

# FRONT SIGHT

**SCI**  
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

July 2008, Issue 3



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7/22 - 6:23 p.m.  
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April 30, 2008

Mr. Tim Hauck  
Safari Club International Mid Michigan Chapter  
P.O. Box 486  
Mount Pleasant, MI 48804-0486

Dear Tim:

Thank you for your gift of \$500.00 supporting the Roger and Debra Card Museum. In order to earn their degrees, students increasingly rely upon the kind of support you have so generously extended. On their behalf, I want to thank you for helping them fulfill their potentials to the fullest.

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Sincerely,

Jeremy Miskler  
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Chad G. Paine  
145 E. Lathrop  
Walkerville, MI 49459  
April 30, 2008

Mr. Tim Hauck  
Safari Club International  
PO Box 486  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804

Dear Mr. Hauck:

I would like to thank you for sponsoring Walkerville Public Schools for the National Archery in the Schools Program. Your sponsorship means a lot to me and my students. In the current economic times our school would not have been able to include this program in our curriculum.

Thanks to your generosity, many students in Walkerville have been exposed to and have enjoyed the sports of archery and bow hunting. So far I have been able to teach the unit once and observed amazing participation and enjoyment from the students. You have literally put a smile on kids' faces all around this school.

I would like to personally thank you for giving me the opportunity to teach this curriculum by providing me with the necessary equipment. I look forward to promoting the sports of bow hunting and archery in my school district. If there is anything I can do support for the Safari Club International please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you again for you

Sincerely,

Chad G. Paine  
Director of Athletics & Physical Education  
Walkerville Public Schools  
145 E. Lathrop  
Walkerville, MI 49459  
(231) 873-4850 ext. 2251

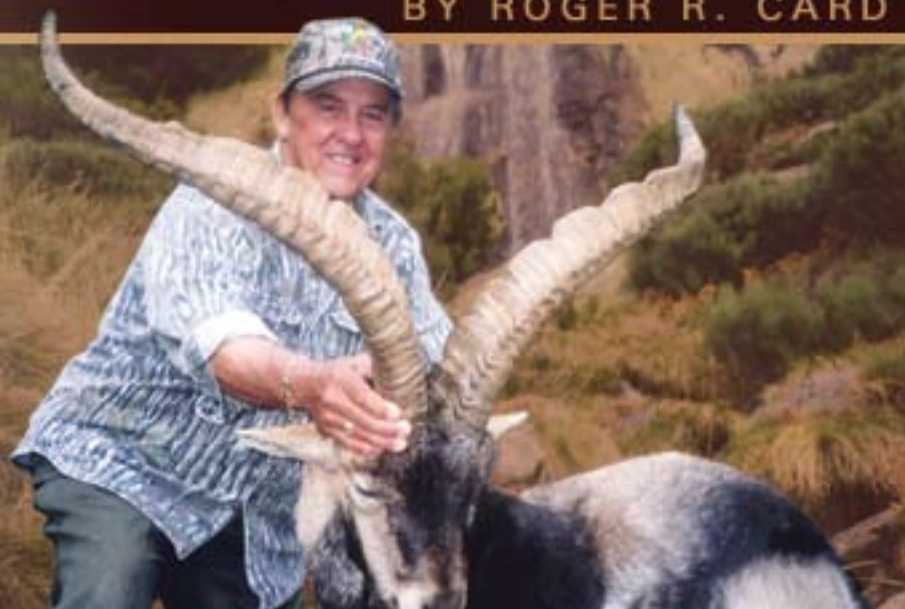
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# A Hunter's Journey Through Life

BY ROGER R. CARD

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To submit material to the Front Sight:

Write: Mary Harter  
1375 N. Cedar Point Drive  
Weidman, MI 48893

Or call: h 989 644-2333 • c 989 506-3577

Or e-mail: harter65@gmail.com

## Standing Committees

Chairmen are listed first

**Annual Awards Banquet/Fundraiser** - Tim Hauck, Don and Mary Harter, John Ayris, Bill Brown.

**Chapter Trophy Awards** - Joanne Witte, Roger Card, Jeff Chaulk, Larry Higgins, Dick and Jackie Stockmar, Art Street, Arnie and Cammie Weigel, Larry Witte, Don Harter, Tim Becker.

**Conservation/Government Affairs** - Dick Stockmar

**Outfitter Donations** - Roger Froling, Tim Hauck, Don Harter, Kevin Unger, Ed Peters

**Education** - Don Harter, Jeff Chaulk

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**Handicapped Youth Hunt** - Nan Riley

**Veterans' Hunts** - Ben Benzing

**Shooting Sports** - Bill Brown, John Ayris

**Public Relations** - Terry Anderson

**The Front Sight** is the official publication of the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International, keeping club members informed about local club activities, and encouraging and defining good sportsmanship. The Front Sight Magazine is published quarterly: January, April, July and October. Distribution 352+. Please support our advertisers! Call or write them for catalogs and information on their products and services. Make sure you tell them you saw their ad in the **Front Sight**.

## PRESIDENT

Tim Hauck  
P. O. Box 329  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0329  
w 989 772-4737, c 989 330-2472  
timbch@voyager.net

## VICE-PRESIDENT

Don Harter  
1375 N. Cedar Pt. Drive  
Weidman, MI 48893  
h 989 644-2333, c 989 330-1065  
harter65@gmail.com

Terry Anderson  
P. O. Box 520  
Houghton Lake, MI 48629  
989 366-8223  
terry@charterinternet.com

John Ayris  
206 Surrey Road  
St. Louis, MI 48880  
w 989 681-2187  
h 989 681-5450

Rick Bennett  
188 S. Bamber Rd.  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-9051  
w 989 773-4415

William Brown  
1084 El Camino Grande  
Lake Isabella, MI 48893  
h 989 644-8631  
c 989 506-0034

## TREASURER

David Rusch  
1600 N. Mission Road  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
w 989 773-9042, ext 116  
c 989 560-7014  
david.r@sttsecurity.com  
maxine@sttsecurity.com

## SECRETARY

Dick Stockmar  
7980 Island Court  
Stanwood, MI 49346-8920  
231 972-7085  
stockmars@charter.net

## DIRECTORS

Jeffrey Chaulk, M.D.  
2969 Brookview Ln.  
Gaylord, MI 49735-9384  
h 989 732-8069  
w 989 732-6455  
vision@chartermi.net

Roger Froling  
1000 Dildine  
Ionia, MI 48846-9584  
h 616 527-4622  
c 616 291-0066  
rfroling@chartermi.net

Mark Marlette  
8923 11 Mile Road  
Mecosta, MI 49332-9754  
h 616 530-5830  
w 231 972-7102  
markmarlette@comcast.net  
c 616 446-0721

## EDITOR

Mary Harter  
1375 N. Cedar Point Drive  
Weidman, MI 48893  
h 989 644-2333  
c 989 506-3577  
harter65@gmail.com

Edward Peters  
4240 E. Millbrook Road  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-8126  
w 989 772-5494  
c 989 621-2344  
h 989 772-6104

Kevin Unger  
122 E. Pickard  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
w 989 773-1711  
c 989 560-7288

Kevin E. Whaley  
13800 Thompson Drive  
Lowell, MI 49331-9393  
h 616 897-8211

Joanne Witte  
11219 Birch Park Drive  
Stanwood, MI 49346-7564  
231 796-4927  
witte@tm.net

## SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule 2008 -2009

July 7, 2008	Board	4:30 p.m.	Camp Misery
August 11, 2008	Board	4:30 p.m.	Harter's
September 8, 2008	Board Membership	4:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Riverwood Riverwood
October 6, 2008	Board	4:30 p.m.	Riverwood
November 3, 2008	Board Membership	4:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Riverwood Riverwood
December 1, 2008	Board Membership	4:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Riverwood Riverwood
January 5, 2009	Board Big Buck Night	4:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn Comfort Inn
February 2, 2009	Board	4:30 p.m.	Riverwood

## Message from the President



President, Don Harter

I would like to thank Tim Hauck for doing an outstanding job as president for the last three years. I am looking forward to being your new president. SCI, "First for Hunters" is a great organization, one of which we can all be proud to be a member.

We plan to continue our mission of Youth Education, supporting our local sportsman's clubs with their youth shooting activities and hunter safety programs, Archery in Schools program, sending children to the MUCC Camp for Kids, and sending teachers to the American Wilderness Leadership School in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Since Mary and I joined the Mid-Michigan Chapter, we have hunted in many places we had only dreamed of going. Besides harvesting many great animals, we have met many new people.

Probably the most important aspect of being a member of our chapter

is the friendships we've developed with other members of SCI.

Heading into our chapter's 30th year, we have many challenges. With our dedicated board members and hard working volunteers, we will have another successful year in the Mid-Michigan Chapter. Please communicate your thoughts and ideas to us about anything you feel would make us a better chapter.

To our members I ask for your help in increasing our membership. If every member would ask one new person to join our chapter, we could double in size. When you invite someone to our local chapter meetings and they join, we pay for their dinner. Mary and I had heard of SCI for years but didn't come and join until we were invited.

This year's Youth Hunt is scheduled for September 27 and 28, the 4th Saturday and Sunday in September. Let's plan ahead and take someone hunting.

See you at the next meeting,  
Don Harter

## Editor's Letter

The first two articles are about a 103 year old and a 13 year old on their first deer hunts. How wonderful that so many of us at all ages can enjoy hunting. The many successful youth hunter's pictures are very enjoyable and I hope to receive more for future issues. Please share your experiences with a young person and take them hunting. They will remember it as a special time for the rest of their life. And remember that no one is too old to hunt. Help an older person to enjoy it, also.

I am looking forward to Roger Card's new book, "A Hunter's Journey Through Life" which is coming out soon. I hope we can have some for sale at future meetings. Roger has so many exciting stories to share and I can't wait to read about them.

While successfully turkey hunting this spring, I saw two coyotes, a bob cat, and was entertained by sandhill cranes. Last week an eagle landed in our front yard. What special sightings in our beautiful out-of-doors.

Happy Hunting,  
Mary Harter  
harter65@gmail.com



Editor, Mary Harter



## From the December 14, 2006, Ogemaw County Herald RC (Rose City) resident hunts for the first time at 103

Julia Neubecker experienced her first-ever deer hunt November 23 in Rose City. Neubecker is 103 years old and lives with her niece, Jean Card. When Neubecker noticed Card's husband, Kim, building a wheelchair-accessible blind in the garage, she said she would like to go hunting in the blind. The Cards took her out on a beautiful, 50-degree Thanksgiving Day and, although she did not see any deer, Neubecker said she did love watching the birds and squirrels.

(Julia Neubecker is Roger Card's Aunt, now 104)





## Brochure Buck

By Leslie Holmes, age 13

My dad likes to keep an eye on the deer herd on our property in Clare by putting out trail cameras. By knowing I get the first chance at what is seen I became very interested in the pictures that were being taken. The first time we got a picture of a 9-point with a bent G-3 I told my dad that was the deer I wanted to shoot. My dad proceeded to tell me we don't just get to pick our deer out of a photo album. He said you can hope for that deer but don't expect to shoot it. We continued to get pictures of deer. My 9-point seemed to be quite photogenic.

The time finally came for us to spend the night at the camper and go out for the first day of the Youth Hunt. I thought it was pretty warm so I didn't need to wear all the hunting attire my dad had purchased for me. I was thinking it was more like a flip-flop and T-shirt day. My dad went along with it because it was my hunt.

We got out to the blind early to get set up. Surely enough, a buck and three does snuck passed us before daylight. Then a few minutes later a 7-point walked in front of our blind ten yards in front of us. My dad asked me what I thought. I told him I thought it was kind of early. Only a few minutes more had passed and more deer were walking passed but nothing shootable. Out of my dad's window he spots a lone deer coming up out of the swamp heading our way. We had a chance to get the binoculars on it and my dad all excited says, "Leslie, it's your deer!"

The buck gets out in front of our blind and stops to nibble on some grasses. I get the gun rested on the window and click the safety off. And my dad said, "Wait, I don't have the video camera." Then he said, "Ok, if you have a clear shot and you're aiming at his shoulder area, take the shot when you are ready." I got the gun steady and aimed where I wanted and pulled the trigger. I said, "Did I hit him?" He said, "I don't know but I don't see him anymore." My dad had me rack in another shell in case he got up to run away. But after a couple minutes we decided to go look where we last saw him. I secured my weapon and off we went to find my deer.



Leslie Holmes, age 13 with her 9-point "Brochure Buck". Her Parents are Scott and Sherry Holmes of Mt. Pleasant.

I ran while my dad followed. When I first spotted him I could hardly control my excitement. My dad ran over and gave me a big hug and congratulated me as I teared up with joy. This had to be one of the happiest moments of my life. I turned to my dad still teary eyed and said, "If this is how hunting makes you feel, I guess I'm a hunter!"



**Members of Mid-Michigan SCI or Isabella County Sportsman's Club may use the shooting range located at 2872 W. Millbrook Road just east of Winn Road. The lock combination is 3855 and changes yearly. Please carry membership identification on you when you visit the range.**





# Our Special Youth Hunters

Jonathan Kirschner from Powers, Michigan, has been hunting with his father, Dan, owner of Wild Spirit Guide Service, since he was three years old and went bear hunting in Maine. Since then besides hunting in Michigan and Maine, he has hunted in Wisconsin, Virginia, Ontario, and Quebec.

Jonathan's bobcat treed close to three miles from the nearest road in 24 inches of snow. He took the animal with one shot from his own 20 gauge and it was treed by his very own English hound, Stormy.

Jonathan decided to try spot and stalk for his boar hunt. They kept to within 30 yards of the 300 pound Russian boar with 3 inch cutters and the animal turned and faced them for several minutes. Finally Jonathan said, "Dad, I can make that shot easy." The boar dropped in his tracks with a shot right between the eyes. His father said he would have been nervous with most adults taking that shot but his 'little man' has really got it together.



*Jonathan Kirschner in the mountains of Virginia on a bear hunt in December of 2006 with his dogs, Stormy and Buford. Jonathan is 9 years old.*



Nick Pasch, 16, from Beal City with his first buck. Tim Schafer took Nick out hunting on Harter's property during the youth hunt. Later, Nick's mom, Betty, prepared a delicious 'thank you' venison dinner for Tim and Lori Schafer and Don and Mary Harter.



Jonathan Kirschner in January 2008 with his first 36# Michigan bobcat. Jonathan is 10 years old.



Jonathan Kirschner with a 300# Russian boar taken in April 2008 on the Wild Spirit Ranch. Jonathan is 11 years old.





Dan Miller, age 10 with his first turkey, taken April 27, 2007. Dan is the son of Bruce and Malissa Miller of Lake.



Marcy Miller, age 12, with her first buck, a 6-point taken on the September 2007 Youth Hunt. Marcy is the daughter of Bruce and Malissa Miller of Lake.



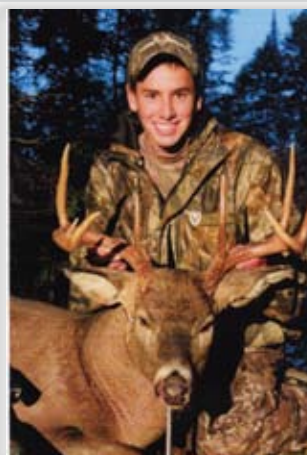
During the Youth Hunt in the Fall of 2007, Hayden Huber, age 12, from Beal City shot his 1st ever whitetail buck. This eight point weighed 130 pounds and had an inside spread of 11 inches. This buck was harvested on land belonging to friends of the family. Hayden used a 30/30 caliber rifle that used to belong to his grandpa. The buck was about 60 yards away and he only shot once.



During the winter of 2008, Hayden Huber, age 12 got his chance to harvest a Rocky Mountain Elk from a farm in Midland County. This elk weighed over 900 pounds and has an official score of 313.5. Again Hayden used the 30/30 Remington model 788 bolt action rifle that used to belong to his grandpa and only shot once using 170 grain power points.



15 year old SCI member, Blair Murphy, Jr., from Gaylord with Jeff Chaulk at Red Pines for the Youth Hunt. Jeff is taking Blair archery mule hunting this August and to RSA for an African Safari in August of 2010 for a graduation gift.



Blair Murphy, Jr.'s first buck, 10/16/2007, at Larry Higgins Red Pine Whitetails. The buck scored 128 4/8 and was 7 years old. Jeff and Larry were almost as thrilled as Blair.



## Hunting with the Next Generation

by Mary Harter

Our son, Todd Harter, came home to bow hunt for whitetails and brought his two sons, Dylan (age 7) and Cole (age 5), to hunt with him. They had both been out with him before in the blinds so knew what to expect but this time they had been practicing being quiet and sitting still. The boys were very excited and hoping they would not only see a lot of deer but watch their father take a buck.

Todd decided which blind to sit in choosing one right behind our house that was the largest to accommodate two extra bodies. He practiced with several shots as the boys called out which diamond on the target to hit. He practiced at various yardages and was ready to go out hunting.

Dylan and Cole dressed in hunting bibs and jackets as did their Dad, and off they went.



After they were all settled in the blind which is a platform in a white pine tree, a doe walked in. Dylan was fidgeting with his hands and the doe looked up at him and was gone. Oops - gotta sit very still.

A few more does and fawns came in and fed in a small rye field. There is an oak tree at the edge of the field with a buck scrape beneath it. The deer are content and are joined by a 4 point buck. The does and fawns wander over the field and come closer to the tree blind and the boys can see them close up.

The buck stays out in the field over a half hour sometimes standing perfectly still. Todd was afraid maybe he was winding them but finally he came closer. He got within shooting range.

Todd maneuvered around the boys and took a shot. It seemed like a good hit but the arrow didn't exit. Todd could hear the arrow hitting the trees as the buck ran into the woods. The boys were very excited and high fiving. They got down from the tree and found a good blood trail and a broken piece of the arrow.

Todd decided to come back home and wait for at least a half hour to give the deer time to lay down and die if he hadn't gotten that perfect double lung shot.

The boys just couldn't wait to go back and when it was finally time, I got to join them. Off we all went with our flashlights. It wasn't dark yet but we were ready for however long it would take.



Dylan Harter, at age 5, practicing hunting in the front yard.  
Fall 2004



We got back to the blind and started tracking. Blood was up on trees at least four feet. The boys and I tried to stay at last blood but that was pretty hard to do. We ran out of blood a couple of times but soon found it again. Todd found the rest of the arrow completely covered in blood. Good sign. After tracking for only a few minutes Todd said, "There he is." The buck lay dead about 45 yards from where he had

been shot. He had died quickly.

Todd had taken some movies of the blind and the boys and tracking the deer. We took some still pictures.

While Todd tagged the buck, the boys put on long plastic gloves as they had planned to do if Todd had been successful. They wanted to be part of the whole thing. Todd cut open the deer and luckily the lower body cavity had not been disturbed. He could easily empty it all on the ground. Then the anatomy lesson began. Cole was surprised that everything was warm. The boys wanted to touch most everything. Todd cut open the diaphragm and pulled out the lungs and heart and that was where the most blood was. We put the heart in a plastic bag for Cole to carry but didn't save the liver.

Todd easily hauled the deer out and off we went back to the pole barn to skin it.

When Grandpa came home from his hunt what stories the boys had to tell him. The next morning we called my father, the boy's great-grandfather who is now 95, to tell him of the events enjoyed by our next generation. I know he was teary-eyed when I told him Todd had used the knife he had given him many years ago.

Now Todd knows how much fun we had hunting with him when he was growing up.



Cole and Dylan Harter

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## Wish Hunt 2007

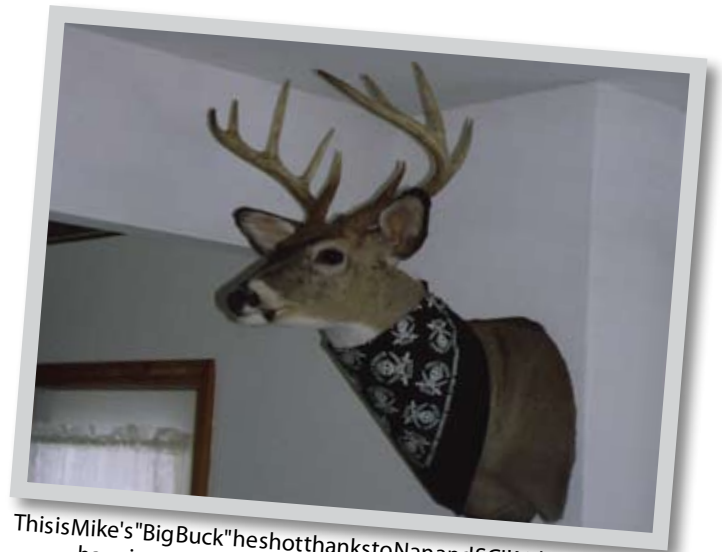
Chairman, Nan Riley

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Tony Semple Foundation for Hope, whose inspiration and mission statement is to give meaningful outdoor experiences to the youth who suffer life-threatening medical conditions. The heritage of the "Outdoor Sportsman" is truly seen in this wish-granting foundation. Thanks also to the Wildlife Gallery for donating their time and expertise in mounting "Mike's Buck". I can't leave out Deer Tracks Ranch for their wonderful accommodations and vast supply of trophy deer. Special thanks to Richard Crawford, Mike's guide; what a great guy! Also much thanks to each member of our Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI. Thanks to you we have been privileged to finance one or two hunters each year.

This year getting to know Mike Hoaglund was truly a humbling experience. Mike's strength and continued enthusiasm for hunting couldn't be matched. As I can witness from all of his racing trophies, Mike is a great competitor, willing to work hard for each trophy. We are certainly happy to have helped him get his "Trophy Buck".

Keep on shooting straight, Mike. We love you. Thanks also to Mike's parents, Paul and Tracy, and his sister, Jessica. We wish you all the best.

God Bless,  
Nan Riley



This is Mike's "Big Buck" he shot thank to Nan and SCI! Mike has his deer hanging right in the dining room for everyone to see.



Mad Mike 311, age 10, with his race bikes and trophies. (9/07)

Mike Hoaglund and his family were very happy to take a break from his chemotherapy to attend the hunt at the Deer Tracks Ranch in Fife Lake, Michigan, sponsored by Mid-Michigan SCI. Mike has a childhood cancer called Medulloblastoma and since they also found cancer cells in his spinal fluid, did radiation after his surgery at the highest dose possible. His 8 to 10 hour surgery in March of 2007 was to remove a tumor the size of a tennis ball in the back of his brain that was causing severe headaches and blurred vision. Mike had been very active with basketball and motocross racing and hopes to return to these activities.



Steve Johnson, "Mothwing Camo", Craig Mortz, Mike Hoaglund with his buck and Tony Semple.

Nan Riley worked really hard to get everything planned. The hunt was everything Mike had hoped for. He has always had a dream of going deer hunting for the "big bucks". Mike's father, Paul, went with him on the hunt. They had so much fun together. They arrived on Thursday as Mike shot his 10 point buck on Friday. Mike also got to do some fishing and caught a big catfish. The whole family came to the ranch for a pig roast and a tour on Saturday.

The family wishes to thank Nan Riley and the Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI for making their son's dream come true. His parents said it was the first time since Mike's illness that they could see that sparkle back in his eyes.





## Harrison Sportsman's Club, Inc.

P.O. Box 548  
HARRISON, MICHIGAN 48625

To: Safari Club International  
Mid-Michigan Chapter  
P.O. Box 329  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0329

To Mr. William Brown / Mr. John Ayris

The Harrison Sportsman's Club would like to express our appreciation to the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International for their support of our youth shooting programs. We all know how important it is to the future of our hunting and shooting sports that we recruit and sustain young people's interest. Our club is strictly volunteer group that can always use help in supporting our youth archery, trap and NRA rimfire programs. We do not charge the kids for these programs and by your contribution of shot shells, archery targets and .22 ammo we can continue to run and expand these programs without cost to the kids.

Again, we greatly appreciate your support of youth shooting programs and would like to invite any of your members to come out and observe these programs in process. The youth trap and archery programs are run on Sunday mornings and the NRA rimfire shoots are held on Thursday evenings throughout the summer. A complete schedule of our events can be found on our website @ [harrisonsportsmansclub.com](http://harrisonsportsmansclub.com).

Thank you for supporting the young shooters at the Harrison Sportsman's Club.

Sincerely,

Glenn A. Bechtel  
Harrison Sportsman's Club

### Shooting Sports for 2008

Houghton Lake Sportsman Club  
Northland Sports Club "Gaylord"  
Mecosta County Rod-Gun Club  
Isabella 4-H Shooting Sports  
Barryton Conservation Club  
Isabella County Sportsman Club  
St. Louis Fishing Derby  
Lake Huron Area Boy Scouts  
Harrison Sportsman Club

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## Buck of a Lifetime

by Dana Hodges

They say if you hunt whitetail deer for a lifetime, the odds favor that you will see one Boone and Crocket buck. Since I had missed a running shot on a huge ten point in Nebraska several years ago, I assumed that was my lifetime opportunity.

I should have realized that the fall of 2007 was something special. A chance to bow hunt southern Illinois during the pre rut in early November started it off. That trip with my son-in-law, Troy, and young friends, Bob and Kevin, was exciting with a couple of B and C bucks spotted and Tony hyperventilating over and missing a 160 class eight point. Late in the hunt I arrowed a nice eight point at 32 yards for my biggest bow kill ever. After watching the arrow pass through and watching him run off, a second buck jumped into the same spot. He was a huge 10 point and had at least 50% bigger horns. I reached for an arrow before I realized I couldn't shoot him.

Earlier in the year, a call came from good friend, Rich Jones, asking if I would be interested in rifle hunting Kansas. We had hunted there together some years ago with black powder. Rich and son, Brian, had hunted this Kansas property for the past few years and taken some nice bucks in the 160 to 175 class. Unfortunately for Brian, his wedding anniversary fell during the Kansas season and being a wise young man, he decided to be home for it. Brian did come with friend Wayne to hunt Oklahoma three days before the Kansas opener. He took time the afternoon prior to the Kansas opener to show me the area he normally hunted and help me set up my pop up blind.



Opening morning was cool with a stiff wind blowing. I tried to find my blind without the use of a flashlight and wandered around an extra ten minutes before locating it. I finally settled in just before daylight with a stiff wind blowing through my blind from my left. I wasn't completely cooled off from my wandering, having sat less than fifteen minutes, when I glanced to my left and saw a nice spike horn buck. He came from the bedding area behind me and passed by within fifteen yards. As I watched him pass by, I caught movement forty yards to my left. A doe materialized out of the pre dawn darkness coming from the same bedding area. As I watched her, a second deer followed. When I saw him from the side, all I could see were white tines, lots of tall white tines, and I knew he was a shooter. My rifle was leaning against the other side of the blind and by the time I reached for it and got it out the side window, nothing was there. I scanned the area with my scope and finally picked out a deer standing fifty yards away. Remember it's still pretty dark but when she moved her head I knew it was the doe. Thoughts began running through my mind like, "Where is he?", and "I can't miss this opportunity!"



A slight movement behind the doe caught my attention as the buck took a step towards her, stepping from behind a bush, which blocked my view of him. I could now see his head, his horns, his big horns, and his neck to the edge of his shoulder. I questioned if I should wait for a better shot when my 270 went off. Now deer were running in all directions and I got ready for another shot. I quickly scoped the ground where the buck was standing and found him down but shaking his head back and forth. The next minute went by in slow motion as I tried to unzip the flap of the blind without any success. I finally crawled under the flap, pulled my rifle out and sprinted to the buck. By the time I got to him, Rich was calling on the radio as he thought my rifle had gone off while loading. I told him I had taken a nice buck and had finally gotten the six by six I had always wanted.

The more I looked at the buck, the more I realized what had just happened. He was a main frame six by seven with matching three inch hooks on the G4s and twenty one points. Could it be? It looked like my lifelong dream of taking a Boone and Crocket buck had been realized.

This was my 55th year of hunting whitetails and I must admit that tears came to my eyes as I reflected on the moment. Rich finished his morning hunt and met me at the pickup at mid day. When we drove up to pick up my buck, Rich got pretty excited and said, "That's got to make B and C."

That evening back at our camp, Brian and Wayne were preparing to leave for home with the nice bucks they had taken in Oklahoma. We let them tell us about their days hunt and after being asked how our day went, Rich dropped the tailgate showing the magnificent buck. To Brian's credit, he was thrilled for me even though he knew it might have been his. I predict that the good Lord will allow him the thrill of taking his buck of a lifetime someday.



The SCI green score on this buck is 207 3/8 inches and is expected to be above the 190 inches required for B and C non typical after the drying period.

I must admit that it didn't take a lot of skill to take this deer, only persistence. I was lucky and blessed to spend all those years hunting with great friends and in God's creation. For that I am most thankful. So keep at it and one day you may take your "Buck of a lifetime".



## Wild Turkey Slam

by Roger Card

SCI has included the Wild Turkey Slam in the World Hunting Awards Program. Most of us big game hunters know the excitement of calling in a big, old Tom in the spring of the year in our home states. But, with the Grand Slam of Turkeys now a special category with SCI, we need to venture further out in the world to claim the Grand Slam in Five Different Species as required.

I have collected the Eastern from Michigan, the Rio Grand from Texas and the South Pacific from New Zealand. Two other species can be hunted in Mexico and the Oscillate in the southeastern United States like Florida.

I chose to do the Mexico hunts for the adventure of hunting a new area for me. My first call was to my long time friend and my booking agent, Michael Valencia. Michael has all the Mexican connections for hunting everything in Mexico. He certainly has two great areas in Mexico for the two species.

The Ocellated turkey is located in South Eastern Mexico near the Campech area. Michael's guides for the hunt really know the areas and where to find these beautiful birds.

The Ocellated turkey is very different from most other turkeys in that the males don't have a beard. They have bright purple heads and the old Gobblers have very long and sharp spurs. They don't gobble much either, only a clucking sound. The flocks we found in this area were from ten to forty birds. The hunt consisted of rising at 3:00 a.m., breakfast, an hour drive to the hunting areas which were mostly Amish

farms, waiting for the turkeys to fly down out of the roosting trees and try to have a blind set up to intercept the flock as they fly by. They will come to a very quiet clucking noise my guide made - I could hardly hear it. Boy, when they do come, it's very hard to determine the Big Boy from a Jake. They all look like shooters. Their tail feathers are really beautiful. My guide kept whispering to me, "Jake, Jake", then as the very last four birds came past our blind, he said, "Shoot!" The 12 Ga. went off, and I had bagged my Ocellated



turkey with 2" spurs and weighing in at 12 1/2 pounds!

This beautiful bird will be mounted life-size for display at the Card Wildlife Education Center at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, as well as my second Mexico turkey, the Gould's.

Michael just keeps coming up with great guides and



the second part of my trip was no exception! I flew to Hermosillo in North Western Mexico and was again met at the airport by my guide. This trip to camp was approximately six hours east up into the Sierra Madre Mountains. I think this species should be renamed the Mountain Turkey as we hunted 5,000' to 6,000' elevations in big pine trees and oak forest on hillsides that are very steep and slippery because of all the leaves and pine needles. The Gould's look more like our Eastern turkey, but have large, white bands on their tails and white feathers on their wings. This species is the largest of the turkeys, but because of the rocks they live in, the spurs are almost always worn down or very short.

My hunt had me climbing on the mountain side in the dark, setting up an observation spot and waiting for the birds to fly out of their roosts. The big difference was the gobblers and hens were talking while still in the trees, so we knew where to set up. Once they flew to the ground, my guide would start calling with his wooden box call, sounding like a hen. He brought my big old Tom right down the hillside for my 50 yard shot. He had an 11 1/4" beard and weighed 25 1/2 pounds.

These were fantastic hunts and adventures for a very special species only found in these Mexican areas. I would recommend these hunts to anyone. For further information,

call me at 989-773-5069 or contact Michael Valencia at 213-399-0831 or e-mail MICHAELVALENCIA1@cs.com. By collecting these two different turkey species, I now have the SCI Turkey Slam!



<p><b>JOHAN PIETERSE SAFARIS</b></p>  <p><b>Johan Pieterse</b></p> <p>Telephone (+27) 83 268 6524</p> <p>e-mail johampieterse@safaris@tiscall.co.za</p>	<p><b>MATESTIC MOUNTAIN LAKEVIEW</b></p>  <p><b>OUTFITTERS</b> ALASKA • COLORADO • MONTANA</p> <p><b>JEFF &amp; CYNDI CHADD</b></p> <p>800-456-0170 970-944-2401</p> <p>P.O. Box 1000 Lake City, CO 81235</p> <p><a href="http://www.mmlo.net">www.mmlo.net</a></p>	<p><b>CAMPEAU GUIDING</b></p>  <p><b>Alvin Campeau Michael Campeau</b></p> <p>PH: (306) 278-3457</p> <p>Box 94 Carragana, Saskatchewan Canada S0E 0K0</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:campeau.guiding@sasktel.net">campeau.guiding@sasktel.net</a> <a href="http://www.campeauguiding.com">www.campeauguiding.com</a></p>	<p></p> <p><b>RIO BONITO RANCH</b></p> <p>WHITETAILS • EXOTICS WILD HOGS • TURKEYS</p> <p><b>Gwen Hughes</b></p> <p>5309 Rio Bonito Ranch Rd. Junction, TX 76849 (800) 864-4303 Fax (915) 446-3859 <a href="http://www.riobonito.com">www.riobonito.com</a> Email: <a href="mailto:riobonito@ctesc.net">riobonito@ctesc.net</a></p>
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## Two Bucks - Same Night "Father and Son Score Big"

By Robert Mills, Owner Pine Hill Club

Deer camp is a special place to share memories and experiences for any hunter. When father and son paired up for a bow hunt, the events that followed made memories for a lifetime.

On the still, quiet evening of October 18th, 2005, Bruce Anderson and his son, Cody, prepared for the bow hunt that would result in the harvest of two excellent bucks at the Pine Hill Club in Isabella County.

The Pine Hill Club is a private deer camp that encompasses nearly 800 acres of land with a mix of quality deer habitat. Cedar swamps, rolling oak hills and pines dot the property. The camp is a haven for game with the whitetail deer being the biggest challenge for the hunter.

As Bruce and Cody left the cabin at 5:30 p.m. for the evening hunt they didn't realize what was in store. Bruce decided to hunt Cody's stand and Cody would hunt where his dad had hunted the night before. Both wanted a



change of scenery and both knew the stands were situated in excellent areas. The stands were only about 300 yards apart and situated in oak trees about 15 feet off the ground. Both stands were permanent with strong ladders and solid platforms making for a comfortable place to ambush the mighty whitetail.

With scent killer, camo-faces, and bows and arrows ready, the father and son combo got into their stands on the eventful evening.

Cody was using a Darton bow set at 60 lb. pull with



aluminum arrows and Razorback 4 blade heads. He is an experienced bow hunter for his 15 years of age.

At approximately 6:00 p.m., he spotted a buck coming into his shooting lane. Two does followed the buck and all the deer were close to his ladder. Cody, waiting for the right moment, stood up and came to full draw. As the buck turned broadside, he took careful aim and released the arrow. The buck jumped straight up as the arrow passed completely through the animal. The does scattered and the buck ran south for about 50 yards and curled back and lay down in a small pothole in plain sight of the bow stand. Cody did not know exactly where he had hit the buck but at dark recovered his arrow with the full shaft covered with telltale blood. He decided not to pursue the buck but to circle far away from the spot where he saw the buck lay down and get his father.

After dark, Cody walked back to the truck in a long circle away from the pothole where he had last seen the buck. Getting to the truck, he cased his bow and walked the two-track to where his father was hunting.

Bruce was standing about 100 yards from his bow stand with his flashlight shining on an object on the ground. When Cody got there his dad said, "I hope you won't be mad, but I shot a great buck from your stand". Upon inspection Cody saw a large 8 pointer on the ground and said, "That's OK, I also shot a buck". As the two hunters rejoiced over their successes they decided to get the truck and load the 8 pointer without field dressing it where it had fallen.





Bruce Anderson is an avid bow hunter. He sits quietly and enjoys the challenge of the hunt while enjoying the colors of nature and the quietness of the evening. Bruce uses a Bear Magnum with aluminum arrows and 125 grain Muzzy 3 blade heads.

After settling in for the evening hunt, he saw movement to his left. As the buck approached it was licking brush, rubbing trees with its antlers, and walking directly into his shooting lane. The 8 point buck walked directly below the blind and stood broadside to the tree stand. At a distance of 15 yards and at full draw Bruce sent an arrow through both lungs and the heart of the buck. It jumped, bolted for about 30 yards and began to walk in a half-circle. The buck stopped, stood, wobbled, and dropped within full view of Bruce in his tree stand. The time was approximately 6:45 p.m. Bruce waited for 30 minutes and walked directly to the downed buck that was "dead as a stone". He wanted to yell, shout, and vocally rejoice. However, he knew that his son, Cody, was only 300 yards away and he didn't want to disturb his hunt. After repeatedly counting the points, he waited until Cody would come following his evening hunt.

They hugged, celebrated, and retold the story of Bruce's

buck many times. After Cody said, "I shot one also", they discussed what they should do to recover the buck that Cody arrowed. Both decided that because of the uncertainty of the shot, they would leave the buck until early morning. It was a hard decision, but the veteran hunters knew that if they jumped the buck it might get into the cedar swamp and escape.

The evening was cold with heavy frost predicted for the area. The decision proved to be a good one.

After Bruce tagged his buck, they got the truck and loaded the deer into the back. They drove to a location away from the bow stand and field-dressed the 8 pointer so as to not scent up the hunting area for future hunts. With the buck in the truck, father and son proceeded to drive home and get some sleep before getting up at the crack of dawn to recover Cody's buck.

At first light, both Bruce and Cody were in the woods. Cody showed Bruce the pothole where the buck had laid down and as they approached, they spotted the buck where it had fallen. The shot was back farther than Cody had thought but good hunting sense paid off with a recovered 5 point white-tail buck. As they tagged and field-dressed the deer they reflected on the "double-hitter" from the night before.

Many bucks have been harvested at the Pine Hill Club over the 34 years that the camp has been in existence. Never has there been a father/son combo that has scored on two bucks in the same evening.

After many pictures, congratulations from other members in the camp, and good-natured ribbing, Bruce and Cody began the task of skinning and processing the meat. "Lots of jerky", said Bruce. Cody just smiled, as this was his first buck with a bow. "How can we beat this?" he responded. Maybe next year will be even better. Both have many memories to last for a lifetime.

As someone in the deer camp said, "Seat Time is Meat Time". Enough said.



## Columbia Whitetail Hunt

by Corey Hyde



Corey Hyde's #1 Columbia Whitetail

In November of 2006, I went on a Columbia Black tail hunt near Roseburg, Oregon. During this hunt I was successful in harvesting a real nice 4 x 3 black tail deer. While on this hunt I learned about the Columbia Whitetail and on several occasions had spotted numerous trophies. This fine whitetail species with the distinct white circles around their eyes and beautiful brown hair have been on the endangered species list for 33 years and are now being hunted to control the herd. The tags are hard to draw for since they only give out 22 tags and only two are out of state tags. The best way to obtain tags is from outfitters (LOP tags) to get on private ranches to hunt them. After finding all of this out, I booked myself for a hunt the next fall for this rare trophy.

I booked my hunt with SDA Outfitters of Roseburg, Oregon (541-430-9702) to hunt the first week of the two week season. Counting the days until I would go back to Oregon seemed like forever. Finally on September 28, 2007, I arrived in Portland and rented a car to drive the three hours to Roseburg. I arrived and was met by Ed and Sandy Stratton

at their residence. These are some of the finest people you will ever meet. They bring you in, put you up in their home, and make you feel like family. Sandy is one of the best cooks I have been around and I think I gained ten pounds from her cooking.

After getting settled in, Eddie, Jr., my guide for the week, took me out to do some scouting on some of their ranches before the season opened. Eddie grew up in this area and knows it very well. We went to a couple of ranches and ended up on one to start glassing for some black tail and spotted a real nice one that would have beaten the one I shot last year. After looking over the ranch and seeing numerous does and small bucks, we came out to the bottoms here the whitetails normally were. Eddie spotted two bucks and a doe feeding in the green field. We watched them for quite some time. The two bucks started chasing each other like they were playing. To my surprise, the one buck had a white tracking collar around its neck which the ODFW do for their studies on the Columbia whitetails. After about five minutes



of the two bucks chasing each other, another real nice young 10-point stepped out to see what was going on. We watched them until it got dark and then headed back to the house to get ready for the season opener the next day. I was excited for the next day's hunt and knew we would see some real nice bucks.

The first morning of the season was kind of slow with only seeing a few does and some small bucks. The first evening we spotted some real nice up and coming bucks that were not the quality of deer we were looking for. The next few days were rainy and cold; we spotted only a few deer.

On the fifth day of the hunt, we woke up to a downpour of rain. We waited it out and finally it let up around 7:00 a.m. We loaded up their Arctic Cat Prowler with a cab and headed to one of the ranches that they had been seeing a real nice heavy, multiple pointed buck coming on it always after season had closed. With a lot of acorns falling and cooler temperatures, Eddie thought that the deer might move up into the oak draws sooner to feed on the heavy crop of acorns. We got everything loaded into the Prowler and it started to rain lightly again. Luckily we had the cab to keep most of it off of us. We had made our way up through some of the places where the whitetails were hanging out and spotted some does but no bucks. The hills were a little greasy and as we rounded a corner of one of the many hills, I spotted five deer, three does, a small buck and another bigger buck. We stopped and got the binoculars on the deer but before I could get mine focused, Eddie said, "There is the big one!" I got focused and looked him over and knew he was the one. The deer spotted us when we saw them so now they were just walking down towards the oak trees out of sight. We got out, grabbed my gun, and Eddie and I headed towards them. As we rounded the top of the hill, they were nowhere in sight, so we kept walking up the next hill to see if they had gone farther on. All of a sudden Eddie said, "There he is". We dropped to the ground and I rested on a mound of dirt and got into position for the shot. He was facing right at us, staring us down, and I had no shot at him in this position. We waited for what seemed like forever as I had the crosshairs of my scope right on him. He finally took a couple of steps and turned broadside to us. I asked Eddie if he was ready and he said, "Take him".

I got settled in, clicked the safety off, and bored down on a spot on the deer. I squeezed the trigger and my Remington 700 in 280 caliber found its mark and the deer took a couple of bounds and fell to the ground. I looked at Eddie and we were both in amazement on how it all fell together. We gave high fives and congratulations and walked towards the buck that lay on the grassy hillside. When we got closer I

could not believe what I had gotten. There was no ground shrinkage here and it was even bigger than what Eddie had explained to me. We both stood there in awe of the beautiful, monster, Columbia whitetail that I had harvested in some amazing country.

After numerous pictures and more amazement, we loaded him up to show everyone what we had taken. This was one of my most honorable days in the field deer hunting with some great people and some beautiful territory. My Columbia whitetail had 15 scorable points with an extra main beam coming out of its skull almost 10 inches long. The SCI score ended up being 133 0/8 non-typical, which puts it in the #1 slot for Columbia whitetail. To shoot such a magnificent animal with some of the best people in the business of outfitting is an honor. A very special thanks to SDA Outfitters and the Strattons for giving me the opportunity to harvest such an awesome deer. I can't express how grateful I am to have harvested this animal with them. I will go back anytime and hunt with SDA Outfitters (541-430-9702) for Columbia black tail, whitetail, black bear, Roosevelt Elk or even some bobcats. If you want a hunt of a lifetime with great people, these are the ones to go hunt with. Thank you, Corey Hyde.

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## New Zealand - 2007

### The Land of the Long White Cloud

by Mary Harter

#### New Zealand's South Island - first three days of hunting

About 36 hours after leaving Tri City Airport in Saginaw, we arrived in Palmerston North on the north island of New Zealand. We were hunting with Brad and Cindy Eldred. Shane Quinn of Alpine Hunting was the outfitter and



Mary Harter with her chamois

our guide on the south island. We spent the night in Palmerston North and were picked up the next day for a 2 1/2 hour flight aboard Shane's Cessna to the Franz Josef mountain range on the south island. What a beautiful day with excellent visibility. We saw cattle, sheep, horses, and mussel farms, and logging operations. On the south island there are glaciers melting into subtropical rainforests which receive on average 200 inches of rain per year.



Brad and Cindy Eldred with a Himalayan Tahr

We stayed at a bed and breakfast owned by Brian McBride. Brian was our helicopter pilot for the next three days. Accommodations and food were excellent. The first night for hors d'oeuvres we ate white bait cooked with eggs. White bait were little fish similar to our smelt but smaller and they were eaten whole. We ate a lot of delicious venison, also.



Brad and Cindy Eldred with a chamois

The first morning, Brad and Cindy went to hunt first. They had never ridden in a helicopter and I anxiously awaited their return so I could see how rough the ride was. I had decided since I had previously been sick in helicopters that Don would hunt alone on the south island. We kidded that I was going to be the designated survivor. When they returned with Brad's chamois hanging from the helicopter by a rope, and telling of what a wonderful time they had and the views from the helicopter, I decided I had to try it. Shane's



Mary Harter and outfitter, Shane Quinn

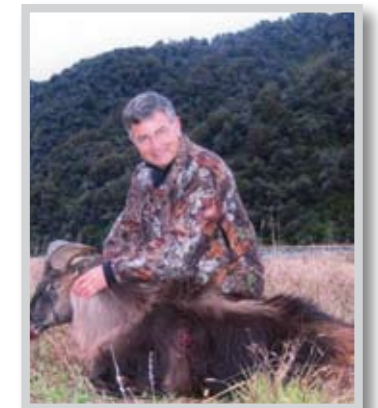
briefing information on what to do and how the hunting would take place had made me feel safer about jumping out of a helicopter hovering on a mountainside. Well, Don shot a beautiful tahr on a dead run and I only used the barf bag once.

Hunting here was different from any hunting either of us had ever done. Using a helicopter was the only way to get to where the chamois or tahr lived. Usually the chamois



Don Harter with his chamois

lived in the grassy areas but way up on the jagged cliffs. The tahr lived where there was less vegetation, right near the glaciers. They are both very sure footed animals and thrive in this location. All large animals in New Zealand have been introduced. When a good animal was spotted, Shane would tell us to get ready. The hunter would take off his/her seatbelt and get ready to get out but leave their headphones on until right before leaving the helicopter. Because of the noise you could only hear his instructions using the headphones. The helicopter would hover, usually with only one skid on the side of the mountain, and after you were instructed, you opened the door and got out. You were to hunch down and carefully walk several steps away from the aircraft and wait until the helicopter flew away.



Don Harter with his Himalayan Tahr





Brad and Don peeking between their trophies

Shane was with the hunter and took care of the rifle. After leaving the helicopter, you searched for the animal.

The second day, Brad shot a tahr and Don shot a chamois. We were done hunting on the south island and were to fly to the north island the next day. We went in to the town of Franz Josef which was near where we were staying and did a little shopping and looking around.

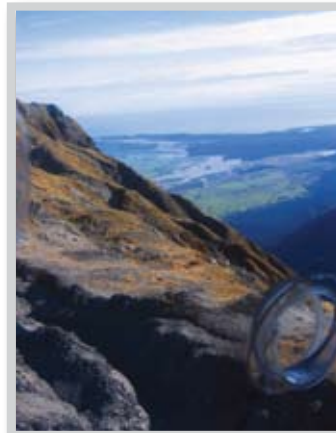
The next morning fog set in on the north island and the Cessna couldn't fly high enough over the fog with passengers because they had no oxygen on board so we were grounded until the fog lifted. Brad and Cindy went out to hunt again and Brad got another tahr. Don asked me if I would like to hunt. I eagerly agreed that if given the chance I would like to try for both chamois and tahr.



The helicopter carrying a chamois

When the helicopter came back, up we went and I was in the hunter's seat. I was so excited to be able to hunt that I was almost crying. About 10 minutes out we spotted a chamois. Shane said it was a good one and for me to get ready which meant to take off my seatbelt and get ready to get out of the helicopter.

We circled around it and set down with one skid on the side of the mountain and got out. I hugged the ground and grabbed the grass until the helicopter left. The wind from the rotors is very strong. Shane had the rifle but the chamois was running up the side of the cliff. Almost at the top he turned and I shot and connected on the first try. He rolled towards us almost one third of the distance. I was so excited and Shane congratulated me and went up to hook a rope on the animal. They picked us back up and with the chamois hanging from a rope under the helicopter and went off to find a flatter area to set him down. There is a lever inside the helicopter to release the rope from the aircraft.



Beautiful views of New Zealand from the helicopter

Then on we went to find a tahr. We circled and circled around the glacier area and after about one and one half hours found a nice tahr. He was running full tilt down the mountain. Shane said that if he reached the bottom he would run like an antelope and be gone. We touched down and out we went. The helicopter left and the tahr took shelter behind a big boulder but he was broadside to us. I shot and down he went. I was so excited and Shane said he would have to take pictures of me for his brochure. He complimented me on my shooting ability which made me feel very good. The tahr rolled in a crevasse and Shane went down after him. After hooking the rope to him, Shane rode out standing on the tahr's head holding on to the rope until the aircraft could set down for him to climb back in. We all had used Shane's 30.06 Browning semi-automatic rifle with 180 grain bullets which really did the job.

Because the north island was still fogged in we rode in the van to Hokitika and took a commercial flight to Christ Church and then on to Palmerston North where we were picked up for another 1 3/4 hour ride to the lodge on the north island.

Look in the next issue for 8 days of hunting on New Zealand's North Island.



## South African Safari

By Josh Christensen

Our trip to Africa started at the Mid-Michigan Chapter annual fundraiser. After talking with the outfitters at the fundraiser, my wife (Sara) and I decided we would bid on a hunt to the Eastern Cape with George Lavin of Walken Seymour Safaris. He was donating a ten day hunting safari for six different animals ranging from kudu to warthog. After an interesting bidding war we ended up winning the trip to the "dark continent". That night at the fundraiser my wife also won a nice Remington .308 that we brought along on the trip.

Five short months, and a lot of planning later we were off on the longest plane ride ever. We have flown to New Zealand twice, but those trips were nothing compared to the twenty-two plus hours we had to sit on this plane ride. Don't get me wrong, South African Air has a great set up with everyone having their own monitor and controller, but you can only sit and watch T.V. for so long.

Upon arriving in Johannesburg we were met by Desmond an employee of Hunter's Support Air 2000. Hiring Hunter's Support was one of the best decisions we could have made. (On a side note, I learned of them through this magazine and Dr. Douglas Heeter who wrote an article about hunting in South Africa...



thank you.) We ended up paying \$160 and sending all of our paperwork to South Africa over a month in advance, but it was well worth the time and money. Desmond was able to get us to the front of every line and he had us out of the international airport and checked in at the

domestic airport in less than an hours time. From Johannesburg we flew to Port Elizabeth, where we were met by George. He drove us to our hunting lodge (the Hounslow House), which turned out to be a very modern and well keep historical landmark. We arrived around 11:00 p.m. and settled in for the night. We didn't have any trouble falling asleep on the account of our exhaustion.

The next morning we awoke to an excellent breakfast and headed out to the shooting range. After confirming our zeros we set off after impala. It wasn't long before we spotted some animals. We first saw a group of kudu, but they were all cows and calves. Next, we spotted a bachelor group of impala with a few nice rams, but George was confident we could do better. So we continued on until we found a nice ram with his herd of ewes. We approached the herd and Sara set up for the shot. (For this hunt we primarily used the Remington .308 Sara won at the fundraiser with 150 grain Barnes Triple Shock bullets. I also brought my 50 caliber muzzleloader hoping to get close enough to get a kudu and springbok with the "mini-cannon".) Sara got set and took the shot at around 200 yards.



She admits now she was a nervous wreck and hurried the shot. Although it wasn't the best shot we ended up claiming her animal a short time later, with a little help from Reggie (George's Jack Russell Terrier). The impala was an excellent example of his species. The rest of the day was spent in pursuit of springbok. We saw many but were unable to seal the deal.

For the next day we decided to try to get me close enough for a muzzleloader shot on a kudu. We saw many, but were unable to get within the 100 yards I wanted to be to take a shot. On the way back to camp for lunch we spotted a herd of springbok and made the stalk. Sara made an awesome shot at about 160 yards, and she had her second animal of the safari. That night we hunted over a hay field for bushbuck. We saw a few ewes and one ram, but he had one horn about two inches longer than the other so I passed him up.



The next day George wanted us to try our luck blesbok hunting. When we arrived at our hunting location Sara and I were amazed at the number of blesbok in the middle of very large grazing field. There must have been over three hundred of these animals and they were all at least 400 yards from the nearest wood line. George said we had two options, crawl out and try to get a shot or set up in the wood line and wait. We decided on the latter of the two, and it wasn't long until the herd came within shooting distance. It was my turn to shoot first on this day so I took aim and shot the lead ram at George's "All clear". I hit the animal a little high, but after a few more frantic shots my blesbok was down. Next up was Sara. Once again we found a nice location in the wood line and waited. And once again a faction of the herd wondered our way. Sara pulled up and hit the Blesbok she was aiming for. Although it was a disabling shot George told her to hit him again, and with her second shot the animal dropped.

There was still time left in the day for George to take us to an awesome location right on the Indian Ocean where he knew there would be some good impala. I figured I'd try a shot with my



muzzleloader so I took this weapon out with us. George did an excellent job of getting me closer than the 100 yards I wanted to be to shoot an animal, but I was unable to fulfill my end of the deal. I clean missed a nice ram and was very upset with myself, not only for missing but also for messing up George's awesome stalk. George didn't seem to be nearly as mad as I was, he looked at me, smiled and then said "That's why they call it hunting and not shooting, don't worry about it". Although they were only words they made me feel much better and a little more relaxed.

The next morning was Saturday and there was a big festival in Grahamstown, so my wife and I asked George to take us in to look around and possibly pick up some souvenirs. We had a great time taking in the culture and buying presents for loved ones back home. The craziest part of this day however was the drive home. It was getting dark and we were only about five miles from the lodge when a huge kudu cow jumped out in front of us. Now I've hit a whitetail or two in my day but a kudu is much larger. Lucky for us, and George, he has a "brush guard" on the front of his truck. The animal did very little damage to his truck, but sure did get my adrenalin pumping.



After another great breakfast we set out looking for the grey ghost. It's amazing how well such a large animal can blend into its surroundings. We saw one very nice bull this morning at about 200 yards but he never offered a good shot. I was planning to use George's rifle if the kudu would have cooperated. That evening we also got onto some nice bulls, however our shooting light ran out before we could close the deal.

I now had four days left to hunt and I still wanted to shoot seven more animals. I decided I had waited long enough for the 100 yard shot, so I ditched to muzzleloader and went to the .308. We decided to have a go at gemsbok on this day. Within the first hour of the hunt George had us within 30 yards of a nice young gemsbok. George told me to pass on it as we could do much better. Although it looked good to me I'm glad we passed on it because later in the day we came across three nice gemsbok and I was able to connect with the biggest cow at about 120 yards. She went about twenty yards and dropped.

Now I had three days left in the hunt and six animals to go. I have to admit I was getting a bit worried, but George continued to tell me not to worry and I would get everything I came to South Africa for. That morning we went after kudu, we placed a nice stalk on a bull and one shot later I had my kudu. We were only an hour into our morning hunt. That went so well we decided to go out looking for impala. Along the way we were able to stalk within 70 yards of a nice bushbuck and I took my second animal of the morning. The rest of the day slowed down a little bit, but I was still able to take a duiker with my muzzleloader. I decided to take



the muzzleloader out for a springbok that evening since I had done so well in the morning. We spotted and stalked all afternoon, but I wasn't able to get a shot. When it started to get dark we began to walk back to the truck when George spotted a nice duiker. I figured what the heck, so I pulled up and shot the small antelope at 40 yards. I later found out the duiker I shot would rank number 13 ever shot with a muzzleloader.

At our request, George booked a photo safari for Sara and I the next day. That morning George took us the "Pumba Game Reserve" where we were able to see many animals up close and personal...some too close for my comfort. Our guide through the park brought us to within 30 yards of two very large sleeping lions. Although the pictures we took of these two big cats were great, I was still uneasy being that close to that big of a predator.

George picked us up from the game reserve when our photo safari was over and took us to one of his friends' cattle ranch to hunt for warthog. This portion of our hunt reminded me of hunting whitetail in Michigan. As I said before it was a cattle ranch where they milk cows and we ended up setting up on the edge of an alfalfa field and waiting for a big boar. When we first approached the alfalfa field we saw about a half dozen pigs eating new alfalfa shoots. We eased our way closer to the field and stood in the bush for about a half hour watching the small warthogs eat and play. The next thing I know a huge boar comes out of the bush about 50 yards from us. George told me it was a really good one and to shoot him when it turned broadside. One shot later the warthog was dead in his tracks.

On the last hunting day I wanted to shoot an impala and a springbok. That morning was rainy and cold and I thought it might be a tough hunt, but it wasn't. During the course of the morning I spotted a nice impala and shot him at around 100 yards, and George got us onto a herd of springbok from which I shot a nice big male. Our hunt was now over.

We stayed an additional three days in South Africa on a side trip we organized through George. He was our tour guide and took us to see many beautiful sights and partake in some fun adventures including zip-lining across rivers and whale watching in Plettenberg Bay. Sara and I enjoyed our trip to South Africa immensely and can't wait for the opportunity to revisit this hunters'/travelers paradise.

## DEER ROPING (FROM A FRIEND OF MINE)

by Chris Chase

I had this idea that I was going to rope a deer, put it in a stall, feed it up on corn for a couple of weeks, then kill it and eat it. The first step in this adventure was getting a deer. I figured that since they congregated at my cattle feeder and do not seem to have much fear of me when we are there (a bold one will sometimes come right up and sniff at the bags of feed while I am in the back of the truck not four feet away) that it should not be difficult to rope one, get up to it and toss a bag over its head (to calm it down) then hog tie it and transport it home.

I filled the cattle feeder then hid down at the end with my rope. The cattle, who have seen the roping thing before, stayed well back. They were not having any of it. After about 20 minutes, my deer showed up, three of them. I picked out a likely looking one, stepped out from the end of the feeder, and threw my rope. The deer just stood there and stared at me. I wrapped the rope around my waist and twisted the end so I would have a good hold. The deer still just stood and stared at me, but you could tell it was mildly concerned about the whole rope situation. I took a step towards it. It took a step away. I put a little tension on the rope and received an education.

The first thing that I learned is that while a deer may just stand there looking at you funny while you rope it, they are spurred to action when you start pulling on that rope. That deer EXPLODED!

The second thing I learned is that pound for pound, a deer is a LOT stronger than a cow or a colt. A cow or a colt in that weight range I could fight down with a rope with some dignity. A deer, no chance. That thing ran and bucked and twisted and pulled. There was no controlling it and certainly no getting close to it. As it jerked me off my feet and started dragging me across the ground, it occurred to me that having a deer on a rope was not nearly as good an idea as I originally imagined. The only up side is that they do not have as much stamina as many animals. A brief ten minutes later, it was tired and not nearly as quick to jerk me off my feet and drag me when I managed to get up. It took me a few minutes to realize this, since I was mostly blinded by the blood flowing out of the big gash in my head.

At that point I had lost my taste for corn fed venison. I just wanted to get that devil creature off the end of that rope. I figured if I just let it go with the rope hanging around its neck, it would likely die slow and painfully somewhere. At the time, there was no love at all between

me and that deer. At that moment, I hated the thing and I would venture a guess that the feeling was mutual. Despite the gash in my head and the several large knots where I had cleverly arrested the deer's momentum by bracing my head against various large rocks as it dragged me across the ground, I could still think clearly enough to recognize that there was a small chance that I shared some tiny amount of responsibility for the situation we were in, so I didn't want the deer to have to suffer a slow death. I managed to get it lined up to back in between my truck and the feeder, a little trap I had set beforehand. Kind of like a squeeze chute. I got it to back in there and started moving up so I could get my rope back.

Did you know that deer bite? They do! I never in a million years would have thought that a deer would bite somebody so I was very surprised when I reached up there to grab that rope and the deer grabbed hold of my wrist. Now, when a deer bites you, it is not like being bit by a horse where they just bite you and then let go. A deer bites you and shakes its head almost like a pit bull. They bite HARD and it hurts. The proper thing to do when a deer bites you is probably to freeze and draw back slowly. I tried screaming and shaking instead. My method was ineffective. It seems like the deer was biting and shaking for several minutes, but it was likely only several seconds. I, being smarter than a deer (though you may be questioning that claim by now) tricked it. While I kept it busy tearing the bejesus out of my right arm, I reached up with my left hand and pulled that rope loose.

That was when I got my final lesson in deer behavior for the day. Deer will strike at you with their front feet. They rear right up on their back feet and strike right about head and shoulder level, and their hooves are surprisingly sharp. I learned a long time ago that when an animal like a horse strikes at you with their hooves and you can't get away easily, the best thing to do is try to make a loud noise and make an aggressive move towards the animal. This will usually cause them to back down a bit so you can escape. This was not a horse. This was a deer, so obviously such trickery would not work. In the course of a millisecond, I devised a different strategy. I screamed like a woman and tried to turn and run.

The reason I had always been told NOT to try to turn and run from a horse that paws at you is that there is a good chance that it will hit you in the back of the head.



Deer may not be so different from horses after all, besides being twice as strong and three times as evil, because the second I turned to run, it hit me right in the back of the head and knocked me down.

Now when a deer paws at you and knocks you down it does not immediately leave. I suspect it does not recognize that the danger has passed. What they do instead is paw your back and jump up and down on you while you are laying there crying like a little girl and covering your head. I finally managed to crawl under the truck and the deer went away.

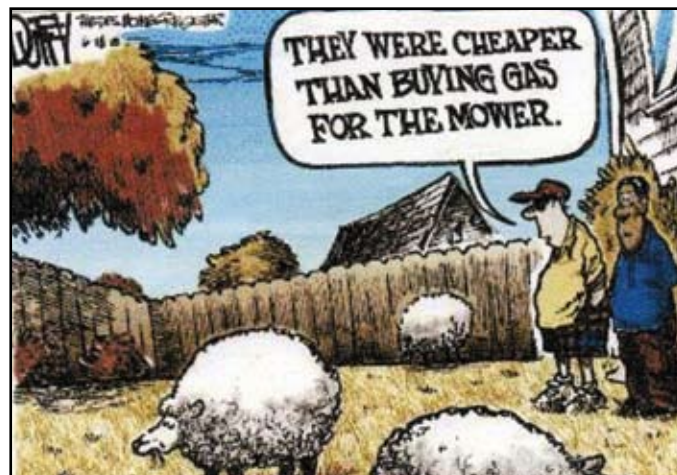
Now for the local legend. I was pretty beat up. My scalp was split open. I had several large goose eggs. My wrist was bleeding pretty good and felt broken (it turned out to be just badly bruised). Any my back was bleeding in a few places, though my insulated canvas jacket had protected my from most of the worst of it. I drove to the nearest place, which was the co-op. I got out of the truck, covered in blood and dust and looking like heaven. The guy who ran the place saw me through the window and came running out yelling, "what happened".


I have never seen any law in the state of Michigan that would prohibit an individual from roping a deer. I suspect that this is an area that they have overlooked entirely. Knowing, as I do, the lengths to which law enforcement personnel will go to exercise their power, I was concerned that they may find a way to twist the existing laws to paint my actions as criminal. I swear. Not wanting to admit that I had done something monumentally stupid played no part in my response. I told him, "I was attacked by a deer". I did not mention that at the time I had a rope on it. The evidence was all over my body. Deer prints on the back of my jacket where it had stomped all over me and a large deer print on my face where it had struck me there.

I asked him to call somebody to come get me. I didn't think I could make it home on my own. He did.

Later that afternoon, a game warden showed up at my house and wanted to know about the deer attack. Surprisingly, deer attacks are a rare thing and wildlife and parks was interested in the event. I tried to describe the attack as completely and accurately as I could. I was filling the grain hopper and this deer came out of nowhere and just started kicking the heaven out of me and BIT me. It was obviously rabid or insane or something. EVERYBODY for miles around knows about the deer attack (the guy at the co-op has a big mouth). For several weeks people dragged their kids in the house when they saw deer around and the local ranchers carried rifles when they filled their feeders. I have told several people the story, but NEVER anybody around here. I have to see these people every day and as

an outsider, a "city folk", I have enough trouble fitting in without them snickering behind my back and whispering "there is the dumb-ImadummyImadummyImadummy that tried to rope the deer.





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as did my forefathers;  
And grant that I find Him with antlers like  
tree branches -- wide and mighty,  
And grant that my hand be steady . . . my aim  
be true . . . and my drag, short.  
But most of all, O Great Spirit, grant that my  
children and their children, and  
their children's children  
Have the wisdom to preserve your work in forests,  
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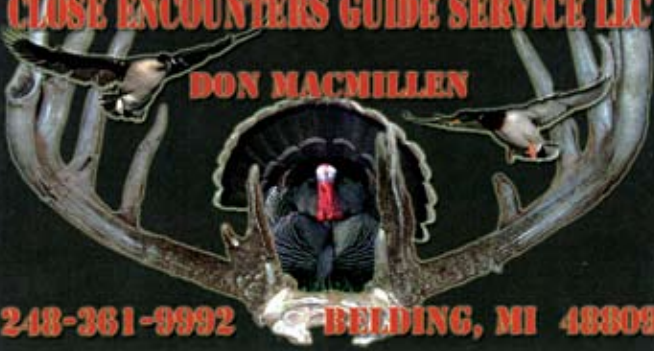
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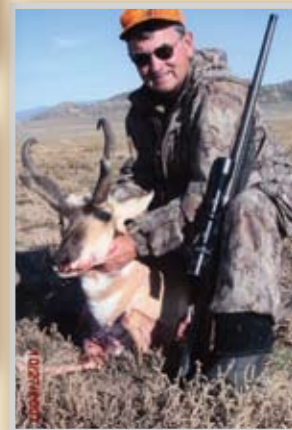
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- \* *New Outfitter, Arctic Conditions, Big Bears*  
by Jeffrey Chaulk, M.D.
- \* *Six Hunters - Six Moose in Newfoundland*  
by Robert Mills
- \* *Wyoming Antelope*  
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- \* *New Zealand - 2007 Part 2*  
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