understatement to say that I wasn't in the physical condition I wanted to be in for our PBS Zachar Bay Lodge adventure.

Steve and I had hunted hard in difficult country. I passed on a doe the first day out. Steve and I had → *continued on page 16*



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~continued from page 15 → come close to taking some shots, but here it was, Thursday, November 12, 2015, the next to the last hunting day, we were getting a late start because of high winds and seas from the west, and neither of us had yet taken a shot. We headed up the mountain from a cabin just east of the lodge. Though the wind was screaming, we were in the lee of a terrain feature between us and the lodge that kept our hunting area oddly calm. Everything seemed perfect for calling and spot-and-stalk hunting. Though we had been doing our best for two or three hours, we only had memories of birds and squirrels to show for it as we inched our way uphill into the wilderness. We finally came to a very steep and open area without much undergrowth. It showed a great deal of deer traffic. It was Steve's turn to call. A little spike snuck behind me. It was only about ten yards away, but I didn't think I could snake an arrow through the alders and into its vitals. Both of us called to the little buck as he snuck out of the

area, but he just kept moving.

We weren't very high on the mountain... maybe five hundred feet in elevation above the beach...when I saw a big-bodied deer moving uphill. I couldn't be sure it was a buck, but its body language suggested it was. I watched it for a while, but then left my pack and moved down the mountain toward the deer. I was going slowly and silently when I glimpsed antler tips much closer to me than I expected. I dropped to one knee and froze as the big non-typical 1 X 4 came into full view directly below me at about fifteen yards. He looked directly at me, looked away and moved farther uphill and to my left such that his head was behind a big cottonwood tree. I drew my longbow as soon as he began to move. He fully revealed himself, looked at me, then as he looked away downhill and began to take another step, I released the arrow. I could see that the broadhead penetrated both chest walls as the buck bounded away. I mentally marked where he had been hit, moved quietly back uphill ...and started to shake all over.

Steve hadn't seen me shoot, but heard the deer bolting away. As I perceived the shot, I thought we would find my buck dead in a matter of yards. We waited a full thirty minutes before starting to follow the blood trail. We quickly found cut hair where I hit the buck, and blood on both sides of the trail...then the broadhead end of the arrow...then the knock end. Sadly, this was not to be a fast or easy tracking job. Steve has eyes like an eagle, and they were put to use. Though mortally hit, the buck was actually moving uphill and into pretty difficult country. We lost the trail many times only to mark the last blood and carefully fan the area until we found more. The buck was hit right at the snow line and his decision to move higher helped, but there were still big patches of bare frozen ground that made tracking pretty challenging. There were also lots of other deer tracks to confuse our efforts. Two hours later and more than a quarter mile from where the buck was hit, we found him. And despite all the blood he had lost, he was still alive. A

final arrow at about five feet sent him crashing downhill another fifty yards to his final resting place.

The pickup vessel would soon be at the beach, so we could afford only a moment or two to catch our breath and to respect and admire the old and unusual buck with a heart like a lion. I was pretty whipped at that point. Steve drug us both down to the beach. We got there, met up with Greg Szalewski and Joe Lasch, and were soon back at the lodge. The events of the day left me humbled and exhausted. Greg, Steve and the other guys caped and cut up my buck that night. I slept like the dead after one of the best days in the bush I've ever had.

Steve Takes a Beautiful Buck on the Very Last Hunting Day:

Once the wind laid down a bit Steve and I were dropped off on the other side of the bay from the lodge and a bit closer to where Zachar Bay opens up into Uyak Bay on the Northwest side of Kodiak Island. We hadn't gained much elevation. I was leading the way but all of a sudden was struck with that "something good is about to happen" feeling. I motioned for Steve to take the lead as we stillhunted onto a small bench. In an instant and out of nowhere, four does were but feet in front of us...and they were moving...but before either of us could get off a shot, a nice 3 X 3 blacktail buck appeared. Steve got off a fast shot from his Robertson recurve.

We were pretty wound up and decided to sit down and let the adrenaline burn off. We were



Steve Anderson's Buck



Transportation back to Kodiak from Zachar Bay Lodge.



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sitting just feet from where Steve had taken his shot. After waiting thirty minutes we got up and began to look around with great care. We couldn't find Steve's arrow at first, but Steve located the smallest twig, the end of which had been cut off by his arrow. It couldn't have been 1/16 of an inch in diameter. But resting there was an equally small speck of blood. But that is all we found and this "good news" quickly reminded us both that we had spent most of the day before crawling around on our hands and knees trying to follow a blood trail. I didn't know about Steve, but my enthusiasm for repeating the performance of the day before was lacking at best.

Steve took the lead as we searched for more sign. We had a good idea which way the buck was going, but couldn't find any more blood for about thirty yards. At that point we had a good

blood trail to follow. After a few more yards Steve saw his buck. Dead as the proverbial doornail. A classic Sitka blacktail buck had met the end of its trail.

The pack out was as tough as it was short: I excel at finding impenetrable brush and proved it once again as we drug the buck to the beach. We were glad to get there. It was a wonderful end to a wonderful trip for Steve and for all of us.

And in the End:

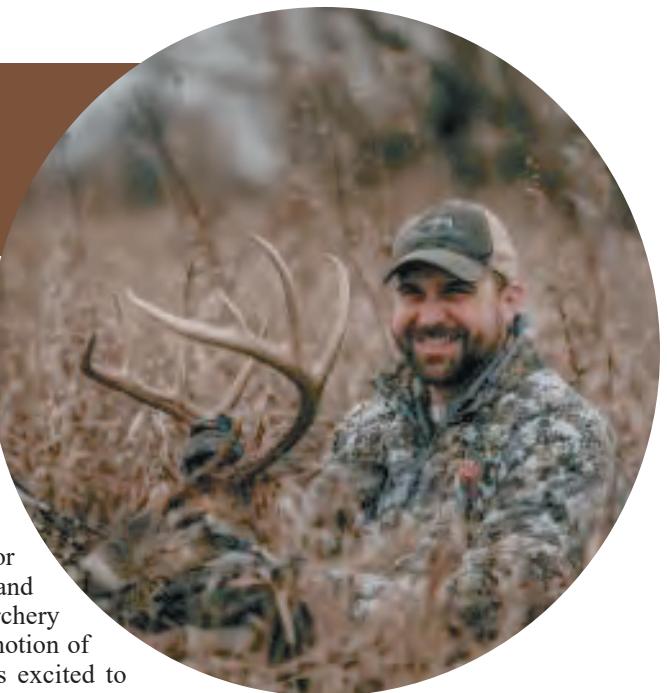
Thanks to Mark Viehweg and others on this hunt I became a qualified regular PBS member and have become more involved in the PBS. This is the sort of fun that awaits the PBS member who signs up for a regional member hunt. Don't be shy. Give it a try.

Regular Member Profiles

Tim Nebel Ohio

My name is Tim Nebel. I'm 35 years old and relatively new to the PBS. I've been a member since April of 2018. I grew up in rural western Pennsylvania where my father carried me around the woods on his shoulders until I was able to walk on my own. It wasn't long thereafter that he started teaching me how to hunt. I relocated to southeast Ohio in the fall of 2014 where a much longer archery season drove that decision above any other reason. I still live here in southeast Ohio with my wife, Baydn, whom I married in 2019. I believe that now more than ever it's imperative that the younger crowd in archery get involved in the PBS. There are plenty of groups out

there trying to take away what we have, and what those that came before us worked so hard to preserve. I've bowhunted big game in Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Dakota, Texas, Kansas, and Colorado, and hope to add some more states into the mix soon. I have a passion for outdoor photography and videography, and am a co-owner of The Push Archery – a brand dedicated to the promotion of traditional archery. I'm always excited to interact with other PBS members, so please don't hesitate to reach out.



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Welcome new members to the PBS family!

September

Todd Szmania - New Berlin, WI
Derek Darlington - Lexington KY
Cameron Graham - Krebs OK
Brandon Rupnow - New Glarus, WI
John Buchin - Plainwell, MI
Arthur Kirsch - Canandaigua, NY
Patrick Finney - Cuba, MO
Tony Middleton - Eagle Rock, VA
John Dietz - Deridder, LA
Johnathan Moreland - Dumas, AR
Howard Charlton - Eureka Springs, AR
Mark Heartlein - Galesburg, IL
Jordan Schupe Jr. - Stilesville, IN
Shawn Braman - Ravenna, MI
Todd Hewing - Hidalgo, IL
Colin Grady - Westfield, IN
Steve Stivaly - Randolph, NJ
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David Joyce - Clinton, TN

Jeff Scoggin - Lexington, SC
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Stoker Walsmith - Noblesville, IN
Matthew Graesch - Ames, IA
Devin Hull - Mayslick, KY
Jason Garner - San Antonio, TX
Will Price - Harlem, GA
Robert Gottardello - Shokan, NY
Daniel Binkley - Monroe, LA
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Andrew Orthober - Oneida, WI
Grant Hooten - Pikeville, TN
Tyler Blount - Troutville, VA
Thomas Downing - Bayfield, CO
Keith Thompson - Wiconisco, PA
Len Kopec - Augusta, MT
Rodney Blanks - Randolph, VA

November

Mike Hardin - Lebanon, TX
Derek Poole - Lake Villa, IL
Brent Lindemuth - Brockway, PA

October

Brian Payne - McAllen, TX
Antonio Goncalves - Hoosick Falls, NY
Cary Gibson - Brockville, ON, CA
Steven Platek - Suwanee, GA
Terry Hutchinson - Caro, MI
Jason Leonard - Piney Flats, TN
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Friends in Snow Places

By Don Davis

From a metal ladder off a gravel road in Montana, I watched over fifty deer dance in that annual mating ritual known as the rut. The weathered old binoculars Dick Robertson gave me may have seen that show a thousand times but it was new and exciting to me. Trophy class whitetail and mule deer bucks chased reluctant does all around, indifferent to the species, hoping to get lucky. My "A" tag was already punched and my trophy was on ice, so I just sat back and enjoyed the view. Above me the snow-covered mountains and buttes were spectacular, the perfect setting to reflect on a memorable week of hunting central Montana.

My first hunting trip outside the deep south came courtesy of my friends Don and Lori Thomas. The Thomas's have shared the woods and water of my native Florida with me on several occasions, always asking me to visit and hunt the whitetails on their Montana property. After several years of trying to draw a tag, I finally found myself in the Great Falls International Airport meeting Lori, tag in hand. We were admiring the Paul Schafer exhibit, a breathtaking collection of world-class animals that Paul took during his all too brief yet amazing time on Earth. It was the perfect confirmation that I was finally in Montana.

The whitetail rut at Don and Lori's place occurs in mid-November, which meant there was a strong likelihood that I was going to be exposed to some very cold weather. But on the afternoon of my arrival the temperatures were pleasantly in the upper forties, a very refreshing departure from the heat and humidity back home in Florida. However at supper that night Lori's dad, Ben Beaudry, told us the area was under a blizzard warning. I was planning for cold and snow on the trip but felt unsure about the conditions that were expected in the morning. Having only seen snow once or twice before, I was as prepared as could be, but my decision to brave the cold and schedule a hunt in November was coming into question.

Sunrise was a solid hour and a half away and I was still undecided whether I should sleep in or go sit a stand. I had expected difficult decisions on this trip, but imagined those to be along the lines of which fine Montana buck to shoot. Don, ever the voice of calm and reason, assured me that as far as blizzards went this one was mild and we should hit the woods. I reminded Don that Lori was the only native of Montana in the house, and she had declared the morning hunt a bust. Lori is an enthusiastic and accomplished bowhunter, and her decision



not to hunt made me think twice about heading out. I was comfortable and confident deep in the hot, humid Florida swamps, but here I was out of my element.

Reluctantly I dressed in the warmest clothes I have ever put on. After what seemed like an hour of layering, I climbed stiffly into the truck and Don made the short drive to the stands. The wind was howling and the snow was blowing sideways as I broke through the calf deep snow. With my safety belt secure, I settled in for what I expected to be a very short, very cold hunt.

When the dark sky lightened to a cloud filled gray, deer appeared on the hill to the west. I studied the deer carefully as they made their way down the hill. As if on cue a young buck entered the scene and chased the does about the pasture. I stayed focused on these deer when instinct drew my attention to the right. A fine 4x4 whitetail started down a trail toward the stand. He was tall with decent mass and average width. I liked what I saw but wasn't sure I wanted to end the hunt a scant hour into the first day. Even with a broadside twenty-yard shot, I hesitated. Tension was on the string as he slipped behind the brush eliminating any need to ponder the issue further. I have found that when such situations arise, it is best to pass on the shot. But this was a nice buck, easily the best I had ever passed up. The farther he moved away, the more I questioned my decision.

I sat the stand a few more hours enjoying the scenery and playing with the snow that dusted my clothing and equipment. It was pleasantly surprising to find how warm I was in my thermals and wool. A few more deer came that morning; none in range, but it scarcely mattered. This was a new experience. The heat, humidity, and recent hurricanes back home seemed decades away as I scouted my way back to the house, enjoying the tracking snow and wondering if a forty-four year old kid was entitled to make a snow angel.

Bowhunters, particularly traditional bowhunters, are a different



bunch, not just in the equipment we use but in our approach to hunting and our generally enthusiastic attitude. Just meeting a fellow stickbow hunter at the range often results in a friendship forged. It was a similar encounter that forged the great friendship I enjoy with Don and Lori.

I met the couple at the PBS convention in Charlotte in 1996. Honestly, I had read only a few of Don's articles but the booth he was manning was empty and feeling sorry for the man, I went over and bought a book. Somehow talk turned to warm weather and fishing and I offered to host Don and Lori on a snook and turkey hunting trip the following spring. The thought of being somewhere warm in March held obvious appeal and a great friendship soon formed. Many trips later the hot Florida fall had given way to a cold Montana autumn. It was my turn to escape the weather back home.

I hunted from the same stand that evening and the next morning with similar results. Many deer showed including the same 4x4, but none presented a shot. The deer appeared to be heading down the coulee towards a spot known as the Thanksgiving stand, where Lori took a fine 5x5 whitetail just before Thanksgiving supper a few years earlier. After consulting with Don and Lori at lunch, Lori insisted that

I sit her favorite stand that evening.

The sun was bright but the day still bitter cold as I settled into the stand. I had learned to keep my bow at ready on a bow hanger in order to keep my hands warm. Straight ahead and down in the coulee

several young bucks were milling about with does when I heard animals running through the pines. Knowing that this was likely a doe being chased by bucks, I grabbed the bow and readied myself.

Over a small rise to the left of the stand, the sounds of deer grunting mingled with the sounds of hooves crunching the snow. A mature doe hurdled an old fence and ran down the coulee in front of me with steam flowing from her nostrils. Right on her tail was a wide 4x4 whitetail, the source of the grunting. The



chase was on, for both the buck and the bowhunter.

To describe the route taken by the buck would involve far too many right and left turns and tree stand pirouettes. The pair covered nearly all the acreage around the stand except that which offered shot opportunities. The buck finally gave up and bedded down under a ponderosa pine just uphill from me, looking dejected. I felt his pain. I guess

~continued on page 22 ➤



→ *continued from page 21*

some things are the same for all males, regardless of species. However sorry I might have felt for the buck, there was a more pressing issue. I was cold, standing at the ready with bow in hand, and this buck was looking directly at me.

Cold gave way to numbness in my gloved hands as I stood motionless on the stand. Flexing my hand muscles I tried to imagine myself on a warm Florida beach, but frostbite kept reminding me where I was. After a long twenty minutes, and just before I cried uncle, the 4x4 rose and bedded back down on the sunny side of the tree, facing away from me this time. Quickly hanging the bow, I sat down and put my hands into my hand warmer pockets. Warmth never felt so good. After a few minutes, I could feel my hands again and was ready to shoot if the shot ever presented itself.

As the buck rose and locked onto a doe up the hill, I grabbed my bow for Round Two. This new chase broke off when another buck joined in. Squaring off in typical rutting whitetail fashion, these bucks seemed headed for some antler banging a mere ten yards away and me with no shot opportunity. Suddenly the second buck broke off, startling the doe, which ran right by my tree. After a victory strut the original buck chased her down the same path.

The shot was a little forward but deadly and the buck soon tumbled down the coulee. I guess it was too much to ask him to tumble uphill. Twilight gave way to moonlight when headlights announced Don heading my way in the truck. After some backslapping and handshakes we retrieved Lori from the house and headed back for photos of my Montana trophy. I thought of my late father's walks to school as we dragged the buck "uphill through knee deep snow-both ways" for the longest forty yards I have ever walked.



Don and his Montana whitetail.

With the field dressing taken care of, we found fellow bowhunters John "Rosey" Roseland and his wife, Lisa waiting back at the kitchen. Soon Dick, Vikki, and the rest of the Robertson clan joined us for what turned out to be a very memorable supper. With proper encouragement the story of the hunt was told and retold, as I imagine hunters of old have done for centuries. Our ancestors would have been proud as we celebrated the hunt and hoisted our glasses in honor of the buck.

Sitting later at Dick and Vikki's place, I wondered, as all hunters do, what drives me to hunt. I'm sure some predatory instinct fuels part of this desire. I don't hunt because I feel some duty to "manage the herd" or feed my family, though we do enjoy the fruits of the hunt. I hunt because I want to. I hunt for memories. I hunt to remember

game taken and game missed, snow covered mountains and new animals, hard tracking on thin trails and the heart-thumping thrill of a close encounter. This hunt had all of that, but that's not what I remember most. The most important memory to me from Montana isn't of the hunting at all. It's of my friends, new and old. Friends in snow places.

PBS Regular Don Davis is an insurance adjuster in Melbourne, Florida, where he lives with his wife Penny and daughter Brooke. Don has helped introduce many friends to the

joys and challenges of hunting and fishing in backcountry Florida.

Equipment Note: Don Davis used a 55# Robertson recurve, Grizzly Stik shaft, and Wensel Woodsman broadhead on his Montana adventure. Like a good southern boy, he used one of his numerous Randall knives to dress the deer, punch his tag, and pick his teeth when he was done.

The Future of Hunting

By Dr. Dave Samuel

Written for bowhunting.net

Aldo Leopold is known as the father of wildlife management. Not only was he a brilliant and original thinker, he also was a beautiful writer. I make no bones about it, I am a fan of the writings of Aldo Leopold. All wildlife students have read (or should have read) his Game Management text written in 1933. All citizens should have read, or should read, his Sand County Almanac.

In my next column, I'll cover some of his best quotes, those that relate to deer hunting today. But for now, let me take another approach, the one that shows us that Aldo Leopold was a bowhunter and bowyer. I present the following for two reasons. First, at least one major, national, anti-hunting organization has insinuated that Aldo Leopold was against hunting. Second, many in our own ranks do not realize that Aldo Leopold was not only a bowhunter, he made his own long bows.

Years ago, someone sent me a copy of a letter that Aldo Leopold wrote (on March 26, 1934) to Herbert Stoddard. You may not recognize that name, but Herb Stoddard was the leading wildlife biologist for quail. He was the top bobwhite expert of our time. Apparently he was a bowhunter too. Here are some of the beautiful words that Dr. Leopold sent to his friend.

Dear Herbert:

I am sending you by express a yew bow, which I have been making for you this winter. I have enjoyed it because it was a way to express my affection and regard for one of the few who understands what yew bows—and quail and mallards and wind and sunsets—are all about.

I cannot assure you that it is a good piece of wood. Staves, like friends, have to be lived with in many woods and weathers before one knows their quality. The fact that the stave is yew, has a specific gravity of .432, came from Roseburg, Oregon, and has been waiting for a job



Dr. Dave Samuel

since 1930, is no more a test of how it will soar an arrow than the fact that a man is a naturalist, weighs 160, and has had time enough to season, is a test of the zest or nicety with which he will expend his powers in the good cause. All I can say of this bow is that its exterior "education" embodies whatever craft and wisdom is mine to impart. What lies inside is the everlasting question.

I have tried to build into this bow the main recent improvements in bow-design, but since some of them are not visible, they will bear mention. The square cross section and waisted handle are of course visible innovations, but probably less important than the new location of the geographic centre. In former days this was pub close under the arrow plate, but in this bow it lies as near the centre of the handle as is possible without overworking the lower limb.

The horns whence came these nocks were pulled off the skeleton of an old cow on the Santa Rita ranges... The slight flaws at the base of the upper nock are the measure of the seasons which bleached her bones before (she) was found. I doubt not that many a black vulture perched on her skull meanwhile, and many a quail and roadrunner, coyote and jackrabbit played their little games of life and death in the hackberry bush hard by her withering hide. Did that stodgy old cow, whilst living, know, or get any satisfaction from knowing, that within her growing horns she was converting her daily provender of desert grama and sun-dried mesquite into an enduring poem of amber light? Does a yew tree glory in fashioning from mere soil and sunlight a wood whose shavings curl in ecstasy at the prospect of becoming a bow? These are questions meant for an archer to ask, but for no man to answer.

One cannot fashion a stave without indulging in fond hopes of its future... On many a thirsty noon I hope you lean it against a mossy back by cool springs. In fall I hope its shafts will sing in sunny glades where turkeys dwell, and that one day some wily bucks will live just long enough to startle at the twang of its speeding string.

And lastly if the bow breaks, with or without provocation, pray waste no words or thoughts in vain regret. There are more staves in the woods than have yet sped an arrow, all longing to realize their manifest destiny. Just blow three blasts on your horn and I will make you another.

*Yours as ever,
Aldo Leopold*

And I thought I was a writer. No David, Aldo Leopold was the writer, and bowyer, and bowhunter.

The Smartest Jakes in Eastern Nebraska



This jake was the first Nebraska turkey I tagged in the spring of 2020.

By Bryce Lambley

I've always had a bit of a love-hate relationship with wild turkeys. Since getting my first spring bow permit almost forty years ago, I've vacillated between being willing to sleep in my topper and drive four hours to hunt them, and yet at other times not even wanting to get out of bed to pursue Ben Franklin's favorite bird in literally my own backyard.

Part of that quandary has been that I was always busy with track and field in the spring. Whether competing for Wayne State College the first few years of my bowhunting career, or coaching the sport the next thirty three years, the big bronze birds have never truly received my full and undivided attention.

Even now, in my third year of retirement from teaching and coaching, there are many spring activities competing for my time, even besides helping at several track meets: looking for antlers, fine-tuning my deer stands, taking photos of migrating waterfowl, and many others less-directly associated with hunting. Even yardwork is a pleasant diversion to someone who spent a career indoors during working hours. But at least now, I am usually able to hunt on the days I want to; this is markedly different than feeling like you have to hunt on the few days you can. Yes, retirement can be a good thing.

The spring of 2020 found me in a mood to get after the turkeys more than usual. The previous year, the Platte River in eastern Nebraska had gone on a rampage and wreaked havoc on not only most of my hunting grounds, but also on my current city as well as my

hometown fifteen miles upstream. It extensively damaged most of the houses on the lake I live on. Fortunately, mine was one of those left unscathed on slightly higher ground. But the flood unearthed nearly one hundred railroad ties used as lakeside tiering in my backyard, and between that and other issues, I sat out the spring turkey season and did not miss it much.

But the following year, I was raring to go. Well, at least enough to get my Double Bull put up early in a likely spot where I frequently observed turkeys during the fall. I'll never pretend to be an expert on these birds, but I have found it is easier to call them to where they already like to travel anyway, rather than to a location that is not on their usual travel routes. So if you are looking for tips here, maybe that is one. At least it seems to work for me.

So I will put my Double Bull blind up just before the season, tucked under a scraggly cedar or among towering cottonwoods, very near the one lane that cuts through the thick riverbottom timber on this particular property. I'll put down a mover's blanket to form a padded floor covering most of the interior as well. This makes things easier on the knees as well as muffles any noise from inside the blind. I'll throw in one or two collapsible chairs as well.

I realize putting out a blind ahead of time is not possible for many. I also know that turkeys can and will approach a new blind even when completely obvious in a field, for instance. Sometimes. But hunting in the spring can involve some other equipment--decoys for example--and I would rather not have to carry a bunch of stuff in with me,



My daughter Emily still has some of the innate curiosity she had as a child.

so I prefer to set things up early.

During the preceding fall, I had often seen a bachelor group of five long-bearded toms. They usually roosted just across the property line quite near to where I had to walk in to hunt, so I'm sure they noticed me on many mornings. But I never hunt specifically for turkeys in the fall, since I am just way too focused on the deer. However, I was quick to notice that these birds would often be seen or heard on my side of the fence when walking out of the timber in the morning, or just before fly-up at the end of the day. And usually near the lane. Sometimes there would be hens/poults in the vicinity; sometimes not.

I've also learned over the years that if there are favored roost sites, I am better off leaving the turkeys alone in that vicinity. You can regard that as tidbit number two if you're taking notes. I realize it is nothing new from guys that do offer advice, but I think many follow this axiom only as long as it takes for the going to get tough; when that happens, they throw this recommendation under the bus like so many other good intentions, and then set up too close to the roost.

A third observation, based on not only my own personal luck with the birds but also on the observations during the fall, is that turkeys often lose their voice upon hitting the ground and then go off on a pre-determined mission that only other turkeys are privy to. And that is usually in the other direction if I have been calling. With that being the case, I find myself hunting a lot more at other times during the day than I used to. Indeed it may be even more effective in mid/late morning or mid/late afternoon when presumably the hens have slipped away.

In skipping the crack-of-dawn hunt, one does miss out on the adrenaline-inducing gobbling exhibition that many toms put on even while still up on the roost. And there is something special about being present for that. Along with the cardinals, the big old toms are usually the first to signal the spring woods are coming alive. Pretty soon, the squeals of wood ducks coursing through the bottoms are added. It really is a great time to be in the woods.

But I get a better response not bothering the roost sites at sunrise, and then slipping in later in the day to make my play for them. Missing that special time at dawn can cause guilt, but hunt enough and you will realize you can kill a turkey at any time during the day.

Plus, if you are trying to take a child or two with you, getting them up at 4:30 a.m. may not go over so well. It has to be fun or most of them will not like it.

Well, 2020 found us all in unique situations with the (expletive deleted) covid-19 stuff. It did mean my youngest daughter, with school canceled by the start of our season, would be able to go with me when I could convince her to do so. I did go out before daylight on March 25, the Nebraska archery opener, and the experience just reinforced what I already knew. I heard tremendous gobbling at any noise I made that even remotely sounded like brethren to them, as well as when trains passed by and a semi jake-braked over a half-mile to the north on the highway. It all sounded great, but when the birds flew off the roost, they got progressively silent and more distant. Social distancing indeed (more expletives).

To make matters worse, on my drive home I had to come to a complete stop to let a flock of turkeys which included four mature toms, cross the busy road just a couple miles from home. Bi-polar, turkeys are. Those suburban turkeys sure make it hard to sell a successful turkey hunt to the non-hunter as an accomplishment.

An afternoon trip with my daughter turned up nothing but we had a good time and she was happy since she could still get Wi-Fi reception. But I bailed before the last hour because I wanted no disturbances within sight of any turkeys in the main roost site.

Emily was not present with me on the third day of the season when I decided to give it another go, this time on an early-afternoon quarantine in the turkey blind. I carefully peeked over the levee that separated the riverbottom timber from the ag fields and, seeing no turkeys, silently slipped my way into the blind maybe one hundred and fifty yards inside the dike and set up my decoy.

Turkeys are smaller than deer, obviously, and so are their vitals. Which is why I like an even closer shot opportunity than I set up for with whitetails. I usually place my decoy(s) no further than five or six yards for that very reason. Everybody has their own rationale for decoys, but I keep coming back to one Dakota Decoy, a jake in the semi-strut position. It has just enough attitude without being intimidating to younger birds. Well, most of the time.

And that's another thing. I've always said, "I'll get picky about turkeys when they start to grow antlers." —continued on page 26

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~ continued from page 25 → Translation: first male turkey in range, young jake or mature tom, is going to catch an arrow. At least that is the goal. Bearded hens? Not my cup of tea, though they are legal in Nebraska in the spring. I prefer ladies who don't need to shave their chest hairs. You can quote me on that.

I am nowhere near a calling expert, and never really mastered diaphragm calls; the older I get, the more my gag reflex seems to kick in. So I usually begin calling with soft calls from a Flextone slate just in case there is something close by. I'm quite capable of sounding poorly on a slate call too, but with some practice generally am able to find a sweet spot. If I don't receive a response, I will go to a louder Lynch's World Champion box call. They are pretty hard to screw up. If I need to gobble, I use my own voice but because I shake my head while doing so, it gives me a headache quickly. I could never have been a headbanger in a metal group.

Anyway, after sporadic calling, I finally got an answer, and then several, to the south. Another strategy I have employed more over the years is to call less. It's tempting to do otherwise, and maybe it is just an admission of my own average ability, but I prefer to play a little more hard-to-get.

After about twenty minutes of sparse give-and-take, I finally spied the birds that were responding. They were not the bachelor group of mature birds I had seen during the fall, but instead were three jakes. Which bothered me not one bit.

They marched right in and got up close and personal with the replica and I whacked the first one to give me a stationary target and he immediately went into the convulsions they often do. I immediately dropped the zipper and charged the downed bird, being careful to avoid the arrow, and pinned the bird to the ground.

There are several schools of thought on pursuing bow-hit birds. My brother, Jason has guided hundreds of successful bowhills over the past three decades, and with non-resident clients who are often hoping to double-up, he will usually let them flop hoping for multiple opportunities. Plus, he hunts the more sparsely-treed north-central part of Nebraska where he can often watch a hard-hit turkey run or fly off for a bit; he usually finds them piled up within a couple hundred yards or so.

I take a different tack in heavily-timbered country. For one thing, I am never looking for a two-fer. And secondly, I'm rarely in a spot to be able to visually track a bird very far. I also feel, even at my age, that I still have the quickness to get on even a marginally-hit bird in the few seconds after a hit if



Hens are not legal in the spring, but calling them in can bring their male escorts, too.

I follow up immediately. And in this case, it may have saved me a long, arduous chase. While putting the clamps on my prize still basically at the point of impact, the other two jakes sounded off repeatedly while scrambling away.

Later, after enjoying some bacon-wrapped fillets with daughter Emily (a high school junior)--and taunting my college freshman (Hayley) still in Lincoln taking on-line

classes with the photos--I decided to get another tag. I'm normally thrilled to take one bird but the lock down made the urge to get back out again strong. Besides, I really wanted Emily to get to see turkeys up close.

On our next outing together, also an early afternoon, I began to get an answer. It took some coaxing, but eventually here they came. Two jakes. They had to be the same two that had lost their partner a week or so earlier.

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The advertisement features a scenic landscape with mountains and a lake in the background. In the foreground, a man wearing a cap and camouflage gear stands on a grassy hill, holding a bow and arrow. The company name "THE FOOTED SHAFT" is written in large, stylized, orange-red letters across the center of the image. A black curved arrow graphic starts from the top left, passes behind the text, and points towards the man in the background.

They seemed to be coming on a string, but then locked up at about twenty five yards, surely thinking, "Wait, haven't we seen this before?"

And for the next twenty minutes or so, I tried everything – calling, not calling, pulling on the line attached to my decoy to give it movement – to no avail. They never came closer and though continuing to gobble hard at every yelp, cluck, or purr I made, they gradually worked away. Finally sensing the gig was up, I just let them go. The good thing was my daughter got to witness all this at fairly close range and even got some video.

Another thing I've learned from my outfitter brother is that turkeys can be successfully hunted in any kind of weather. Really, it is just an extension of how I view deer hunting but I think many believe the only days the birds are active are the calm, warm days. That is definitely not true; those days just feel best to us.

So when cabin fever got the best of me again on April 14, it was with temps at thirty six degrees and the wind chill in the twenties. Too cold for my Emily to want to be there, but I knew the wind would be negated down in the timber and I slipped out again, this time for a early evening hunt. An hour of calling every five to ten minutes with only one far-off gobble to show for it at the outset, I was surprised not to hear anything since.

Just then, a stopped train way out north must have restarted, and the resulting domino-effect of loud crashes touched off a torrent of shock gobbles very close, perhaps one hundred yards away. Their lips loosened, they now responded to my calls in the normal fashion. It looked to be



I was happy some turkeys showed up for Emily's second hunt, even if they stayed out of range. She was happy there was good Wi-Fi reception.

the same two jakes, but this time they had a hen in tow, and she was a talkative, raspy one.

It doesn't always work (nothing really does all the time), but if the caller will mimic the sounds a loudmouthed hen makes, it will often draw her in. Attract the hen, and you usually can get the males with her to do the same. So I set about trying to replicate her calls down to the very note pattern; she got agitated in short order and came in looking for the lady that was mocking her. Not finding her, she circled around my blind at about ten yards on all sides. She showed little interest in the jake decoy, but I figured her suitors would.

But those darn jakes did the same thing they

had the last time, never approaching within twenty five yards, obviously skirting my position. I've learned my lesson over the years and refuse to take marginal shots. While they postured out of range, a third tom appeared beyond them, at about one hundred yards, also strutting his stuff. He was a mature bird for sure but seemed not to want to join the party.

Jake turkeys are usually as dumb as the deer equivalents of forkhorns and fawns, but these two had wised up in a hurry. I grinned thinking I had nobody to blame by myself. Apparently seeing their buddy get axed in this very spot had traumatized them--whether it was the ferocious decoy that had done their pal in, or anxiety about the well-camouflaged blind, or memories of some long-haired hippie (it was the quarantine, remember) tackling their friend, I can't say with certainty.

I quit calling to avoid furthering their education, and all four eventually ranged out of sight to the north. I shut up for about thirty minutes and then heard a hen yelp far to the south. That meant I was probably in between her and those birds that had departed. A good time to try a gobble. It was instantly answered by the birds to the north. Alright, back in business.

And sure enough, the three male birds began coming back down the lane toward me. This time, the older bird was in the lead. He was limping as he has been for at least three seasons. I sadly had something to do with that, but have been buoyed by seeing him not only survive but thrive. On those occasions during deer season when I would walk up on the bachelor toms in the woods, they would

→ *continued on page 28*



Spring is a glorious time to be afield, even if for no other reason than the migrating waterfowl.

~continued from page 27

all run except him; he would take a few strides into a relatively open area and immediately take wing. I had never been able to get a second crack at him.

Another thing I have learned about turkeys is to never ever “count my (thunder) chickens before they’ve hatched.” In other words, I try not to get too excited about turkeys coming my way. Been there dozens of times, and been too often disappointed. I take a mindset to be hopeful but not count on anything. It makes the many inevitable detours easier to take.

And that is exactly what looked like was going to happen again. At about twenty five yards, the leading bird began to leave the lane to detour around my setup. The jakes began veering in that direction, too. I quickly reached for the twine I have attached to my decoy and tightened it, spinning the fake jake about one hundred and eighty degrees to face the big tom. His demeanor changed on a dime and so did his path; he shifted directions and strutted right up to the decoy with nary a noticeable limp in his gait.

Upon releasing the string, the decoy slowly swiveled back to facing away from the riled-up bird and he came around to face his suddenly meek rival from the front. After killing my first bird, I had told myself I would try a head shot if given a second chance. I have a Woodsman head whose three trailing blade edges had been cut from the ferrule and splayed out ninety degrees from the shaft. It was not fun to sharpen, but I was anxious to see what it could do.

But I was also a little too anxious and did exactly what I had coached myself not to do on this head shot attempt--I rushed it-- and watched the wide Woodsman fly just behind his head. But the big bird only got angrier, perhaps thinking the enemy had flapped a wing at him. I think the boys from MeatEater call it the “Decoy Trance” and they are right; when a big tom is duped, they can get tunnel vision.

I grabbed a backup arrow and as the gobbler was nose to nose with his rival, put an unaltered Woodsman head into the boiler room, just above his legs (a strong aiming point when the bird is broadside to the shooter, even if his plumage is doing all sorts of mating gymnastics). He went into the typical spasms and I was out the blind’s door in an instant, but after a few yards the bird had already nosedived and was down and out.

It was only then I noticed the jakes hauling butt out of there once again, shock-gobbling repeatedly the whole way. They had been very close to the action but I had not noticed them with my focus on the first bird. I admired the big turkey and had plenty of light to get good pictures. I also took down my blind and removed all my gear from this property even though I still had not seen the bachelor group of toms. While I could buy a third Nebraska tag, two birds were plenty from this property,



Tagging tom number two was doubly rewarding as it made up for a bad shot three years prior.

I thought.

I also thought about how much easier the last couple turkey and antelope seasons have been with my fifty-six-inch ‘Pale Rider’ Pronghorn longbow; its short length alleviates the tight-quarters issues traditional bowhunters often find in shooting from enclosed blinds. I am amazed how it seems to shoot exactly where the sixty-four-inch ‘Green Machine’ Pronghorn I carry for deer season does. That was a reminder to send a quick field photo to my Wyoming bowyer friend, Herb Meland.

As I drove home, I got to thinking that rarely have I developed a one-on-one relationship with turkeys the way I often do with whitetails.

The dinged-up but cagey tom I had just taken was perhaps the only one. Yes, I realize they are less individual (noticeably recognizable) and I have never been concerned about beards and spurs anyway, except to admire them once in hand. It was nice to finish things right with the old gobbler.

I also realized that in my short time afield this season, I had given the two remaining jakes a master-level, crash course education. I suspect they will become cautious and perhaps identifiable adversaries for me in the future. Here’s hoping we meet again.

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FIRST PROFESSIONAL BOWHUNTERS SOCIETY — HUNT FOR — DEER AND ANTELOPE

By Dr. Nicholas Gray
PBS Qualified/Life Member

I believe the first Professional Bowhunters Society Hunt was for black bear in 1965 in Maine. In 1971, the PBS decided to have an official hunting trip for its members. My friend Larry Craig and I were both PBS members, so we decided to make the trip to northwest Nebraska. Neither one of us knew many of the other bowhunters, but it doesn't take bowhunters long to get acquainted and to start swapping hunting stories. Larry and I mostly hunted with Otis "Toad" Smith and Francis "Kiko" Tovar, which was a riot. One of them killed a pronghorn at about one hundred and ten yards, not exactly an ethical shot to take. Oh well!

Toad was a very large man of about three hundred pounds and a deputy sheriff in Sibley, Iowa. He had purchased a large watermelon which he put in the stream by our camp. When Toad was hunting by himself for a few hours, Kiko came up with the bright idea of eating some of the watermelon. We cut it in half and ate some, then some more until most of it was gone. I asked what Toad would do. Kiko said to just pin it together and put it back in the stream, and maybe Toad would forget about having a watermelon. Anyway, this was not the case! Toad was not a happy fellow when he discovered his almost empty watermelon. Kiko saved the day by calming Toad down so he wouldn't kill us. I don't remember if Kiko took the blame. Toad turned out to be a gentle giant and was still

our friend. I think that Kiko knew the whole time that we should not eat the watermelon. He was a real prankster. I remember that Kiko loved to hunt with super-short recurve bows.

One evening I was hunting this Nebraska Piney Ridge area literally at the Nebraska-Wyoming border. I had seen deer crossing a ditch from Wyoming into a feed field in Nebraska the previous evening. Not having a portable treestand with me, I just climbed up in a pine tree, sat on one limb, and stood on another. Sure enough, several mule deer came out. After missing the first shot at one of them, the same deer ran closer to me. My second arrow found the mark, and the deer piled up in the adjoining ditch in Wyoming. I had just shot a Wyoming deer in Nebraska! The really funny part of the story was that my stomach had recently been hurting while in the tree. Even though this may seem gross, right after shooting deer, I had a strong number two right from the tree limb fifteen feet in the air. Boy, I felt better after that!

My hunting buddy, Larry Craig, killed a fat little *little* mule deer buck on that hunt. Larry and I tried for antelope, but we couldn't get close to them. I don't remember who else was on the hunt or what else was killed. Old age, I guess. Anyway this was a hunting experience to remember. It was a good time and is good PBS trivia. The PBS created a life member belt buckle in 1992. One gold and nine silver buckles were given for the first life memberships. After that they were bronze. I received one of the silver buckles.



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By Brian Koelzer

I refuse to acknowledge the commercialization and material mess Christmas time has turned into. Stores replace Halloween decorations with Christmas decorations on the 1st of November and Thanksgiving is all but forgotten. Who decided that getting up at 3AM the day after Thanksgiving to rape the big box store shelves of all their foreign trinkets was a good idea as well? Probably going to have to rename that day now anyway due to its offensive nature... whatever.

The holiday season I look forward to is a time to gather with good friends and family. Partaking in good food and good drink with people you care about is a greater gift than any new component for an "i" device or the like.

The area where my wife and I hunt whitetail deer was hit pretty hard with EHD several years back but has fortunately rebounded well and we were able to buy several doe tags over the counter as well as have our buck tags in our pockets. We eat wild game almost exclusively but between the two of us we had eight tags and three freezers at home that were still fairly full from previous seasons hunts. Since shooting whitetails with a bow is fun and the property needed a few thinned out we decided that this year there would be no scarves, mittens, and re-



gifted jello cakes getting handed out at Christmas but coolers of tasty venison instead.

Late September blessed me with a big old Wyoming mule deer buck and in early October Kara was able to drop the string on a handsome five point whitetail. November rolled around and after some close calls and one blown opportunity I was able to notch my tag on a great buck. It had already been a fantastic season but with all the doe tags in our pockets we knew the fun was just beginning!

It used to be so easy to just throw our stuff in the truck and head out for a weekend of hunting but having a fourteen-month-old little boy has certainly changed how we operate. The weekend of November 23rd found us pointed north. The back seat of the truck packed to the ceiling with bows, arrows, diapers, and toys. The tiny motel room that was to be home for the next three days was arranged in no time and we were ready to go. Our new system of hunting was that I had mornings and my wife had evenings. The first morning out I had deer movement but no good shots at a doe. I did note however that several fields had been turned over the previous week but that one still had standing barley. Knowing the deer would all be congregating there come evening it was a no brainer where Kara would be hunting.

The tree options weren't great for the wind but an old blowdown at an open gate made for a great spot for a ground blind. Fortunately for us some friends of ours who live up in the vicinity offered to watch Bowen for the evening so we could both hunt. After getting Kara settled into her blind plenty early I headed to a spot a ways away that I figured would be hit or miss but was my best option for the wind. It was a beautiful evening to perch in a tree but as luck would have it I didn't have much action. Kara, on the other hand, had plenty! An hour or so after getting in her blind she started to see movement in the woods and it wasn't long before deer started coming her way. The first few groups were does and fawns and neither one of us likes shooting a doe with a fawn so she patiently waited as they unsuspectingly walked past her blind. An hour before dark the woods came alive and when the first big single doe offered a fifteen yard shot Kara sent a VPA through both lungs. Ten minutes later another group came from a different angle and another double lung shot was made. Kara texted me all excited and wondering if she should try to fill her last tag. I told her I would come down and two deer was probably good for one night. I arrived just as the sun was setting and we took some photos then the work started. A burger and a beer tasted good at the local bar that night and sleep came quickly for us all.

The next morning, I left Kara and Bo sleep-



ing in the motel room and made the short drive out to the woods. Sipping coffee and formulating a plan waiting for grey light I couldn't help but give thanks for our awesome lifestyle and many blessings. When the time was right I got dressed and slipped down the edge of a slough

to a funnel stand that always sees good action in November. Shortly after daylight I start seeing deer and it wasn't long before a lone doe strolled past me. My 58# Yellowstone longbow zipped a VPA through both lungs and she was down a short thirty yards away. I said my thanks and nocked another arrow hoping for another opportunity. A storm was brewing on the horizon and the wind started howling through the trees. I was only eight feet up in a bushy cluster and I decided to sit it out for a while but told myself I'd get out if it started blowing any harder. After an hour and not much more deer movement I figured it was time to get out. I slowly climbed down and just as my feet touched the ground I saw a small buck chasing a doe my way. The high winds and moving branches helped conceal my motion as I readied for a shot. I quickly nocked an arrow and as they passed me ten yards away I drew and shot in one fluid motion. The hit was a little far back but I assumed I got liver and one lung. Electing to back out and give her some time I made my way back to the truck and drove back to pick up Kara and Bo. This was going to be my little guys first blood trail and I was excited to share the experience! Upon returning to the woods Kara loaded Bo onto her back and I took the lead on the scarce blood trail. All the leaves had recently fallen and the forest floor was covered in them. Unfortunately, the high winds were literally blowing away the blood trail and it took a little work to find her. Bo slept for most of the trailing but woke just as we found her and started pointing saying, "der, der, der!" She had died only eighty yards from my first doe but had made a big horseshoe to get there. A few quick photos were snapped and the field dressing chores were undertaken. I was easily able to get my quad to the deer and loaded them both for the trip out. We had deer stacked like cord wood in the back of the truck on the way home and thankfully the weather stayed cool. Those big does ended up feeding brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, mothers, fathers, and grandparents in three states. That's my kind of Christmas shopping!





A Bird in the Hand...

By Randy Brookshier

Beats two in the bush, as the old saying goes. That adage certainly holds true when chasing a grouse with a traditional bow!

I met up with some fellow P.B.S. members, John Vargo, Nathan Yazel and his son Hunter, in Wyoming this past September to participate in a members elk hunt that was being hosted by Jeff Holchin. Jeff had selected a great area for the hunt, beautiful mountains and lots of game in the area. Some mornings I saw herds of over one hundred elk and most days could hear bugling throughout the day. Spending the days locating numerous elk trails, wallows and even sheds kept us excited and you would think that it would be easy to stay focused on the task at hand. Instead, we found it easy to become distracted as the area has a heavy population of another western game animal... grouse!

Several elk hunts that started the day with noble intentions rapidly descended to traipsing up and down the ridges and drainages searching the junipers for targets of opportunity.

That area of Wyoming is home to several species of grouse but the immediate area we were hunting was populated with ruffed grouse and blue grouse. The ruffed proved to be the more wary of the two while the blue grouse was just accommodating enough to entice us to sacrifice our arrow supply in their pursuit.

If I remember correctly, I encountered blue grouse every day that I was out there. Being a semi experienced elk hunter, I had wisely packed several blunt tipped, older arrows for stump shooting around camp and for small game encounters. I exhausted this supply fairly rapidly and had to resort to heating broadheads off of the ends of some of my douglas fir arrows and attaching blunt heads. A shot at a grouse sitting, very temptingly, on the end of a pine limb high above your head generally has only two results... a grouse in hand or an arrow that likely impacts in the next county over. I did have one exception to that rule. One afternoon I shot a blue grouse up in a pine and watched my three bright yellow feathers bury into its side. Instead of the expected result of having the grouse drop to the



ground, it set its wings and flew away with my arrow visibly protruding through both sides. Nathan, Hunter and I watched it sail into an open area several hundred yards away and despite us spending a long time searching for it, were never able to recover neither the bird or my arrow.

I saw several flocks of five or more birds and one morning I crossed paths with a flock of nine in a trail. I was lucky enough to take one of them and headed back to camp. Later that afternoon I was telling that tale around camp and it took no prompting from me for both Nathan and Hunter to sign on for an excursion back to the area. We headed out on a grouse safari! We did manage to find the birds and get some shooting in.

I believe each of us managed to harvest at least one grouse while out there, as well as loose or break at least one arrow. My personal arrow losses were considerably higher. Most of our bowhunting adventures are serious, isolated affairs. Days spent alone in tree stands or living out of a spike camp while listening to elk bugles. While I thoroughly enjoy those times, I really enjoyed chasing the

grouse with a couple of other guys. Made me feel like I was fifteen years old again. I've told several people that it would be worth the trip to go back there with nothing but a back quiver full of blunts and a couple good friends.

As enjoyable as they were to chase as a diversion to elk hunting, they were even more enjoyable as an addition to the menu. Jeff makes a delicious grouse spaghetti dish on pasta. I found that cubing them, sprinkling the cubes with seasoned pepper and a little rosemary and then pan frying them in butter was amazing! We would finish up a skillet of grouse and almost immediately make the comment... "We need to get more of these!"

The area I hunt in Virginia has a decent, but declining ruffed grouse population. A fellow would be lucky to get a bow shot at one every ten years or so. It was refreshing, and a lot of fun, to be in them and chase them with traditional archery gear. Sometimes even successfully! All in all, an excellent diversion away from the seriousness of bow hunting and excellent table fare to boot.

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Self-Quarantining for the Summer in a Bison Blind



By Dennis Dunn

For seventy one days, total — in unbroken stints of five, thirty five, and thirty one days I spent the summer of 2020 self-quarantining in a Double Bull blind, in an upright chair, for twelve hours a day. My goal was to harvest with my recurve and a wood arrow a true “Pumpkinhead” old bison bull from the House Rock herd on the Kaibab Plateau in northern Arizona. I wasn’t sure my eighty-year-old spine was going to survive the endurance marathon, but somehow it managed.

The reader may be aware that over the past dozen years or so, virtually all of that herd has migrated up onto the plateau and into the northern half of the Grand Canyon National park — where, of course, they can’t be hunted. Because the herd has grown to over 1200, by park service estimates, both AZG&F and the service encourage hunting for them over salt from blinds — situated in close proximity to the northern Park boundary. The various salt locations are stretched out over about twenty five miles on an east/west axis, more or less parallel to the boundary. They are all main-

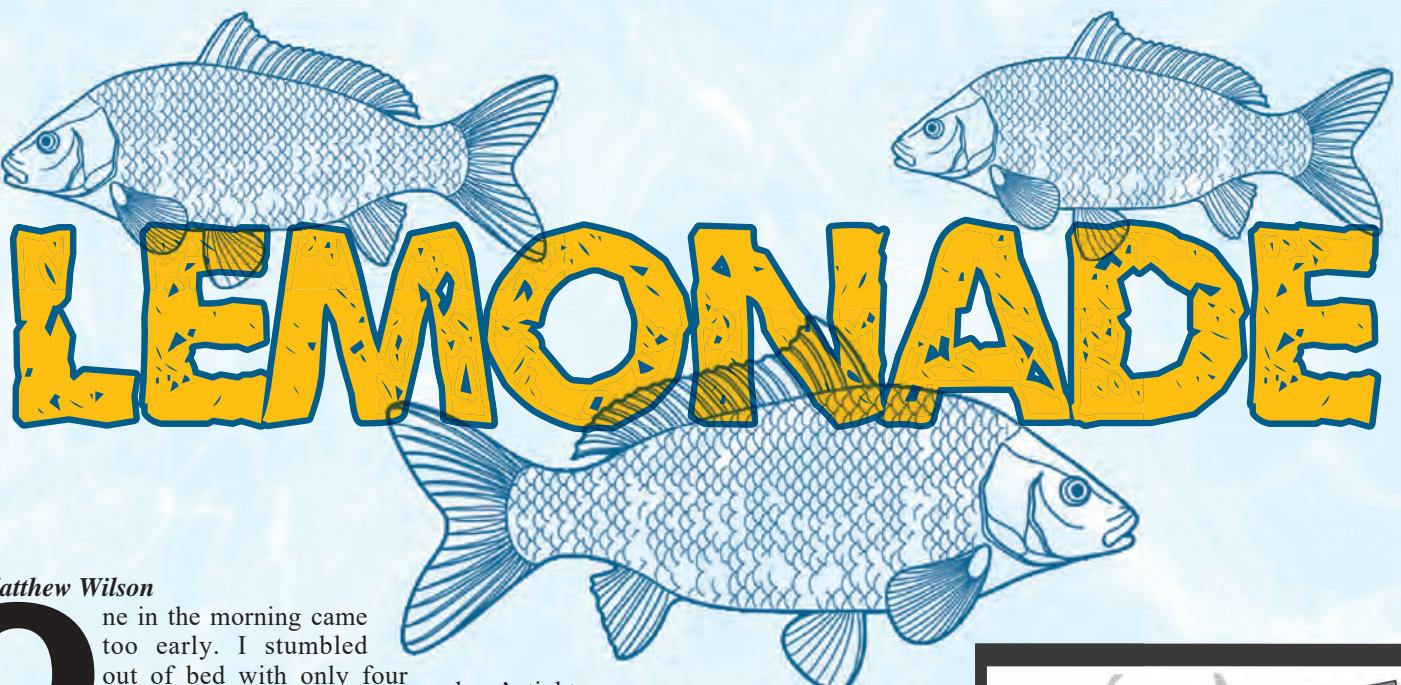
tained by a phenomenal outfitter named Russ Jacoby, of Flagstaff, AZ.

The bison are hunted virtually year-round, and almost all the bison killed are taken from blinds. “Spot & Stalk” is impossible because they get shot at all the time, and most of their visits to the salts are nocturnal. Occasionally, however, they give in to their craving for salt, make a mistake, and sneak across the boundary during daylight hours — especially when it is very hot, or during the dark-of-the-moon periods. That is what provides the patient hunter an occasional opportunity. AZG&F advertises the hunt in their regis as one of the toughest hunts in the state — and definitely not for everyone.

During my seventy-one-day “sit,” I passed up several lesser Pope & Young bulls, holding out for one of Boone & Crockett quality. The one I ended up harvesting on August 11th (three days before my tag was to expire) grossed green 115 1/8th, B & C, so it is not quite going to make that records book, but it will score high up in the P & Y records. The harvest of this trophy bull now puts me within one, single species-“upgrade” of the

first-ever, all Pope-&-Young Super Slam — accomplished with purely instinctive shooting. Tom Hoffman, Jack Frost, Walt Palmer, Randy Liljenquist, and Edwin DeYoung have all recorded all twenty-nine species in the P & Y records, but no one has ever done it without any yardage sight-pins attached to their bows for aiming. Being now in my ninth decade of life, I realize I’m in a race with Father Time. Next year — with God’s blessing — I hope to harvest a trophy-quality Alaska barren ground caribou, to complete my quest. It will be my eighth hunt for that species.

The bull pictured here weighed nearly two thousand pounds — in the estimate of Russ Jacoby. With God’s guiding hand, my Suzanne St. Charles’ fir arrow (800 grains and tipped with a 225-grain Tuffhead broadhead) transected both lungs and completely severed the pulmonary artery in between them. As a result, the bull suffered instant, massive, internal bleeding and died within seconds — traveling only eighteen yards. Providential assistance? You bet! I’ll accept it anytime it’s offered.



LEMONADE

By Matthew Wilson

One in the morning came too early. I stumbled out of bed with only four hours of sleep, got dressed and kissed my wife good-bye. Poured a cup of coffee and then poured myself into the truck for a three hour drive. Thank goodness I packed my gear the evening before. With the help of some great podcasts, and a bit more coffee, I arrived in time to set up for turkeys. I was hunting public land in northern Nevada and had a coveted tag in my pocket. It took five years to draw the tag, something I am sure must astound folks who live where turkeys are prolific. A hectic and crowded opening day led to frustration and no success. The end of the season was upon me and I was sure I would see no other hunters. I would have the place to myself.

I sleepily made my way to a corner of the river where I had previously seen some sign. As I was setting up I heard the first gobble. Until that moment I considered my beloved coffee the ultimate wake up stimulant. How wrong I was! In a flash my attitude and lazy demeanor changed. Three decoys were carefully placed, two hens and a jake, a "Ghost Blind", mirrored panels angled downward to reflect the ground and hide the hunter behind them, was set in front of a tree lined backdrop and I was on an old folding chair with my Maddog longbow ready for action.

The turkey gobbled for half an hour as the sky began to color up. Waterfowl were busy calling and flying and a covey of quail whistled to each other for assembly. The air was dead still as I heard a flapping bird cross the river. Peeking around the blind awarded me with the sight of a wonderful tom in full strut. I slid to my knees and put some tension on the

bow's tight string. For minutes and minutes the bird strutted and walked in circles. I kept thanking God and telling myself to wait for the right shot. At one point he faced away from me, tail in full display. I half rose and came to almost full draw but when he spun around I slid back behind the mirrored hide.

I should have shot him right there, but figured there was still time and it would fall into place. I figured wrong.

Three more toms flew in about fifty yards away. My bird sauntered over to them and they proceeded to have a meeting, maybe about the lifeless trio, maybe about who had the longest beard, I'm not really sure. After a few moments they sauntered off in the direction of my truck. I slipped from the blind and followed. The morning sun was just up and right at my back, possibly saving me from detection as I found the quartet out in the open on a little rise about seventy yards or so ahead. When they went over I followed them. As I peeked over, they were between myself and the Chevy, cautiously staring at the white abomination out of place on the river bottom. Finally, realizing something wasn't right, the birds took a left heading back towards the river. Seeing my face peeking just above the sagebrush, the "putt-putt" sounds started and they were all head's up as they marched right past me. I remember thinking, "This isn't how it's supposed to go," as I came to draw on the last bird. Thinking twenty-two or so yards, I watched in disappointment as my feathered shaft nearly struck the bird's foot. The range



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was a bit farther. He hopped, the lead bird took wing and the rest ran for the river. A miss.

I went back to the blind and hung out till around ten. A small walk and some looking around helped me deduce a possible evening ambush at the bend of the river where the three toms crossed hours earlier. I reset the decoys, reset the blind and slipped back to the truck. An hour's worth of catnap gave me new life as I awoke ready for more. Re-sharpening my broadhead and a little stump shooting killed another hour. I was ready for another shot at these birds.

The wind decided to play with my hunt. Not a breeze or steady, easy blow but rather a forty-mile-an-hour pain in the butt. It occurred to me that the blind was probably suffering in this gale. I headed to my haunt at noon. Sure enough, the panel blind was flopped over so I reset it and prepared myself for a bit of a sit. For two hours I held the blind, reset the blind and cussed the blind. It is a neat concept, this mirrored blind, but it definitely had its drawbacks. Wind was perhaps more of a death blow than any other factor. At two o'clock I gave in. Even if the birds came by the flapping panels would scare them away. I packed up and decided to take my gear to the truck. Thinking those toms weren't far, I would still hunt the trees where

I had last seen the birds. This terrible wind would surely make it hard for them to hear me and I may be able to sneak up for a shot. However, barely halfway to the truck I met the same four toms heading towards me. We stared at each other and they melted back into the trees. I cussed myself and lamented my lack of perseverance.

After considering the options I decided to leave the birds be and I drove to the top of the river valley to scout for others. The cliffs on top gave me a great vantage point to glass from. In disgust I saw the four toms on my chosen afternoon sit, practically in the same spot as the blind was. No

other birds showed themselves so I watched my morning's quarry till an hour or so before dark when I lost them in the brush. I wasn't worried figuring they would stay right there and I would have another chance come sunrise. At dark I ate dinner, a can of smoked oysters and a Gatorade, rolled out a sleeping bag in the bed of the truck and stared at the stars. Well, I was pretty tired so maybe I only looked at the stars before slipping off to sleep.

The next morning I was ready! Blind set, decoys set, chair set as I plopped my butt down and waited. The day dawned beautiful, almost a repeat of the previous one, with one exception.

There were no turkeys. No gobblers and no sounds, just another pretty day on the river. At around nine-thirty the wind returned. I put up with it for almost an hour and conceded defeat. A wonderful hunt with a wonderful encounter. It was a slam dunk with a shotgun for sure but I just couldn't put down the bow. Maybe next time.

As I left the

→ *continued on page 40*





continued from page 39 river I drove across the damn and got back on the highway heading towards home.



After thinking about it I turned off at the exit closest to the back of the reservoir to do a little looking around. Years back the place held quite a few carp.

Coming around the last corner to the waters edge I did indeed see carp. Thousands of carp! Carp from the shoreline to yards out in the bay. Man, I should have brought my bowfishing rig. That would have turned the lemon of a morning into lemonade. As I drove away I spied a jackrab-

bit under a tall sage, catching some shade. A quick stalk gave me a fifty yard or so bounding try at him with a judo tipped shaft. I was close!

Thinking about the carp I began to form a plan. Next week I would come back and bowfish them. It was a bit of a drive but with all the carp I was sure it would be worth it. I really could make lemonade.

The week passed slowly. I told my wife of my plans and to my amazement she said she would come. She is crazy about fishing, shoots 3D with me occasionally, but does not hunt. Still, she wanted to give it a try. I rigged up a second outfit and had her take some practice shots off the back porch one evening. All seemed well and we finished up a busy week of work and home life.

I wanted to get there early so at half past three o'clock on Saturday morning we hit the road. As Wendy slept, I sipped coffee and listened to some music. Work tried to call me out but I just let the phone ring.

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I couldn't wait to let an arrow go at those fish! We pulled in and paused to get a feel for the place. Last week I had the spot to myself. On this day there were about a dozen campers nearby. The pandemic is definitely wearing on people, they need to be outside, I thought. I held no grudge to the "intrusion" and definitely felt the same way. We grabbed a little corner and got to it.

The carp seemed to know people were around. Most of the right on the shore fish of last week were now about fifteen yards out. A bit far for my wife's light bow. But if we stayed still for a bit a few seemed to drift in. We just had to be patient.

Wendy got a few shots. All misses, and all over the top of the fish. Pretty typical for a novice bowfisher and I reminded her of the waters refraction. "When you hold below the fish, hold a bit lower," I told her. Finally, a few drift within six or seven yards and Wendy connected! As exciting as taking a critter with a bow is I think it is even better watching someone else do it, especially if it is a friend or loved one. With a triumphant shout Wendy lifted the arrowed fish up for me to see, then shrieked and almost dropped it as it slid down the shaft onto her hand. I laughed and helped her get it free of the arrow and into the cooler.

I shot a couple of fish and then remembered a spot on the other side of the dam that held some bigger guys. Taking Wendy we went and took a peek. Sure enough, half a dozen bigger fish were tailing around a flood gate. Wendy missed one and as she is retrieving her arrow I picked a good one giving me a broadside. A good hit rewarded me with a fifteen or so pound fish and good fight. I was dreaming of that shot all week, what a gift to have it happen in real time!

As the morning wore on more and more people showed up. Some seem to had no concept of keeping distance and literally camped out

right on top of us. We packed up and moved to another spot, thinking to fish with rod and reel for a bit. But as we were rigging up I looked and saw a disturbance in a little cove. My first thought was bullfrog but then I caught the back of a carp cruising through the grass. "Wendy, grab your bow and follow me!" As we approached the carp I watched my wife's body language. I think that a person can take game with a bow and it can affect them. Older people seem to react to it differently than younger people when they experience their first time taking an animal's life. I wasn't really sure how Wendy felt about her first carp kill and if she would do it again, but when I showed her the fish all that was put aside. She hunted that second fish! Crouching low, Wendy slipped in, bow half drawn. At the right time she eased up, came to a good draw and sent the fiberglass shaft downrange. At the hit the carp sped off and wrapped the line around a semi submerged bush. Being a good husband I stripped down to shorts and went in to get it. She laughed at me as I believe a good wife should. Carp number two was in her hands, a nice four to five-pound fish. Hero pics were taken and we looked for more but it wasn't meant to be. The day was warming up, sleepy campers were out and in the water. The carp seemed to melt into the deeper parts of the lake. Our adventure had come to an end.

On the drive home I thought about our adventure. Years of waiting for a turkey tag trickle into a few hours of bowfishing, the culmination of which led to Wendy joining the ranks of hunters who have taken game with bow and arrow. I was disappointed about an unfilled tag, though I have stacks of them at home. I tried to salvage a "failure" into success with skewered fish. For awhile I thought I had made lemonade. But as I looked at the smile and happy content look on my wife's face sitting next to me I realized what the real lemonade was about. I didn't lose anything after all, I was just unaware of the true prize. The lemonade was already made and sitting right there. I just needed to take a sip.

Canned Carp

As I age the thought of not utilizing everything possible of the game I take tends to bother me. Bow killed carp in my younger years were always used as fertilizer, dug into the garden or

under the rose bushes. This time would be a little different. I would eat these carp. At the least I thought I could rack it up to a sense of 'been there done that'. Fried jackrabbit being a prime example.

A little research led me to canning carp. Pro carp eaters suggested that the many bones would dissolve or be too soft to notice. I filleted the fish, removed the bloodlines as much as possible and cubed it all up, ignoring the many little bones.

A few simple ingredients were added, mainly salt, tabasco and BBQ sauces and some apple cider vinegar. There are literally dozens of recipes available online with a quick search. Clean and prepared canning jars were filled to within an inch or so of the top, ingredients added and lids sealed. The jars were placed in a pressure cooker at ten pounds for ninety minutes, removed and left to cool.

I can say with one hundred percent certainty that this was no fried jackrabbit! The meat was wonderful, bones a non-issue. It was so similar to canned salmon that I'm sure I could fool the pickiest eater. I urge you to try it. Easy to prepare and well worth the effort.

The AMS Retriever

Old school bowfishing setups are plain cool, I have some seventies era Bear fishing reels that work fine. One big drawback is they noticeably effect range and slow down an already heavy fiberglass fish arrow that much sooner. The AMS retriever seems to address those issues head on. However, it is designed to mount right up along the sight window of the bow. I love my longbows and that just wouldn't work. With the help of a traditional gadget adapter, an eight inch carriage bolt, some washers and nuts, it was easy to modify the AMS retriever to quickly attach to any bow. You do have to cradle your bow when reeling up the arrow but once figured out it is relatively easy.

Gear

Wendy was shooting a Saxon longbow, pulling twenty-five pounds at twenty-six inches. Matthew was shooting a Maddog longbow, fifty-one pounds at twenty-eight inches. Fiberglas fish arrows and AMS retriever reels, modified to fit a Traditional Gadget Adapter.



Marfa Eats



Mississippi Pot Roast

Directions:

This is an Instant Pot recipe but any pressure cooker should work. I'm sure this can be done slow cooking as well. Start with the Instant Pot set on the "sauté" setting. Pour in the oil and let it heat up. Now add the meat one piece at a time. We're just wanting to brown it on all sides so as pieces are added, keep them all moving around. They will try to stick to the bottom. After the meat has browned on all sides, remove it from the heat. Now toss in the onions. Keep them moving and stirring as they cook down (about 3-4 minutes). This will also deglaze the bottom of the pot. At this point cancel the sauté mode on the IP. Next stir in the garlic and let it cook for a minute or so. Now stir in the beef broth and the juice from the pepperoncini. Add the two packs of ranch dip and the gravy mix. Now destem the pepperoncini and add as many as you want. All of them is about right (it won't be spicy). Now put the meat back in and add the $\frac{1}{2}$ stick of butter. Close up the lid and set the IP on "pressure cook" for a 65 minutes at high pressure. Be sure and cancel the "keep warm" setting on the IP if it is on. After the timer goes off, do a 15 minute natural release then do a quick release. Now remove the meat from the pot. Return the IP to "sauté" to get the juices boiling.

Gravy:

In a separate pan, soften the butter and add in the flour. Mix it to a smooth consistency of frosting. After the juices are boiling add in this roux. Whisk it in for a minute or so and then turn off the heat. As everything cools the gravy will thicken up. Pour it over the meat and enjoy.

By Mark Wang

I hope you guys are hungry. Here is the next edition of the "Marfa Eats" series. In this installment, I've included an "Instant Pot" recipe. As I noted in the first article, most of our meals are precooked and frozen for the travel. After arrival they are thawed and reheated. This saves on prep time thus, increasing hunting time. There are some meals of course, that are easily prepared in short order. These can be done on the spot with ingredients obtained locally or brought to camp. The pot roast recipe is best made beforehand.

Pot Roast Ingredients:

1. $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oil
2. 4-5 lb. chuck roast or venison roast cut into approximately 3"x3" M/L chunks
3. 1 large onion diced
4. 2tbs crushed garlic
5. 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup beef broth
6. 16 oz. jar of pepperoncini
7. 2-1oz. packs of dry ranch dip mix
8. 2 packs beef gravy mix,
9. $\frac{1}{2}$ stick salted butter.

Gravy Ingredients:

1. 6 tbs. salted butter, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup all-purpose flour.
2. A note here, I use "Better than Bouillon" to make my beef broth.





Crawfish Pie

This one comes from the world famous LSU fan, Russell Lantier. For this reason it must be simple and easy to make. And it is. It is also delicious.

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium sauce pan, over medium heat, melt the butter and sauté the onions until tender. Add soup. Stir often.

In a small bowl, add cornstarch and slowly stir in the evaporated milk. Stir until well blended. Stir the milk mixture into the soup and onions. Continue to cook until everything is blended.

Add green onions, crawfish tails, salt and cayenne. Cook for 10 minutes.

Now, with the pie shells on a cookie sheet, fill them up. Bake for around 25-30 minutes until golden brown.

It's that easy. Enjoy!

Crawfish Pie Ingredients:

1. 1 stick of butter
2. 1 medium onion, chopped
3. 1 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ can of condensed cream of shrimp soup
4. 1 T. cornstarch
5. 1 small can (5 oz.) evaporated milk
6. $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped green onions
7. 1 lb. crawfish tails (crayfish or crawdad tails may be used in substitution)
8. Salt, cayenne peppers, to taste
9. 15-17 3 inch frozen pie shells. (Dutch Ann brand 8 per box if available) or 1 large pie shell



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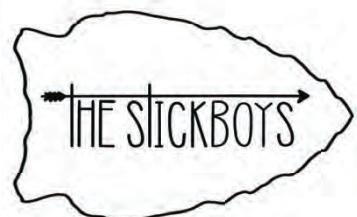
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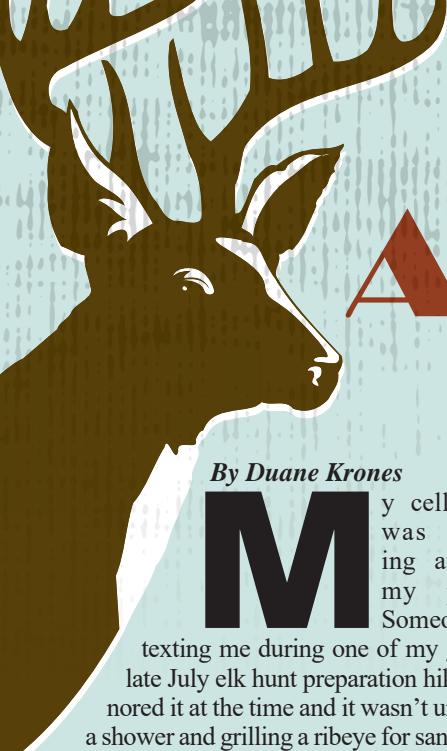
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The Atypical Buck

By Duane Krones

My cell phone was buzzing away in my pocket. Someone was texting me during one of my grueling late July elk hunt preparation hikes. I ignored it at the time and it wasn't until after a shower and grilling a ribeye for sandwiches with Lisa that I remembered it. It was a grainy zoom picture from my neighbor, Craig. Two big whitetail bucks in velvet standing side by side. Man they had good racks!. He wrote, "Duane, take a look at these two bucks I spotted this morning in the beans. I think one is an Atypical".

Craig is not a deer hunter but being a farmer he knows his deer. The velvet makes every buck look great but the body size of the one buck was really impressive. He also had something going on with the right main beam and his brow tines were a big mass of velvet on the left. I could tell that his rack was big but his head and body was so big it put him at a proportional disadvantage.

I sort of liked Craig's term 'Atypical' and I smiled when I read it. I called Craig up to talk about the bucks. Turns out he had seen them from his house on a few occasions but this was the only time he could get a picture of them. Throughout August I kept my eyes open and between the two of us we spotted these two bucks often enough for me to realize that they had set up shop near the three acre patch of woods owned by my other neighbor, Rick. Rick is also a non-hunting farmer. He farms a small tillable portion of my property and we give each other access.

This woodlot is surrounded by crop fields on all sides. It is lower than the surrounding farm land and water drains through it to the west. The property owner adjoining the southwest quarter of the patch is Mark, a guy who I've known forever and he used to be a part of our archery club in the late 70's. Mark doesn't hunt much these days. I myself had not hunted those woods for over six years partly because it was so open that it was hard to approach without spooking deer and they always knew how to play the wind for bedding. Besides, Mark's kids used to try to bow hunt it as well and I figured it was best I kept

clear.

With Mark's kids grown and moved, the area was less disturbed and these two bucks had figured it out. Mark is a hobby farmer and grows some grain for his cattle or pigs he raises for food. He does not use any modern methods so his two small corn fields were wild with tall weeds. Heavy rain had washed out some of it and the deer were tearing the rest of it to pieces. Initially I thought it was CRP with volunteer corn growth until later on.

harvested perhaps even moving to my side of the road. I would have to hunt this stand before harvest and with a westerly wind only.

Harvest was delayed due to heavy rain in October. The deer in the area had standing water all summer and the fall was no different. They would remain as long as they had everything they needed. I was patient, waiting until the wind was westerly before I made my first attempt in early October.

I live across the road north of the woods so



The vine scrape where I passed a shot at the big typical 10 pointer two nights prior.

Late in August I set a tree stand about two thirds of the way south in the wood lot. It was buggy and hot that day and I was in a hurry, getting bitten up as I worked. I was relying on memory from past deer movement patterns and what looked like a crisscross of old trails. The two bucks were using the northwest side of the woods to do their daily activities. That was easy to see by the disturbed grass and abundance of tracks. I also knew they had to be using Mark's weedy corn patches and the brushy draw for bedding and cover. I felt like it was best to be near the bedding cover. Soybeans surrounded the remaining three fourths of the woods, with large cornfields beyond east and south. I knew they would change their habits when the crops were

I had to walk about a half mile and steer plenty east to circle around and enter the woods from downwind. A morning hunt resulted in numerous does and fawn sightings with no sign of any bucks. I noticed a tall dead vine hanging vertical about twenty-two yards west of my stand. It looked like the deer might be rubbing or messing with it. It had become separated from its roots and was tossed around with the breeze creating a bare spot on the ground ready made for scraping.

I was surprised that I hadn't noticed it before. It reminded me of a giant hub scrape that I hunted in Illinois many years ago. It too had a vine hanging in the center of it. I was convinced that every deer in the area visited that stinking scrape. One thing I knew for sure, was that this



The view from my stand looking west. I had a pretty good view of the weedy corn patch and the brushy draw that the two bucks were living in all summer. I first saw the approaching buck at the center of this photo as he bulldozed his way straight towards me.

year's rut would include this vine scrape. I decided to let things alone for a while.

Late in October conditions were right for another attempt. The wind was more west than north and using a similar east side approach I entered the woods at midday. I saw plenty of does again. They were still with their fawns. A couple does hung around causing me to be a bit more careful about noise and movements. I did some grunt calls west, towards Mark's weedy corn without result. I could hear an approaching combine behind me. The farmers were harvesting the big cornfield on the other side of the beans to the east.

I love the sounds of harvest while hunting but as the sun dropped low I became aware of another thing I love about harvest. The wind had died off and the cool thermals, slight as they were, brought the sweet smell of picked corn right past my nose. I released some fluffy milkweed seeds and watched them drift down wind just north of the vine scrape, which by now showed more signs of use. My scent stream had swapped ends nearly one hundred and eighty degrees. I decided to stay put hoping my stand height would spare me.

The sun was just going down when I became aware of a large deer southwest of me and moving north along the edge of the woods and the weedy corn. As it entered the woods straight west, it was clear that this was one of the two bigger bucks. He came straight to the vine and rubbed his head on it and stood still for a while. He had a nice ten point rack extending past his ears.

He carried himself with that big buck swagger and he really was a sight. Then I heard more

sounds out in the weedy corn. Another deer was lurking just out of view. I wondered if it was his big companion. I noticed one of the does had moved down wind of me and I braced to hear her blow out of there any second. At the same time the ten pointer worked around the scrape and offered me a good shot but knowledge of the other buck, possibly right there in the corn, caused me to pass the opportunity.

Eventually the ten pointer moved off in her direction but seemingly uninterested. They were nearly out of sight when I heard them running off. My height must have given me an advantage with scent drift until they were further down-range. I strained to hear the unseen deer in the corn. All was quiet as darkness set in. I got down quietly and re-traced my route back home.

The next day was Saturday and I hunted elsewhere. I passed a small eight point as he mindlessly chased a few annoyed does. The weather was becoming unsettled. At 10:30, I quit hunting, went home and headed back across the road to make a stand adjustment. I had decided that I needed to try to set up between the hanging vine scrape and the weedy cornfield edge west of it. I was convinced that both big bucks lived in the weedy corn patch. I knew it would be risky to move a stand but I decided it was worth the risk. I entered the woods again from the east and was relieved that I had not spooked any deer. I took my stand down quietly and quickly checked the vine scrape as I looked for a suitable tree. The vine was chewed up and plenty of hoof drags showed on the bare dirt. I was discouraged by the lack of suitable trees for my stand. I finally settled for a broken 'Y' shaped maple that required some hatchet work. It was not going to be ideal

but it was in the right spot. Extra chain extension links were needed to get my hang-on stand cables long enough to get the platform close to level. I would have to bring them in later. I was hoping the broken 'Y' would help break up my outline and I wouldn't look like a cub bear on a flag pole. The sky became a heavy overcast as I left the woods. This is good, I thought to myself. It's supposed rain hard tonight and the winds will be strong. Maybe I pulled it off.

Saturday night was an east wind and I climbed into a favorite river bluff stand. That hunt was cut short by two neighbors looking for a poorly hit deer. I had seen the little buck and it was hobbling along about eighty yards in front of them. I got their attention and told them to leave the deer alone for a few hours then take up the trail or they were going to lose it.

The wind blew hard all Saturday night with periods of rain. Sunday morning was a bust and I sat in church thinking about deer hunting. After dinner it was still gusting over twenty-five miles per hour when I headed across the road. The sun was out and the wind was straight out of the west. I was plenty early and should be on stand by 2:30 p.m. Entering the woods again from the east, I spooked a young doe from its bed. I barely heard her run with all the wind noise.

I had to lengthen my platform cables with additional chain splice links to get things more level. This worked and I found the platform suitable. I got situated and began to assess my shooting lanes and make some mental plans for possible shots. I found that I had limbs in the way that I had not noticed in my haste Saturday. I got down and found a long branch to twist the offending limbs free. Thank goodness it was so windy.

I also occupied my time playing with my Go-Pro camera just taking some embarrassing selfie footage that I never intended anyone but my wife and family to see. At one point a couple does wandered east of me and one of them blew her nose at me for a ridiculous amount of time. Again I was glad for the high winds to cover it up.

I had hopes that the wind would blow itself out by sundown. But as the sun got lower, the winds remained. I began to think my mind was playing tricks on me. I thought I was hearing grunts from the weedy corn but a partially fallen tree trunk behind me rubbing another tree in the wind made a darn good grunt sound, too. I'd hear corn stalks rustle out of sync with the wind and at one point I was sure I could smell a deer. I really wanted those bucks to be in that corn field.

Finally the sun was setting orange and the winds subsided giving way to a peaceful calm. Suddenly antlers were smashing in the corn field. Two bucks were sparring near the brushy draw running north and south about a hundred yards west of me. I strained to see moving corn with the low sun burning my eyes. Then all was quiet.

As the sun dis-

→ *continued to page 46*

appeared I could finally see the field clearly. The cardinals began to chirp, signaling approaching darkness, but I had time. I inhaled through my grunt tube to produce a low powerful grunt. No audible reaction from the deer in the corn. I put my top front teeth hard into the back of my lower lip and blew as long and as hard as I could. The reaction was immediate and violent. I could hear and see corn stalks snapping off in a straight line, heading right at me. The low pitched soft grunts clearly heard in the commotion. I finally saw him and my reaction was, he's big. I was whispering, "Come on big boy, come on, that's it I gotcha... I gotcha... easy does it... draw when he goes behind the tree, the hand doesn't leave the face".

He had two options for passing my tree. I'd hoped for the left side and he took it never hesitating. As he passed a rotten leaning tree trunk I drew as I'd planned and shot him at about six yards. The arrow hit hard and I saw the big hole and arrow angling back as he circled in high gear before quickly stopping in the safety of the corn in partial view.

I grunted and hissed again thinking he must have thought another buck stuck him from the blind side. He didn't move an inch. I could see a nearly two feet of arrow sticking up. I didn't like that. I thought I had seen plenty of penetration, maybe the brush he ran through caused it to work upwards. I tried to reassure myself that I shoot a thirty-four inch arrow from point to nock and two feet of shaft showing is still deep. I could see the yellow and white parts of my feathers flagging his position.

He was about fifty to sixty yards off and I'll never forget the sight of those feathers moving to the rhythm of the buck's breathing. Nothing else moved but my arrow. Here was a real survivor, using learned behavior that allowed him to mature. There was no panic, no wild run, just calm deliberate actions of a great buck. He slowly melted into the corn without a sound. Shortly after, I heard him either fall or plunk down to bed. I couldn't be sure. I thought I heard a soft gasp with it. Then a few seconds later, one slight rustle sound and all was quiet.

My hearing is near perfect but the blood was rushing in my ears and I began to shake pretty bad as the delayed physical effects set in. I called my wife to let her know I wouldn't be home until after dark. I intended to give him four hours because I'd convinced myself that I had made a liver hit and I didn't think at the



I wanted a good daylight picture so after a short hunt on my property the next day, I brought him in to our old saw mill site. Dad would have liked that a lot.

time that the arrow had penetrated all the way. A few raccoons were all that stirred as I made my way out of the woods. An orange harvest moon was rising and I struggled with doubt and worries about needless suffering on the hike out.

It was 10:30 p.m. when I returned, equipped for tracking and hoping I didn't have to. I'd had conversations with the neighbors so they would know what was going on. The picked bean field and moonlight provided a quiet approach to the south end of the cornfield. I paused there for a while to listen. It was dead calm and nothing moved in the corn.

I circled through the woods back to my tree stand and entered the corn, heading north to where I had watched the fletching of my arrow disappear. There was no blood trail and I had expected that. I was going to be searching for evidence of a bed or a dead deer.

I found him laying sprawled out about fifteen yards from where I last saw the fletching disappear. He had not died in a bed. My reaction was of relief because all I could think about was him suffering. He had died quickly. He was stone cold, long since passed on. My arrow had gone through the back strap, into the ribcage, angled back through the diaphragm and destroyed the liver before poking partway through the bottom. The brush he had run through had pulled the arrow upwards and had probably

done additional damage. The big modified Magnus Classic Broadhead had done its job.

He kept his identity to the end with his head partially hidden in weeds and downed corn stalks. He was the bigger of the two bucks. The thing that struck me was his huge body. His neck and head were massive. Struggling to move him I figured his weight easily over two hundred and fifty pounds. He had a thick heavy typical ten point rack with a backwards point on his right beam, a small fork on the left brow tine and an additional curling brow tine on the left side. A total of twelve points. A fine 'Atypical Buck', as neighbor Craig would say.

I felt sad that he was gone, glad he didn't suffer, and a bit satisfied about how I'd gone about hunting this buck. Some of my favorite whitetail hunting stories were written by Rodger Rothhaar. I felt as though I'd lived out one of Rodger's hunts near weedy corn fields, with the soft deep grunting of an approaching giant. I ran my hands over his ears and neck. All I could say was, "It was just your day boy...what a buck you are... thank you boy." I called my wife Lisa and simply said, "I found him." "I knew ya would. Come and get me," she replied. I hiked back home to get her and we hauled him out together in the moonlight.



Eric Dickerson killed this bull with a 52 pound Timberhawk recurve and 190 grain Tuffhead broadhead at 15 yds.



Tom Vanasche with an Alaskan grizzly this August.

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Corey Bailey took this doe with the selfbow in Nebraska.



Jerry Oliver Kentucky 2020 Harvest.



This buck bedded down 12 yards in front of Tim Jones' tree. That was his last mistake. I made my own bow, and shoot Zwickie No Mercy single bevel broadheads.

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