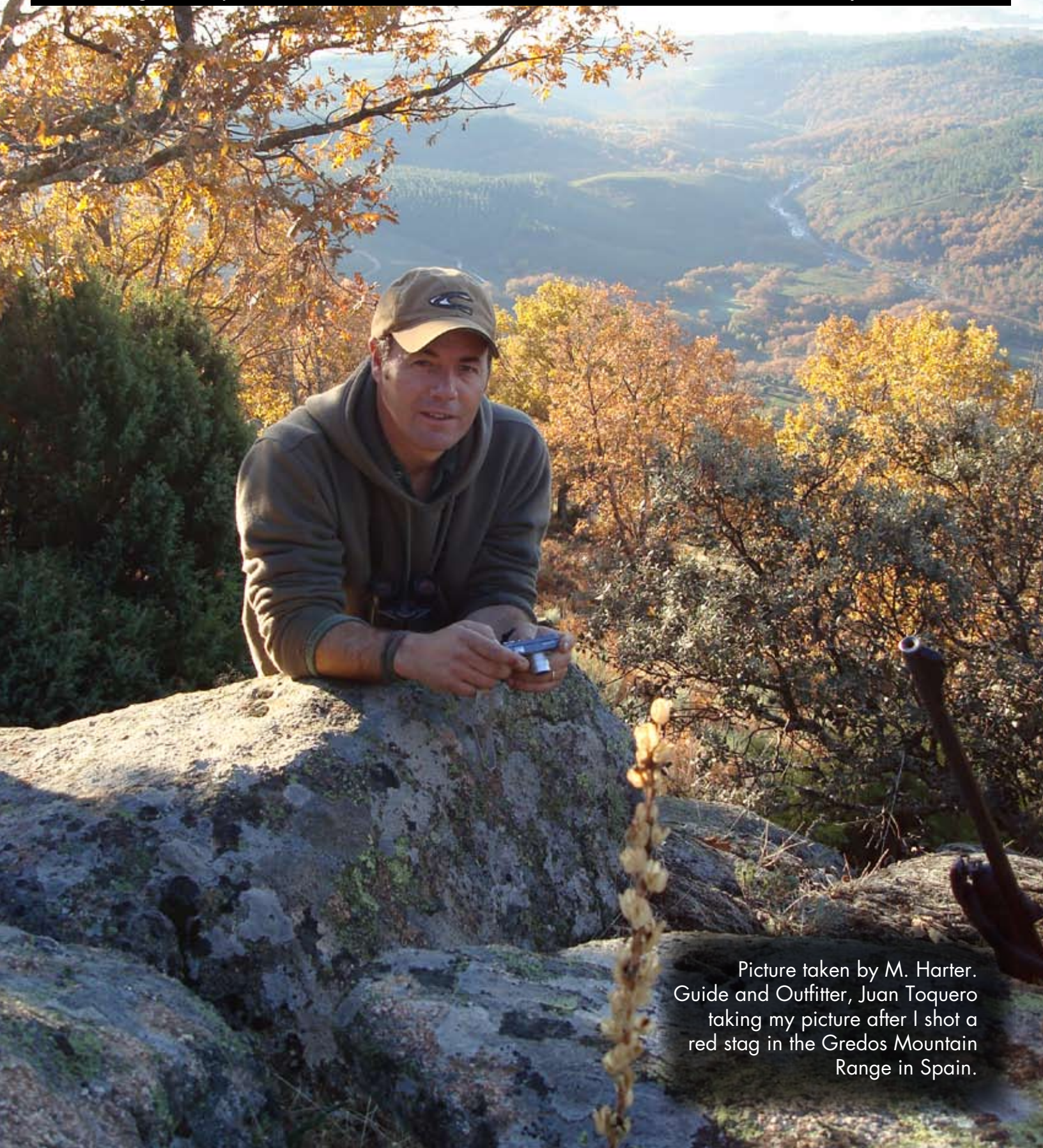


FRONT SIGHT

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

January 2009, Issue 5



Picture taken by M. Harter.
Guide and Outfitter, Juan Toquero
taking my picture after I shot a
red stag in the Gredos Mountain
Range in Spain.

Impressively Beautiful . . .



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Chairmen are listed first

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If you don't already receive "In The Crosshairs", a SCI communications, and would like to, just e-mail Nelson Freeman at crosshairs@safariclub.org to be placed on the list.

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+.

Check our own www.midmichigansci.org website for copies of the Front Sight, listing of events, and fundraiser auction items.

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SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule 2009

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Type</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
January 5, 2009	Board	4:30 p.m.	Soaring Eagle Conference Center
	Big Buck Night Registration	5:00 p.m.	Soaring Eagle Conference Center
	Big Buck Night Dinner	7:00 p.m.	(formerly The Holiday Inn)
February 2, 2009	Board	4:30 p.m.	Riverwood
February 27, 2009	Hunters' Convention	2:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.	Soaring Eagle Casino
February 28, 2009	Hunters' Convention	10:00 a.m. - Close	Soaring Eagle Casino
April 6, 2009	Board	4:30 p.m.	Riverwood
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Riverwood
May 4, 2009	Board	4:30 p.m.	Riverwood
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Riverwood
June 8, 2009	Board	4:30 p.m.	TBA

Reservations required. Please call Maxine at 989-773-9042, ext. 119.

Message from your President

Depending on when you receive this, 2008 is almost behind us or it is very early in 2009. Many of us had some great hunting experiences to share with other members. Our economy is struggling but our gas prices are coming down. With the election behind us let's hope 2009 will start to look more positive for all of us.

For our Chapter, two exciting dates are coming fast. First is Big Buck Night on January 5th at the Soaring Eagle Inn (old Holiday Inn). We always have an excellent turn out for this event where we get to share our deer harvest stories with other members. Second is our 30th Annual Hunters' Convention on February 28th and 29th at the Soaring Eagle Casino. We have many excellent hunts donated for auction at this event. Some are listed in this publication and on our Chapter Web Site, www.midmichigansci.org. Get your reservations in early as we are limited to seating only 400 for the Saturday night dinner.

Hope to see you all at these events,
Don Harter

Editor's Comments

During rifle season last fall I had the opportunity to sit with my 96 year old father in his blind. He had suffered another stroke since last season and we didn't want him to sit alone. He wanted to hunt and this is about the only thing he has left to look forward to.



Editor, Mary Harter with her Tanzanian, Leopard



President, Don Harter with his Tanzanian, Dagga Boy

A note to Members:

In these challenging economic times it's hard enough to keep pace with our day to day necessities, let alone any extra curricular activities. So, as a group we must strive to make our voices heard to protect the Hunting Heritage we have enjoyed for so long. We need to keep our membership strong. Please encourage friends and family who also enjoy hunting and the out of doors. Invite them to a membership meeting and they too can help in the future of hunting and keeping the legacy of SCI alive. Thank You.

Rick Bennett
Membership Chair

With my sister's help we got him in his blind and as I sat beside him with his 30-30 Winchester he has hunted with since 1936, I was in awe. I grew up hearing his stories and with that same hunting blood in my veins and my husband by my side, love hunting more with every adventure. Here was my reason.

A couple of deer came by and he carefully sighted through his Marble peep sight and pulled the trigger. His gun was canted and he thought he had missed but I went out to look. I followed five trails and couldn't see any blood but at least he had gotten off a shot and was happy.

Four generations of us were in the woods that opening day with several successes. Our youngest grandson, Kyler - 5, was with his father as he harvested a buck. Don's brother, Cliff, harvested a nice 8-point, the largest buck he had ever taken.

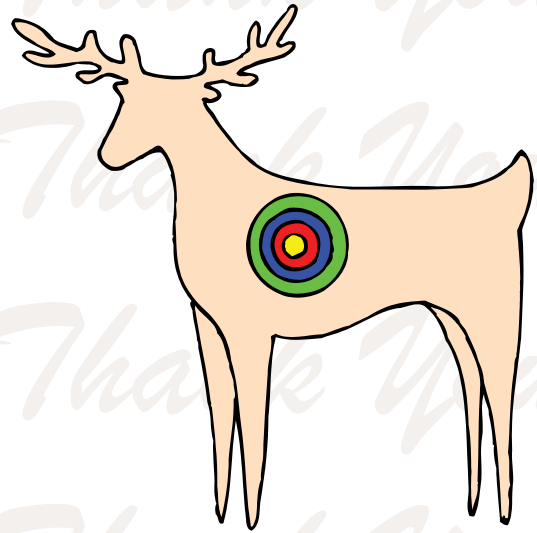
Many happy memories,
Please share yours,
Mary Harter

Dear Michigan Safari Club'

Thank you for sponsoring me to go to the MUCC camp for kids. I really loved it, I had alot of fun when I was there at camp. I really love councelors were really really nice. also the food was really good to. The best activity that we did was when we shot the 22 guns. The thing that I didn't like is when we had to stand in line for about 15 to 20 minutes to get our food. I also want to tell you is that I passed my hunters safty. I hope that I will get a big deer this year. I Hope that I will be able to go again.

Love

Jed Kallio



Dear SCI

Thank you for sponsoring me and my friend. The camp was the best. At the camp we got go swimming and fishing every day and we also got to shoot .22's and get our hunters safty, only 4 out of 13 people passed the test. My friend and I were 2 of the 4. The food at the camp was good. That whole week was fun. Since I got my hunters safty I'm going to try to shoot a deer this year for deer season. The worst part of the camp was going to sleep because it was uncomfortable. Other wise the camp was all fun. Thanks once again.



From,
Marcus Gloss



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Mid Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International

presents

Big Buck Night

Open to the Public

Monday, January 5th

*Soaring Eagle Inn Conference Center
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Adults \$20 • Kids 12 and under \$15 • Under 5 yrs. FREE

*Bring your rack that you shot in 2008 and get it professionally
scored plus get in the FREE gun raffle with your scored rack.*

White tail and Mule deer

All tickets are pre-sold. Must have ticket prior to event.

Registration starts at 5 pm

Dinner at 7 pm

*Dinner includes two entree buffet, salad bar and dessert table
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Friday, February 27, 2009

2:00 - 10:00 p.m. • \$5.00 Admission

Outfitters, Exhibitors, Awards and Auction

Saturday, February 28, 2009

Outfitters, Exhibitors, Banquet and Auction

10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Registration

5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Dinner (reservations required)

6:00 - Close Live Auction

For more information, contact Tim Hauck: (989) 772-5494

Partial list of live auction items:

Richard Holmes Safaris - Eastern Cape South Africa - Plainsgame
Wycon Safaris - Wynn Condict - Antelope Hunt in Wyoming
Wycon Safaris - Wynn Condict - Prairie Dog Hunt in Wyoming
Dan Kirschner Wild Spirit Guide Service - Bear Hunt with Hounds
Dan Kirschner Wild Spirit Guide Service - Bob Cat Hunt with Hounds
Roger Froling's Buffalo Ranch - Buffalo Hunt
Brian Simpson, Wittrock Outfitters in Alaska - Trophy Grizzly Bear Hunt
Jeff Chadd - Colorado Rocky Mountains
Jim and Adonna Stahl - Mustang Outfitters - Nevada - Mule Deer
Jim and Adonna Stahl - Mustang Outfitters - Nevada - Mountain Lion
Larry and Joanne DeVuest - Texas Whitetail Hunt
Lee Livingston - Woming - Mule Deer
Jim Fejes - Texas Exotics
Ken and Jeff Harrison - Lake Michigan Fishing Trip
Mike Cowan - Missouri Deer Hunt
Toquero Hunting Services - Fallow Deer Hunt in Spain
Sam Fejes - Tsiu River Lodge - Alaskan Goat Hunt
Johan Pieterese Safaris - South Africa - Plainsgame
Johan Pieterese Safaris - South Africa - Five Small Cats
Spoon Creek Outfitters - Oregon - Roosevelt Bull Elk
Mike McCrave Hunting, Ltd. - Scottish Highlands - Red Stag
Mike Carlson, Larsen Bay Lodge - Kodiak Island - Sitka Black Tail Deer Hunt
Carroll Bud Womack, Quality Outfitting - New Mexico Bow or Rifle Bull Elk
San Juan River Outfitters - British Columbia Mule Deer Hunt
Jack Cassidy - Colorado Mule Deer or Whitetail Deer Hunt
Kruipers - Saskatchewan - Whitetail Deer Hunt
North Star Outfitting - Neil Johnson - Alberta or Saskatchewan Whitetail Deer
Raphael Tagliaeozzo - Argentine Expeditions - Axis Deer and Dove Hunt
Joe O'Bannon - Florida - Alligator Hunt
Don McMillan - Belding, Michigan - Ducks, Geese, Turkey Hunts
Sergei Shushunov Russian Hunting Agency - Northern Osseria Dagherrau Tur
Racks and Tracks Outfitters - Nevada Mule Deer
Mike Ballard - Sitak Adventures - Quebec Labrador Trophy Caribou

Check our website for a complete listing - www.midmichigansci.org



Ibex Grand Slam in Spain

by Mary Harter

We flew in to Madrid, Spain, where we were met by Juan and Agatha Toquero. Don intended to hunt all four Ibex that are only native to Spain: the Beceite, the Sierra Nevada, the Ronda, and the Gredos. I wanted a Mouflon Sheep. Juan drove us east and then north through the Castellon Province, along the Mediterranean Sea, to the mountain range where Don was hunting the Beceite Ibex. We saw grape vineyards, almond trees (without leaves), olive trees (with leaves), and fields where grain had been harvested. The earth was quite red. Nearer the Mediterranean we saw citrus groves and palm trees plus fields of bright green artichokes. Oranges were being picked and truckloads were on the roads. We passed beautiful old towns with very narrow streets. Terracing was everywhere. Stone fences were numerous where years ago people had cleared the land and either made fences or the terracing.

We stayed the night in private cabins at Moli Del Abad (windmill of the Abby) and ate very late dinners of great food



Don with his Beceite Ibex

always including olives and bread dipped in olive oil.

The next morning we were picked up by the game keeper, Domingo, and rode in his Land Rover to the mountains to hunt the Beceite Ibex. In the mountains were juniper trees, pines, live oaks, heather, and holly. Birds were like our chickadees, junkos, nuthatches, and finches but upon asking had different names in Spanish. We followed rocky trails up the hillsides up to about 4,000 feet. These trails were quite well groomed as they were used for hiking trails by backpackers. The ibex were in family groups of bucks, does and their young even though they were heavy in the rut. In certain places you could smell their urine. We saw several in different locations, some on the mountains across the valley from us. I finally sat in one location while Don, Juan and Domingo, walked farther on the trail. As they were coming back, a group of ibex started coming over the top of the mountain towards where I was sitting. A nice buck was in the group and Don took a 280 yard shot and connected. Don and I waited as Juan and Domingo went up after him. We had seen most of the other ibex cross from behind a pine tree but had not seen the big buck so were confident that he lay near the pine. They found him and dragged him down to us for picture taking.



Don with his Sierra Nevada Ibex



Mary and Juan Toquero with a Sierra Nevada Ibex

The next morning we drove south along the coast. We could see ruins of old castles throughout the region. The steeples of catholic churches stood out in every town. We saw many, many stone fences and stone buildings with red tile roofs. The sun shone every day. We passed fields of solar panels and Juan told us the electricity is 50% from nuclear plants and most of the rest is hydro, solar, and wind. Later, we saw several areas of windmills, some old like in Holland and some new. We drove by Castellon on the Mediterranean



Some of the mountain trails were straight up one side and straight down the other. Guess who sat behind the driver on these trails.

Sea, the capitol of the province.

We spent the night in Velez Blanco and our room had a balcony overlooking a beautiful valley.

On to Diezma where we were joined by Angel, the game keeper in this area. He drove us up in the Sierra Nevada mountains. The tops were snow covered but usually by this time of year, the snow was further down the mountains. We were glad that it was unseasonably mild. Angel drove us on very narrow roads on the edge of the mountains, through pine forests. We saw many ibex, females, young, small rams. Finally they spot a beauty far away on a mountainside across the valley. We watched him for awhile and he came our way after the females we had just seen. We drove near where he was, got out, stalked through wooded areas with several pines. Another buck joined him. Don set up to shoot. It is 210 yards. Juan said to wait until he stepped up onto a large rock. When he did, Don shot and down he went. We couldn't see him but the second buck stayed right where he was for quite awhile probably wondering where the first buck went. We were sure the first buck hadn't run or the second one would have followed. When we went to find him, there he was laying on the other side of the rock, a nice eleven year old buck.

While skinning Don's ibex, we look back and another buck is walking up the trail from where we just came. We get back to the car and drive nearer. He has bedded down by a large rock. This one will be mine. I set up with Juan peeking out from the side of a pine tree. The ibex is just laying in the sunshine chewing his cud and looking off to the side. It is only an 80 yard shot. Juan asks me if I can do it. "Yes. Now?" "Yes." BANG! Right in the shoulder and he falls just behind that rock. He is a nice eight to nine year old buck.



Don with his Ronda Ibex

On to Grenada for the evening. Grenada is an old city with very narrow streets. You sure wouldn't want to drive a large vehicle around there. We were up at 6:00 a.m. to go out hunting Ronda Ibex. We stopped for coffee at a gas station and Juan also bought items for lunch. We traveled towards the coast and mountains, some snow capped in the distance. Many, many olive groves are in this area. We drive off the paved roads and climb mountain trails that are one lane only and straight up on one side and straight down on the other. I sometimes just have to shut my eyes. We stop to glass the far hillsides several times and climb up one side to look down in the valley on the other side. We see several ibex but no shooters. After crossing through a locked gate, we reach an old homestead and I stay there while Juan, Angel, and Don go off walking to search another area for ibex. They check out a valley and are so lucky to see a couple of does with a nice buck following. The buck came over a rise to look at the does and back down. Juan said to wait and he would come back up, which he did. Don shot him at about 250 yards. Juan and Angel climbed down to retrieve him.

After our picnic lunch, we took off for a five hour drive to a place near Madrid owned by Federico. He had crops planted just for wildlife and elevated hunting blinds that we didn't have time to even get into. His place was very well kept. As soon as we got out of the car, I glassed his fields and found several Mouflon sheep grazing acorns under his oak trees. It was getting late and the animals were out already. We drove back in Federico's pickup which was familiar to the animals and also saw roe deer, fallow deer, red deer, and wild boar. We set up three times to shoot at a large Mouflon ram. I tried to fire the rifle but there was no shell in the chamber. Juan quickly fixed me up and I shot the ram square in the chest as he was looking straight at us. Down he went at about



Don and Mary Harter with Juan Toquero and their mouflon

180 yards from me. He was huge with more than a full curl almost touching his jowls. Frederico seemed very pleased that I hit him. Frederico spoke no English so we did a lot of nodding. Down the road we went to another area where we saw three more rams. They crossed in front of us and stood in a wooded area at 158 yards and the middle one was the largest. Don quickly got down and set up to shoot and down went the ram. Juan set up both of our rams together for a picture of us to use in his brochure. You wouldn't believe how rocky the fields were in this area. A lot of the rocks were brick sized and larger and they planted grain here. We went back to Frederico's butchering area and skinned out the sheep.

On to Madrid with dinner in an Argentine steak house with Juan and Agatha. The next day we spent in Madrid where we took both city tours and shopped at ElCorte Ingles. We ate dinner at a nice fish restaurant where they don't even seat you in the dining room until 8:00 p.m. We were inquiring to eat at about 7:30 p.m. so they set us up in the bar area. People in Spain eat very late.

On to hunt Gredos Ibex. It was 28 degrees that morning when we met up with Deme Milagros and Castor. We started hiking up the Gredos Mountain at almost 8:30 a.m. It started getting daylight at 8:00 a.m. We saw many ibex in different family groups. Up and up we went over stones, through brush, most of which was heather. It was very difficult and I used the shooting sticks for a walking stick, had on good mountain climbing boots, and still needed assistance at times. We kept walking and glassing and finally we see a shooter. He is laying down on rocks below us. We get closer and eat lunch out on a rock that we could look straight down from and see him. I set up to shoot in a bowl in the rock and wait for him to stand. Don is surprised that I would even get out on the rock but after settling into the bowl, I feel more secure. Finally after about an hour, the ibex stands, I shoot, he drops in his tracks. It is 259 yards. One of the guides go down to

get him from around the side of the mountain. From where we are you can't just go down; it is too steep.

We start back up and around and down the valley instead of straight across the top of the mountain because there is a greater chance of seeing an ibex for Don. On our way glassing the fourth valley, we see a really nice ibex with several others. Don leaned over a rock and shot and the ibex disappeared. Juan thought it had been hit and decided to go down along through the ice and rocks and brush. It is about 5:00 p.m. We proceeded down the mountain with the gamekeeper through the rocks, brush, ice, etc. Just before dark, Juan shouted that he had found Don's ibex and that one made Don's grand slam. It got dark about 6:30 p.m. and we got out our torches (flashlights) and proceeded. We could hear the river getting closer and closer and were to find a narrow path along the river. After fighting brush (heather) and rocks we finally found the path that was still very rugged. Sometimes we were on it and sometimes we weren't but at least it was somewhat level. We finally reached the car after 8:00 p.m. and took pictures of our double Gredos Ibex. I don't think I like heather anymore. We were sore, blistered, and very tired after hiking the very rugged terrain for almost 12 hours.

We spent the night in an old converted home of the game keeper which had original rough granite floors. We had a delicious dinner cooked by the game keeper's wife including rabbit soup and slept sound after taking pain pills. The building reminded me of an old castle, only on a smaller scale.

The next morning we awoke early to roosters crowing and we were off to another area for fallow deer and red stag. We were met by Jesus and Luis Jara. This 6,000 acre piece of property was very mountainous but criss-crossed by roads. We saw many animals and finally a great red stag laying down



Gredos Ibex What a climb!! This made Don's grand slam.

at 259 yards in the brush. I laid down on the side of a gravel road and waited while the game keeper walked in to get him to stand. We waited and waited for almost an hour and the game keeper got within 20 meters and started throwing rocks at him. He finally yelled and the stag whirled and was off. We thought I would have a little time to shoot him; that he would stand and look around and then leave to his left side. Well, that didn't happen and I didn't get off a shot.



Spanish Fallow Deer

On to looking more and we find some fallow deer in the trees. The game keeper said some large ones lived in this wooded area with oaks and just about that time, there they were. Juan said they would be hard to get in the trees but I said it looked just like Michigan. I shot my fallow deer at about 125 yards as he was sneaking through the trees. Next, we find a herd of fallow deer with about four shooters. We sneak down a path until the deer are more visible. We are behind brush and when the deer are within 150 yards, Don shoots. The deer goes over the hill and the game keeper and his dog and Juan go up after it. We drive around to the other side of the mountain and overlook the valley where the deer might run in case he needs another shot. Finally we see him and down he goes. Juan and the game keeper haul him up to us and we take pictures of our double - our fourth.

This area has oak trees, heather, a few palms, and cactus all growing together. Homes also have grapes and oranges growing. I have never seen such a diversity of vegetation.

We continue to drive around, park, scope, and finally when it is almost dark we see some red stag. Juan and I sneak down in a valley towards them. We finally set up to shoot from a huge rock. A nice red stag is at 290 yards. We really see three nice red stags and several fallow bucks. We wait and wait for a good shot. The red deer start to walk down the far side of the mountain but two come back. Then the



Mary's European Red Stag

fallow deer are either in front or behind the biggest stag. It is rapidly getting darker but finally the red stag is clear and I shoot. Juan can hear the bullet hit. The stag falters but is still standing even though all the rest of the animals run away. We decide to wait until first light in the morning to approach him.

Back out just before daylight and there is a blood trail going down the backside of the mountain. Off we go with the dog tracking down the steep rocks and brush finding a couple of bloody areas where he bedded down. We find him under a tree. He is a nice, symmetrical, six by six.

Now we think we are done with our hunt and talk about all the events while enjoying the morning sunshine and look across at the mountain we had climbed for the Gredos Ibex a couple of days before. We cannot believe that we climbed it even though our bodies tell us we did.

On the way back to the game keeper's house we drive by where I had set up for the first red stag the day before and we see one bedded down. We are sure it is the same one and Don decides to go for him. Juan decides that he and Don should set up to shoot and the game keeper and several of his workers will drive the area in hopes that the stag will stand up and if he runs, go towards Don and Juan. I sit on a rock to wait as I hear the drivers yell. Unfortunately, the stag bolts and runs right through the drivers and is gone before Don can even take a shot. He has eluded us twice.

This has been a great hunt with Juan Toquero as our guide and traveling companion. He has extensively researched all of Spain for the best places to hunt the various animals. He speaks fluent English which is so necessary as we speak no Spanish. We both would certainly recommend hunting with Juan.

Tanzania, Africa 2007

by Roger Card

Rod Merchant and I left Lusaka, Zambia on July 20, 2007 for the flight direct to Dar Es Salaam. We were met by Jerome Latrive, our professional hunter, and checked into the Sea Cliff Hotel to wait for the morning charter out to JML Safaris.

The hunting area Jerome and his father have is 4,000 square miles of some of the best plains game hunting in Tanzania. They also offer lion, leopard, and elephant hunts, if you wish. Their area is 100 miles long by 40 miles wide with four wonderful, efficient camps and hundreds of miles of two track trails.

Each day is pretty much the same for hunting. Up at 5:45 a.m., grab a little bite for breakfast, drive until noon, have a nice lunch and catch a nap, then start out again hunting until dark. The evening meals were always a special treat, leaving you wondering how they prepare this wonderful food this far out in the bush. My focus on this hunt was concentrated on East African Kudu because that was the only animal I needed to fill a slot on my World Conservation Award quest. I collected a beautiful 50 inch on the third day of our hunt. I also shot a real nice Sable, Impala, and Zebra. We did several stalks on buffalo and elephants but were never able to find anything larger than what I already had.

Every year about half of Jerome's concession is burned of the tall grass so the new growth will prosper and grow. There were several factors that put me in Tanzania a couple weeks ahead of the grasses really coming back. Most importantly, I had to coordinate this hunt with the one from Zambia and it was a chance we took. We did see lots of game. However, we never saw the great numbers the Seleous area is famous for. Before we left, there was a nice rain day and the new grass just exploded from the ground in the burned areas. There is no doubt that we were just too early in the season.

The hunting area is all about the same with lots of trees and tall grass. This certainly allowed for great stalking. Not always easy but doable. I had forgotten how exciting it is to put a stalk on a bull elephant. Jerome had me at 30 yards several times, believe you me, that sure makes your heart pound.

Jerome and his guides were always being cheerful and pleasant, working very hard to keep everyone smiling and happy.

The first morning Rod and I showed up for the hunt with our binoculars, bullets, guns, camera, clothing, and brand new



Roger Card with his Sable

Card's Draw camouflage hats. Jerome looked at our hats, smiled and said, "Nice hats, do they come in men's styles, also?" We knew then our time with JML Safaris would be fun with lots of laughter and jokes. When you think back, that really is an important part of a great safari. Rod continued to do his magic shows whenever we had a break in the hunting and around camp in the evenings. The local natives are sure he is some kind of Bush God. Rod leaves them shaking their heads and with wide eyed amazement.

Some of the more exciting moments of our safari were:

Lions - When we stumbled onto the lions we were way to close to a feeding male. At first we spotted the female on the right hand and then before we could move, the male that was eating the hartebeest gave us a little charge and a big roar. It worked and we left real quick! He was only 20 feet away!

Elephants - While hunting we came upon a female with a small baby. She saw our jeep and made a mad charge with her ears flapping and her trunk in the air. She ran right up behind the truck just screaming - it was fun.

Black Mamba - While hunting one day a large black mamba stuck its head up above the grass and got everyone's attention - even Jerome was shaken a little by this.

Our hunt with JML Safaris in Tanzania was certainly a great conclusion to our 2007 African hunting adventure.

If anyone has any questions on this type of hunt, please feel free to contact me. Roger R. Card.

*Sometimes the road less traveled is less traveled for a reason -
Jerry Sienfeld*

With the support of many SCI chapters including ours, Alaska was successful.

Alaska Chapter SCI
PO Box 770511
Eagle River, AK 99577



September 19, 2008

Don Harter
Mid Michigan Chapter
PO Box 486
Mt Pleasant, MI 0

Dear Mr. Harter:

After having lost twice on the same ballot question in previous years, many hunters in Alaska were skeptical that we could reverse our fate on the third go around. In 1996 and again in 2000 Alaskan voters were asked to decide whether predator/prey management by the use of aerial assistance should be allowed in our state. Both times the resounding answer was no. Fortunately the Alaska Legislature remained in friendly hands and we were able to overturn those other citizen initiatives after the mandatory two year waiting period.

We knew going in that we had to win this time or we could face the very real possibility that the Legislature would finally concede that the will of the majority of Alaskans was against we sportsmen and women. That is where you came to the rescue. Although the SCI Family has provided good levels of cooperation on such issues before, I cannot remember such an out-pouring of support such as we received here in Alaska. The number of chapters and individual members who heeded the call for help was overwhelming, not to mention very humbling.

Money is the mother's milk of campaigns. Without it you usually don't have much of a chance of winning. Through the efforts of SCI, Alaskans for Professional Wildlife Management was able to construct a winning campaign. SCI funding allowed us to hire a professional consulting firm and do the requisite polling to establish who our likely allies were among voters and what our message should be. Such a professional effort paid off in spades the night of the election as we waited with baited breath for the results. When the first numbers flashed up on the screen at election central in Anchorage, none of us could believe our eyes. We were not only winning, we were kicking their (anti-hunters) butts.

I cannot find the words to describe our gratitude to the SCI Family for this victory. When the dust settled and the final accounting of our victory was assessed, SCI, its chapters and its members donated over 85% of the funding for this campaign. Over 85 chapters and individuals contributed including several chapters from outside the country. There are many groups out there who deserve our thanks, as well as our support, for they too are in the battle to support hunting, but no other one group can ever contest us for the statement in our logo, "First for Hunters". I am truly proud to be a member of the world's leading hunter-conservationist fraternity.

From the heart of a hunter, I extend my deepest appreciation to all of you for your part in saving professional wildlife management here in Alaska, and especially to our President, Merle Shepard who successfully encouraged this process.

Sincerely,

Eddie Grasser, President
SCI Alaska Chapter

Hunting with Julius Gers

by Joanne Witte

At our Mid-Michigan Safari Club International annual Hunter's Convention on Saturday February 16, 2008, I purchased a Roan antelope hunt donated by Gers Safaris in the Northern Cape in South Africa. Julius Gers, the owner, has over 15,000 acres called Klein Papkuil Preserve near Danielskuil, not too far from Kimberly. Our friend, Art Street, who had hunted with Julius the previous three years, went with us. Larry and I are rifle hunters and Art is a bow hunter.

We had had a wonderful time on our twelve-day hunt. Julius, his wife Madelene, and their three daughters, Carman, Nikita, and Tonya, were wonderful hosts, hunting operators, and chefs.

Larry and I have hunted in Africa on 4 other occasions (three trips to Zimbabwe and one to Namibia), but this was our first time in a very elegant facility. Everything was first class—the accommodations, the dining, the hunting equipment, the professional hunters, the game, and the attention to our needs. It was wonderful to have dependable hot water and plentiful and delectable food and drink.

I particularly enjoyed hunting an animal with such a notable history. Julius's ancestors established a trading post near Danielskuil that still exists. This is the place where Sir William Cornwallis Harris shot the first Roan antelope circa 1836. In his book, *Wild Sports of Southern Africa* published in 1852, Cornwallis Harris describes his safari from 1836 to 1838 during which he traveled from the Cape as far north as the Limpopo River. He had "18,000 leaden bullets" plus metal for more bullets, but only one rifle. He had ordered two more but they did not arrive in time for his trip. He had a team of 30 oxen, wagons, tools and numerous gifts and some "inferior spirits" for the natives. Cornwallis Harris was a young man in his mid twenties when he embarked upon this adventure.

Cornwallis Harris saw thousands of animals—most of which we still hunt today--and crossed rivers and traveled to places with names we still recognize. Even the tribes we hear about now were familiar to him back then.

It was thrilling to know that I shot the same animal he did in the same place though in much more comfort and over 170 years later.

An account of our trip follows:

THURSDAY JULY 10, 2008

Larry, Art, and I stayed overnight in Grand Rapids so we could get an early start for Atlanta to catch our Delta flight to Johannesburg, South Africa to begin our hunting trip with Julius.

FRIDAY JULY 11, 2008

Today was our 28th wedding anniversary. What a way to celebrate!

After showers at 3:00AM and an uneventful trip to the airport and plane ride, we arrived in Atlanta about 8:00AM. We had hoped to obtain bulkhead seats so Larry could remove his leg braces during the long flight. Once we arrived we found that we had to wait till they opened the flight at 4:30PM to request the seats. We spent a long day in the Atlanta airport. I discovered display cases full of beautiful articles the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Customs had confiscated from travelers because they did not have the proper import permits.

We were able to get the bulkhead seats but the flight left over two hours late. The day before the once daily flight to Johannesburg had been cancelled due to inclement weather so many people were trying to get on this flight. We heard some sad stories about trips being ruined because of the delay. We were glad we did not have a connecting flight to make in Joburg upon our arrival.

SATURDAY JULY 12, 2008

We arrived in Joburg about 6:00PM after a 19½ hour flight with a 7 hour time difference—almost three hours late. Everyone needing connections had missed their flights. There was a huge line at Customs. Eventually we found our rifles and luggage and Art's bow. All of our luggage arrived intact.

The people from the Professional Hunter's Association of South Africa (PHASA) who had pre registered our rifles found us, as did the representative from the Afton House where we spent the night. After big tips to the little vultures hovering around us at the airport we were on our way to the Afton House. Our room was very nice and the steak dinner we had was good.

SUNDAY JULY 13, 2008

After a leisurely breakfast of eggs, bacon, toast etc we

made it to the airport about noon and were told that even though we had paid the travel agency for our tickets to Kimberly they had not paid South African Airways. Whereupon several more of the little vultures escorted us to a ticket agent at a different counter on the other side of the airport and we proceeded to purchase tickets to Kimberly. Lots of stress. Luckily we had a credit card to pay for the tickets and we had arrived at the airport early. Gracy Travel is trying to get us a refund.

Julius met us at the Kimberly airport about 5:00PM and we were on our way to the farm. It was about a 1 ½ hour drive. Julius and Art had a warm reunion.

Dinner was beautiful and delicious. Our starter was honeydew melon, ham slivers, and blue cheese with a creamy dressing. For dinner we had pumpkin pancakes in cream sauce, chicken, steenbok, and a beautiful chocolate cake dessert. Of course there was very special red and white wine from Julius' extensive wine cellar.

They said they "barbecued" the meat. We would say the meat was "grilled" because there was no BBQ sauce on it. They built a wood fire in an open pit and we had drinks while sitting around the fire. Once the coals burned down they shoveled them on to a cement ledge, pulled a grate down over them and grilled the meat. It was delicious and so tender.

The whole compound was beautiful. We met Julius daughter's Carman and Nikita and our Professional Hunters. Joanne's PH was Alwyn De Jager (a young fellow of about 25) and Larry's was Frans Grobbelaar. Alwyn's wife Marike helped with the cooking. Julius' wife Madelene does most of the cooking but she was visiting a friend for a few days. After she returned she took charge in the kitchen. Carman is starting her last year of law school and Nikita is in her second or third year of college. Both girls attend university in CapeTown. Tonya, the third daughter, is in boarding school and comes home on weekends.

MONDAY JULY 14, 2008

We didn't sleep well. It was cold. Julius turned the water pump off overnight to prevent the pipes from freezing as they had the night before. When I awoke at 1:00AM to use the bathroom, there was no water. I had a moment of dread. Oh no! Not more water problems while hunting! Crisis averted! The pump was turned on about 7:00AM and left on for the rest of our stay.



Joanne's Roan

We sighted in our rifles. Both Larry and I were using Browning A-Bolt .300 WSM with 180 grain Winchester Fail Safe ammunition. They worked well on both large and small game.

Alwyn, Art, Philip (my driver who was also the skinner) and I went out to find a Roan. Art was the official videographer that day. Larry, Frans, and Willem (Larry's driver) set out to see what they could find.

Alwyn spotted a good Roan but it slipped off into the bush. A few minutes later he spied another one and he whispered, "let's go for a walk" while making walking motions with his fingers. I came to know that gesture very well. We pursued the Roan for a short while. Finally it stopped behind a bush and looked at us. I could only see the head and neck about 80 yards away. I got my rifle in position on Alwyn's shooting sticks and when it presented a quartering shot I squeezed the trigger. The Roan spun around about 4 times and disappeared. We followed the blood trail and found it about 60 yards distant. It was a perfect lung shot. Art videotaped the entire episode.

By 12:30PM we were back for lunch. We had fruit—banana, kiwi, pineapple, papaya and a little dish of yogurt for starters. The main course consisted of French toast, mushrooms, and bacon and broiled tomato. The South Africans like shredded sharp cheese on sweet things. They put syrup on the French toast and then shredded cheese on top of that. They did this with everything that had syrup or jelly or marmalade on it. I tried this and it was very good. The cheese tempered the sweet taste of the topping.

Larry shot a great Red Hartebeest while hunting with Julius and Frans. This was the first of the six animals he had on his list. He intended to show more restraint than me. I had no list.



Larry's Red Hartebeest

In the afternoon Alwyn and I made two stalks for springbok but didn't get a shot. Those springbok flit like fleas across the open areas that are called "pans".

Dinner was mushroom soup for starters, BBQ wildebeest and zebra. They tenderize the meat by keeping it in a vacuum-sealed pouch for 2½ weeks in the refrigerator, not frozen, before grilling it. We also had sautéed vegetables, oven fried potatoes and sweet carrots. For dessert we had pear cake. Everything was so delicious and so beautifully prepared and served. Of course there was red and white wine also.

TUESDAY JULY 15, 2008

It was 35 degrees this morning! Cold! We were glad we had fleece jackets, hooded sweatshirts, and down jackets. Based on Art's advice we had taken winter pajamas for which we were grateful. Of course, the hot water bottles provided by Madelene for our beds helped keep us warm at night. By 10:00AM it had warmed up to 60 degrees.

Alwyn and I went to the same area where we saw a big common springbok yesterday. It is called the sout pan or salt pan. In former days it was a salt mine. Unfortunately we didn't see the big one today. I shot a beautiful black springbok from my knees while using the sticks after a short stalk.

We hunted in the brokenveld on the Ghaap Plateau where Julius owns over 15,000 acres. The vegetation consists of wild olive trees and camphor bushes. The plateau is 50 miles by 150 miles and is full of limestone and dolomite. The land is covered with rocks up to the size of softballs. I should have worn hiking boots instead of the glorified tennis shoes



Joanne's Black Wildebeest

that are great for sandy soil. The elevation is about 4900 feet. Alwyn wore Wolverine hiking boots some of which are made in Big Rapids.

Alwyn and I made two long stalks to try to get close to common springbok and bontebok but no luck. We saw huge scimitar horned oryx and two nice waterbuck.

In the PM I shot a black wildebeest in the pan behind the lodge. Alwyn, our driver and I "went for a walk" and came upon a herd lying down. We knelt behind a bush and Alwyn tried to figure out how to get the beasts to stand up so I could get a shot. There was a herd of springbok nearby that would surely spook if anyone moved. After a long conversation I decided I could shoot the animal lying down. Alwyn said to shoot where the shoulder bent. That was almost on the ground. I steadied my right arm on Alwyn's shoulder, and while on my knees, using the sticks, shot. The animal fell over dead right there. Alwyn said, "Hell of a shot!"—A comment the hunter always loves to hear.

The driver took the animal back and Alwyn and I arrived at the lodge after a two-hour walk during which we saw springbok cavorting on the other side of the pan. Because there was no cover we could not get close enough for a shot.

My eyes were giving me horrible grief. They were sore, itchy, and watering; my nose was running and the constant wind and sun were burning my face. I learned to cover my face as much as possible and to avert my eyes while the truck was moving. I'm not sure if I was allergic to something or if it was the wind bothering me. Next time I intend to wear goggles and Muslim headdress. Larry spent the day looking for a waterbuck.

WEDNESDAY JULY 16, 2008

We were out early. Alwyn and I went back to the buffalo area across from the salt pan to look for a bontebok. Alwyn had spotted one there before. Carman and Nikita were pressed into service as drivers because there were other hunters. They both love the farm and like to drive. Julius has a series of hand signals for the PH and the driver so no words are spoken between the two during the drive. They communicate by using the side view mirrors. Carman drove Larry and Nikita drove me.

Alwyn spotted a good bontebok and by 8:30 it was down. He called for someone to come from the farm to take the animal back so we could keep hunting. The rest of the morning we looked for a steenbok but to no avail.



Joanne's Bontebok

Larry shot a black springbok that was lying down at over 280 yards for which he received many accolades from Julius, Frans, and Art who were with him. This was one animal not on his list.



Larry's Black Springbok

Julius has flags at the entrance to the farm. There are two South African flags flanking the drive. He tries to have flags from the countries of his hunters. While there we had the US flag, a Michigan flag, a Danish flag for Madelene's friend who was staying for a visit, and the

gay pride flag. There was a party of six—a mother and father and son from South Africa and their non-hunting American friends—a 75-year-old woman and two gay men. Hence the flag. No desired animals were seen in the PM.

THURSDAY JULY 17, 2008

Today we drove to the Kalahari to a farm called Gamagara to hunt for gemsbok and waterbuck. We were also checking out the 20,000-acre property for Julius because he is considering buying it to expand his hunting opportunities. The red sands were absolutely beautiful and game was plentiful though skittish.

I welcomed some time off during the drive to let my eyes recover. In the PM Alwyn and I stalked a large herd of gemsbok but could not get close enough for a shot.

We also saw rhino they are raising. The lodge was very imposing but cold and uncomfortable. Our rondavaal, however, was comfortable and large. Marike came with us to do the cooking. The little Jack Russell terrier we have seen at the farm, Choppie, belongs to Alwyn and Marike and came with us.

There were orange trees with good oranges behind our rondavaals.



Larry's Ostrich

FRIDAY JULY 18, 2008

We were out early in the AM. Alwyn and I made a long stalk for an elusive impala but they never stopped. They were as fleeting as the spingbok.

In the PM we dropped Art off at a waterhole with his bow. He shot a very nice impala.

Larry shot a huge ostrich. —the second animal on his list. Alwyn and I saw lots of animals but nothing shootable. My eyes and nose were still giving me fits. It is very hard to hunt with your eyes closed.

SATURDAY JULY 19, 2008

This morning Art went with Alwyn and me. I shot a beautiful black backed jackal off the truck at 9:00AM Hooray! I really wanted one. It appeared to the right of a bush and I shot and missed. Then it appeared again to the left of the bush and this time the shot was good. It was feeding on a wildebeest head.



Joanne's Black Backed Jackal

We saw dozens of meerkats, bat eared foxes, and a tiny baby steenbok, maybe a week old, lying in the trail.

At last light I finally shot an impala. We saw two and embarked upon a diesel stalk. I took a shot at the animal while it was moving--something I never do—and connected. The animal disappeared and we found no blood. After a short while our driver saw the animal lying under a bush whereupon I dispatched it.

SUNDAY JULY 20, 2008

Today we went back to the farm; we were all very ready to return "home".

In Kuruman we stopped at The Eye—a huge spring with a pond full of fish. It was a beautiful spot. The water that served the Moffat Mission came from this spring.

Next we visited the Moffat Mission where we were much impressed by the industry and dedication of the Moffats. Robert Moffat, an English missionary, translated the Bible into Setswana in the mid-1800's. The buildings were beautiful and we especially liked the dung floor in the church. Marike said her family has a dung floor in their barn. It has to be redone three times a year and smells bad for part of the process but once finished it is very hard and durable. (Yes, it is cow manure mixed with water.)

David Livingstone married the Moffat's daughter and spent a great deal of time at the Mission. Cornwallis Harris

mentions in his book that he visited the mission and the town of Kuruman during his travels.



Joanne's Gemsbok

We were back at the farm for lunch and then out hunting after checking our rifles.

I made a 359 yard shot (according to my range finder) on a gemsbok. What a thrill! Alwyn was very impressed with the shot and so was I.



Larry's Red Lechwe

On the way back a good steenbok was spotted and collected after a diesel stalk.

Larry shot a beautiful red lechwe—the number three animal on his list. Julius was with him in addition to Frans. Julius and Frans were with Larry for all his listed animals.



Larry Witte with his Nyala

MONDAY JULY 21, 2008

Alwyn and I rode around all day but didn't find anything worth shooting.

Larry shot a great nyala with a luxurious hide—animal number four. I convinced him to have it skinned for a full mount. We will figure out where to put it later. He received many congratulations.

Art shot a gemsbok, the only animal he really wanted on this trip. The bow hunting blinds here are called "hides" and are made of concrete over wire mesh. They are recessed into the ground and are built near waterholes so an archer sees lots of game. During his last three trips Art collected many great animals with his bow. On this trip he was mainly acting as a companion for us.

TUESDAY JULY 22, 2008

There was a special treat today—lunch in the bush. It was complete with champagne, and linens. The food as usual was delicious. We had mealie (traditional African porridge) with a meat sauce, fresh hot rolls, corn casserole, and a potato dish that I want to try. It was cooked cubed potatoes, with bacon, onions, and mushrooms fried together, and red cabbage that was not precooked. Cream was poured over all and it was heated through.

Larry shot a wonderful waterbuck—animal number 5—in the afternoon.

Alwyn and I spent an uneventful day stalking the elusive springbok. Right at dark I shot a huge kudu in the buffalo pan. It ran and I missed it with another shot. We called for the troops and everyone came. Finally at 8:00PM we hunters and our PH's went back to the farm. Julius and the trackers found blood but no kudu.



Larry's Waterbuck

WEDNESDAY JULY 23, 2008

We all tracked the kudu for hours. The trackers and PH's found tiny drops of blood in the sand, on the rocks,

and on the bushes, sometimes 10 yards apart. We followed its circuitous path for over two miles but no kudu was found. We concluded it was not a killing shot.

After lunch Alwyn and I hunted in front of the lodge but found nothing of interest.

About 4:00PM Alwyn and I went back to the buffalo pan and waited beside a waterhole hoping the kudu would come for water. We saw beautiful sable, lots of Roan, many curious buffalo, and a half dozen kudu but not my kudu.



Joanne's Common Springbok posed Danish style

THURSDAY JULY 24, 2008

Today we had a "proper English breakfast" at nine o'clock. For starters, we had juice, fruit and yogurt. Then we had fried eggs, toast, bacon, sausage, tomato, mushrooms, muffins and lots of hot coffee.

I measured everything according to the SCI system. We took sandwiches out for a snack so we would not have to return to the farm until dinnertime.

Alwyn and I returned to the salt pan to try to get that big springbok. After a very long stalk we spied it as we hid under a clump of trees. Because there was no cover it was not possible to get closer so I steadied myself on a tree for a long shot. Unfortunately I did not have my range finder so I wasn't sure just how long the shot was. I shot over it. Then it was back to the farm to try the pan in front of the house.

Alwyn took a walk by himself and spotted a good springbok. He came back for me and we sneaked up behind a tree and I dropped it at a little over 200 yards.

I wanted to pose the animal as do the Danes. They lay it on the side with the head facing forward rather than propping it up on its legs. It is much easier to get the animal into position that way.

Early on Alwyn asked me at what distance I was comfortable shooting. I said 200 yards and he said, "Great, most people tell me 100 yards."

Alwyn and I returned to the buffalo pan for another night of hoping the kudu would show up at the waterhole. It didn't. If they find it later, they will send the horns to me.

Everyone there—including the trackers, skinners, and drivers—used cell phones incessantly. They were more convenient than radios but sometimes they rang at inopportune times.

Larry shot a great black wildebeest—the number 6 and final animal on his list. It was also his most interesting hunt. Art, Frans, Willem and Larry made a half hour stalk on foot before they spotted the herd. The animals were lying down so the hunters sat down to wait for them to get up so Larry could get a clear shot at the one he wanted. Three and one half hours later the animals finally stood up. They heard Willem answering a cell phone call from Julius wanting to know how the hunt was going. Larry shot the animal and the herd took off. They looked for two hours until dark and found the tracks of the herd but no blood and no dead wildebeest. Finally they realized that the injured animal had taken a different path and they found it about 100 yards distant. Larry suffered some anxious moments in the meantime.

I noticed a plaque on the wall in the Lodge saying it is a four star lodge. In response to my question Madelene said you must have a television set in every room and 24 hour room service to get a five star rating.

FRIDAY JULY 25, 2008

Today Alwyn and I hunted for duiker, big springbok and big gemsbok but found nothing of interest. In the afternoon we looked for a reedbuck. One was spotted but it wasn't big enough. Reluctantly, I decided it was time to conclude the hunt.

Larry shot a steenbok (an animal not on his list) while on the way to pick up Art at a hide. Art was just getting ready to arrow a big blue wildebeest when he heard Larry's shot and the beasts scattered. Unfortunately, even though Larry remembers posing the animal and taking pictures there are no pictures among our over 350 prints.

That afternoon Alwyn took Larry and me to watch Julius dart a cow buffalo in the herd with a calf that was failing to thrive. The veterinarian, a young English woman named Janine, was there earlier in the week and said it could be a neurological disorder. They isolated the mama and the baby for Janine to look at later. Her entire practice is with wild, not domestic, animals. "Very dangerous; very dangerous", she said.

I asked Alwyn if all the South African farm owners were

as careful of their animals as Julius is and he said, "Yes." Earlier in the week Julius sold some of his buffalo to another hunting operation. It was quite a sight to see the animals loaded into the van. Julius will have a huntable population of Cape buffalo in about three years.

On the various pieces of property there are cemeteries holding the remains of previous owners. Julius' uncle from whom he bought part of the farm is buried there.

Tonight we had last supper so it was joyful and sad at the same time.

SATURDAY JULY 26, 2008

After breakfast we settled up and headed for Kimberly where we had lunch with Charles who was Art's PH on an earlier trip and had an uneventful flight to Joburg.

Once again we stayed at the Afton House but it was too full and the staff was not attentive to our needs. Supper was late, the meat was tough, the shower was temperamental, and Art's room was the size of a closet. However he did have his own bathroom this time in contrast to our previous visit.

SUNDAY JULY 27, 2008

After breakfast at 8:00AM we spent a long boring, and cold, day at the Afton House. They took us to a restaurant in a mall for lunch where I had a blah salad with no dressing.

We finally arrived at the airport about 4:00PM and got our rifles checked in but did not get bulkhead seats. The little vultures were still there but for the most part we escaped them. Our seats were not too bad. However, my TV didn't work properly and my reading light didn't work at all. I positioned Larry's light between us so both of us had to contort to have the light shine on our books.

MONDAY JULY 28, 2008

We arrived at Atlanta early and had a bad experience with Customs. The officials were rude, uninterested, and not helpful. One person gave Larry's passport to Art by mistake but he had no interest in clearing up the mix-up.

The three of us had a drink with breakfast at 9:00AM—a first for all of us. We arrived in Grand Rapids on time, collected all our luggage, and got to Stanwood about 5:00PM. Art left for his home near Gaylord right away.

We had a great time and enjoyed and appreciated having Art on the trip with us.

We highly recommend hunting with Julius Gers for a great South African experience.

Marco Polo Sheep in Tajikistan

by Roger Card

I published an article in the last issue of the Front Sight from Tajikistan. It was written during a "break" in the hunting when my partner, Rod Merchant, and I were under "house arrest" by the KGB. Fortunately all of the infractions were curable and once everything was in order, our documents, licenses, permits, ammunition, guns, and passports were returned to us. A small amount of money donated to the police retirement fund seemed to move the process along nicely.

The trip from Dushanbe, where we landed, to our hunting area was a brutal and treacherous 24 hour jeep ride on a glorified camel trail taking us as high as 17,000 feet through the Pamir Mountains. Camp consisted of a little stone building so remote it had to be near the end of the earth. Once our papers and gear were returned it was up at 4:30 a.m. for some serious Marco Polo Sheep hunting. There were loads of sheep in the area, the only problem was they always spotted the vehicle before we saw them. It did not matter how far away we were when I put the 30x power Zeiss spotting scope on them, they were always looking directly at me or running in the opposite direction. The only way to get around this was to stalk up the side of a mountain and peer over the summit into the valley below. The guides were quite adept at this and most stalks produced good sightings. The temperature was about



Near the end of the earth in Tajikistan

20 degrees and the altitude was between 14,000 feet and 15,000 feet. Also the wind was blowing viciously from 20 to 30 miles an hour 24 hours a day.

I was prepared for these conditions

and had brought proper clothing for protection. Even then walking up a mountain two to three miles in this environment was a challenge. In the three days of intense hunting I probably did about 10 to 12 of these bone numbing frigid freezing stalks. Each time we glassed a new valley we spotted sheep but either they were too far away or small rams and females. Secretly I was hoping for a 60" ram but I had told my guide in "sign language" that a 55" ram would make me ecstatic.

Finally we crested a mountain top and on our side of the valley was a group of four rams with what we all agreed was a shooter. The stalk took about 45 minutes to an hour



of moving ever so slowly. My guide and I worked really hard using every little bit of cover we could find to stay hidden from the rams and trying to get within range. I had been practicing at home for a range of up to 600 yards but I really hoped we could get closer. At the longer ranges with the high gusting winds you are squeezing the trigger hoping for a good body shot. I very much wanted to get where I would be comfortable putting my Nozzler Partition right in the old engine plant. I am happy to report my guide got me to about 500 yards and I just flattened that huge 55" ram. There could not have been a happier hunter anywhere in the world. He is a beautiful ram that I hope someday to get into the Card Wildlife Education Center.

Now that I had my ram and the hunt was over there was only one more challenge remaining, the return trip back through the mountains. The following is an excerpt from my book, "A Hunter's Journey Through Life", describing that treacherous trip in a blinding snow storm. I hope you enjoy it.

Excerpt -----The jeep this group had arrived in turned out to be what we were waiting for and at last we could leave for our return to Dushanbe. A plan was soon hatched where we would get a good night's rest and arise at 4:00 a.m. to start our twenty-four hour return trip. Rod and I were up accordingly, dressed and packed. This really wasn't that big of a deal as we had been ready and waiting now for three days.

At 5:00 a.m. it was discovered that our escape vehicle didn't have enough anti-freeze in it and there it sat in front of the door with the engine frozen. Not until 11:00 a.m. that morning did we finally pull out of camp with a vehicle that was full of fuel, had a working heater, and seemed to have a reasonable chance of reaching Dushanbe in the near future. Our new driver spoke only Russian so we communicated with hand signals and off we went all thumbs up and smiles. Ten hours later we pulled into a little town that had a really nice Bed and Breakfast and decided it would be best to get a good night's sleep and leave early the next morning for the last leg of our trip. This final day would take us high into the

Pamir Mountains and would be treacherous in the daylight, let alone after dark when we were exhausted and visibility was poor.



Plowing snow with a Land Cruiser

Just prior to reaching the Bed and Breakfast, our driver spotted a woman on the street he knew and they had quite an animated conversation. As soon as we were unloaded, he explained he needed to get fuel and off he went with a big

wink and a smirky grin. Rod and I grabbed a quick meal and prepared to turn in wondering if we'd ever see him again. The good news is he was waiting out front bright and early the following morning just like he was supposed to be. The bad news is he looked like death warmed over! Obviously, he had partied all night. To make matters even worse, a blinding snow storm had blown in. At this point we really didn't need more adversity, but it came anyway.

The road (if you want to call it that) between this stop over and Dushanbe is one of the most treacherous trails I have ever been on. It is a tiny ledge, often no more than eight feet wide, chiseled out of a sheer stone wall. There is not a guard rail or marker of any kind to help you spot the edge. On the way into camp originally, I had witnessed several places where sections of the road had fallen away and we had to hug the inside wall to avoid falling into these voids. Now we were about to take this camel trail crossing back through the Pamirs, eventually reaching the 17,000 foot pass, in a snow storm with a hung over driver. Not good!

As we started working our way higher the Land Cruiser kept losing traction and would spin out in the snow. Each time we lost forward motion and did a sideways slide it would take us out to the very edge. It was unnerving, to say the least! This problem was eventually corrected by letting air out of the tires which created more traction. It did the trick for getting us over the pass, but once we reached the peak the now grossly overloaded Cruiser was navigating with four flat tires and there was no way to replenish the air! Did I mention we really didn't need any more adversity on this trip? The flat tires made for a very squirrely ride, even though we were trying to go straight. Needless to say, it was a white-knuckle trip every second of the ten hours it took us to get through the pass.

Rod and I made the trip on the very edge of our seats, trying to assist the driver spotting fallen boulders, rock slides, and many other dangers. Sometimes it was snowing and

blowing so hard we would be in complete white out and just seeing the road was a challenge. It didn't leave our minds for a second that if we slid off this road we would die. The drop off was never less than several hundred feet -- usually over a thousand, and in several places we were pushing snow with our front bumper. It was SCARY! We thought the driver would appreciate our help and concern but apparently he took offense. We found ourselves dealing with a chauffeur that was not only hung over; he also had a real attitude. He started showing us his authority by increasing his speed and fish-tailing the car whenever possible always trying to see how close he could get to the edge to torment us. IT WORKED! This was extremely dangerous and so totally unnecessary I could not believe it. He continued in his adolescent manner until I was forced to confront him. It really got ugly.

By the time we crossed over the summit our driver was pretty sullen and would not acknowledge we were in the car. We had started this journey at 6:00 a.m. and by 10:00 p.m. we were still trekking through the storm and we were exhausted. Our eyeballs were bugged out and hurting from hours of being peeled watching for danger. Upon reaching the far side of the mountain we started passing through some small villages and each had a road house where you could get a cup of tea and a fried egg with bread. Our driver pulled in front of one of these, removed the keys, and without a word, disappeared. We assumed he was checking to see if we could get a bite to eat, but we hadn't seen exactly where he went.

It was approximately 0 degrees outside and within an hour we were freezing. We dug out our flashlights and went looking for the jerk. We found him in the road house, wrapped in a blanket, sleeping by the fire. He had gone inside to bed and left us to freeze in the truck! Did I also mention that once we had crossed the summit he stopped to celebrate by having a tea cup full of straight Russian vodka? You just have to love a guy like that.

Upon this discovery of our friend sleeping, I was so upset that I literally kicked him to get his attention. I wasn't mad about him needing sleep, I was furious that he had just left us without a word about what he was up to. The return trip from camp ended up taking thirty-six hours of driving in a storm that finally dissipated ten miles out from Dushanbe. Go figure.

Upon arrival in Dushanbe at 2:00 a.m., we found no one had made hotel reservations and we spent another hour and a half driving around trying to find a room. We finally did, and while I checked into the hotel, Rod and the driver unloaded our bags and then, thankfully, that belligerent driver just drove away. I think he understood he wasn't going to be able to buy much beer with the tip I had in mind!

Antelope Hunt

with Jack Cassidy

Ten guys made a great trip to Wyoming in the fall of 2008 to hunt antelope. Randy Dykstra, Kevin Whaley, and Roger Froling drove out together. Tim Hauck, Eddie Peters, Ron Rau and Jeff Wilson drove together, and Jim Hegedus, Jimmy Hegedus and Steve Smallbone flew to Casper, rented a car and drove to camp. Randy Dykstra's big One ton Ford Diesel truck was great - with four doors it had plenty of room, along with no problem towing Kevin Whaley's big enclosed trailer. Kevin purchased a freezer for the trip and it worked out very well. I got a 1000 watt twelve volt converter that we hooked into the battery and ran an extension cord back to the trailer, and plugged in the freezer. This proved to be a very good way to keep things frozen solid. The vice president of the Sioux Storm Ball Club had purchased a buffalo at the SCI convention in Sioux Falls, and we packed the freezer full of his buffalo and hauled it to Omaha. It was full of antelope and deer on the return trip from Wyoming and so it really worked well.



Roger Froling and Jack Cassidy with Roger's beautiful antelope

hundred yards I got a lucky heart shot.

All the guys filled, seven guys made arrangements to head home. Kevin Whaley, Randy Dykstra and I stayed to hunt deer. We made some nice drives and I got a nice eight point white tail. I shot two shots and hit him twice at a dead run. It was nice to be lucky. Then Kevin Whaley got a nice mule deer at two hundred fifty yards, and Randy could have gotten a couple of smaller bucks, but passed on them.

We spent a day shooting prairie dogs and it was really fun. Kevin Whaley got out his fishing rod, and on his second cast caught a twenty one inch Rainbow trout. It was a real beauty. Kevin landed more trout, and is truly the master angler. Randy Dykstra and I never got a trout

Everyone had a great hunt and got their antelope. This ranch has one buck to every four does and is such a fun hunt. I'd recommend it to anyone.

Roger Froling



*Front row kneeling L - R: Ron Rau, Randy Dykstra, Tim Hauck, and Jeff Wilson
Back row L - R: Young Dan Lisco, Jimmy Hegedus, Ranchowner Corky Lisco,
Jack Cassidy Outfitter, Rancher Big Lisco, Dr. Jim Hegedus, Kevin Whaley,
Eddy Peters, Steve Smallbone, and Roger Froling.*

The team of ten hunters went out the first day and all got nice antelope except me. Jimmy Hegedus got the first trophy antelope at eight AM or so, and then his dad got one, then Steve Smallbone and Tim Hauck and Ed Peters and Ron Rau and Jeff Wilson, Kevin Whaley and Randy Dykstra. I missed two long shots.

On the second day I got a nice one. We spotted him about three hundred yards off on a hilltop, and couldn't get a shot. So after a nice stalk, Jack got us up on the group, and told me which one to shoot and at about seventy five to one



Ed Peters with a great antelope

"Dirt Roads"

by Paul Harvey

What's mainly wrong with society today is that too many Dirt Roads have been paved. There's not a problem in America today, crime, drugs, education, divorce, delinquency, that wouldn't be remedied, if we just had more Dirt Roads, because Dirt Roads give character.

People that live at the end of Dirt Roads learn early on that life is a bumpy ride, that it can jar you right down to your teeth sometimes. But it's worth it, if at the end is home... a loving spouse, happy kids and a dog.

We wouldn't have near the trouble with our educational system if our kids got their exercise walking a Dirt Road with other kids, from whom they learn how to get along.

There was less crime in our streets before they were paved. Criminals didn't walk two dusty miles to rob or rape, if they knew they'd be welcomed by five barking dogs and a double barrel shotgun.

And there were no drive by shootings.

Our values were better when our roads were worse!

People did not worship their cars more than their kids, and motorists were more courteous. They didn't tailgate by riding the bumper or the guy in front would choke you with dust and bust your windshield with rocks.

Dirt Roads taught patience.

Dirt Roads were environmentally friendly. You didn't hop in your car for a quart of milk. You walked to the barn for your milk. For your mail, you walked to the mail box.

What if it rained and the Dirt Road got washed out? That was the best part. Then you stayed home and had some family time, roasted marshmallows and popped popcorn and pony rode on Daddy's shoulders and learned how to make prettier quilts than anybody.

At the end of Dirt Roads, you soon learned that bad words tasted like soap.

Most paved roads lead to trouble. Dirt Roads more likely lead to a fishing creek or a swimming hole.

At the end of a Dirt Road, the only time we even locked our car was in August, because if we didn't some neighbor would fill it with too much zucchini.

At the end of a Dirt Road, there was always extra springtime income from when city dudes would get stuck. You'd have to hitch up a team and pull them out. Usually you got a dollar...always you got a new friend...at the end of a Dirt Road!

Hunt in Eastern Colorado with Jack Cassidy

by Roger Froling

There are gold in them there hills and you need only to know who to help you find it. Jack Cassidy is one of the best prospectors I have met.

Hunting has taken me to a lot of different places in the world, and I've met and have been very fortunate to share a lot of camp fires with some of the very best.

Anyway, back to Jack Cassidy. Back in '02 I met Jack Cassidy and we talked about hunting and I learned he not only has dedicated his entire life to hunting, but his son is also a big game outfitter. Jack is a no nonsense kind of guy, and when it comes to hunting, make no mistake, Jack wants you to succeed. Jack hopes you are in athletic condition not only physically, but like a good ball player who can pinch-hit, catch, and run. He knows we hunters are athletes, and we owe it to ourselves to be able to run, move fast, and shoot. By this I mean if you see a trophy, you don't spend ten minutes trying to get in position to shoot and then miss or maybe let it get away. You need to get into position, get a rest if possible, and shoot and hit the target, whether the critter is standing or running. This means that if Jack sees what you are looking for, you'd better be ready by being in shape, and in good practice with your shooting skills, and that once in a lifetime opportunity will not be wasted. You will have the pictures to show what a great job Jack Cassidy did for you.

Jack spends a lot of time looking for big bucks, both white tail and mule deer, as well as elk and antelope. Jack not only finds where they are, Jack knows how to get you back to where they are for that once in a lifetime shot.

I started out wanting to go with Jack and my friend, Tim Hauck, wanted to go, too, so we put in until we drew out licenses. Jack showed me two monster white tails the very first day. We were looking for a big mule deer and Jack knew of a couple nice big mule deer bucks. But we didn't find them the first day, just the white tails. By the way, we stayed in a nice house with a good cook. We made our own lunches with plenty to choose from.

On the second day we looked over some more good



Roger Froling's mule deer

country and we looked for a big mule deer that a rancher had seen.

Tim Hauck had his guide and I had mine. We would go out in the dark of early dawn, and usually meet for lunch, check out the different areas, and do some stalking and do some glassing, and also talk to different ranchers who might see a buck and tell Jack about it.

One day we had just left an area we had been glassing, and the rancher called on the cell and told us while moving some cattle, he spotted a trophy white tail across the river right where we had just been glassing. Tim made several stalks, but didn't get a shot. Finally persistence paid off. We were checking out an area and we kicked up a huge mule deer. He was moving at a dead run three hundred yards away, and he made a clean escape.

Then we went to another area and there we jumped several does, and as we watched them run away, we continued up the dry creek bed. And there they were - several does and a nice mule deer buck. They ran up the bank out of the river bottom, and across the sage brush field in front of us. The big buck with his "One Eighty Plus" rack stood out like a beautiful picture. I scrambled to get my gun loaded and got my scope on his shoulder. He was leaping up and down and running like the wind. I tried to concentrate on his shoulder and swung just in front of his nose as I pulled the trigger.

Wow! He disappeared in the sage brush and the does continued to escape. Since I couldn't see the horns I figured he must be down.

Jack Cassidy was very happy he had guided me to a true trophy of a lifetime. This was a really great hunt. My hat's off to Mr. Jack Cassidy, a truly fine gentleman and great guide and outfitter - a friend for sure.

The next day Tim got a real nice white tail buck. It was truly a memorable hunt.



Roger Froling and Tim Hauck with a wonderful whitetail

Dream Comes True for Disabled Vet

by Jim Fortino

September 29 will always be remembered by Doug Burgard, disabled USMC veteran from the Vietnam War. Burgard was the recipient of the Debra Card Courage Award, donated to the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International by Roger Card in memory of his deceased wife. Burgard was the chosen applicant from over 30 applications. Burgard suffered a near fatal stroke and has been left without the use of his left arm and limited use of his left leg.

During his interview, Burgard, nicknamed Klinger, mentioned two wishes that he would like to do again, riding his motorcycle and whitetail hunting. As the winner of the Debra Card Courage Award, Burgard was given a three day hunt at Cards Draw, a whitetail ranch located at Mecosta, Michigan, owned by Roger Card.

Burgard anxiously awaited the day, calling many times to make sure that this was not a dream and was going to really happen. Finally the day arrived. Burgard arrived two hours early and waited anxiously unknown by the entrance. Finally the time arrived and Burgard entered and was welcomed by the staff at Cards Draw. After a short lunch, Roger Card took him to the shooting range to make sure that this old marine could still shoot. No problem here. Once a Marine, always a Marine. He shot one handed and was right on. The evening hunt seemed like decades away to Burgard but once in the blind and settled in with his guide and camera crew, all



Roger Card, Jim Fortino, Wally Bontrager, and Doug Burgard with the one shot buck

he had to do was wait and watch for his whitetail dream to come true. Approximately at 6:05 p.m. a very nice possible eight point buck came into the field but was very reluctant to put himself into a safe position to shoot. After waiting for the right moment, the shot was fired and the buck dropped straight to the ground, a perfect shot for this Marine. This eight point buck, upon closer inspection turned out to be an eleven point buck! Burgard was ecstatic and could not believe that his dream came true, thanks to Roger Card and the Debra Card Courage Award.



Roger Card, Doug Burgard, and Wally Bontrager admiring Doug's 11-point buck



Debra Card Courage Award winner, Doug Burgard

North American 29 Word Search



C D W C A N A D I A N M O O S E U V W S D
 A M M O U N T A I N G O A T U L E E L K E
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JAGUAR
 COUGAR
 TULE ELK
 POLAR BEAR
 GRAY WOLF
 DALL SHEEP
 STONE SHEEP
 PRONGHORN
 MUSKOX
 GRIZZLY BEAR
 SHIRAS MOOSE
 ROOSEVELT ELK
 AMERICAN ALLIGATOR
 COASTAL BLACK BEAR
 INLAND BLACK BEAR
 AMERICAN BISON
 DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP
 AM. MOUNTAIN GOAT

ARCTIC ISLANDS CARIBOU
CENTRAL CANADA CARIBOU
 ALASKAN YUKON CARIBOU
 MOUNTAIN CARIBOU
 QUEBEC LABRADOR CARIBOU
 WOODLAND CARIBOU
 ROCKY MTN MULE DEER
 DESERT MULE DEER
 COLUMBIA BLK TAILED DEER
 SITKA BLACK TAILED DEER
 ALASKAN YUKON MOOSE
 COUES WHITE TAILED DEER
 WHITE TAILED DEER
 E. CANADIAN MOOSE
 W. CANADIAN MOOSE
 ALASKAN BROWN BEAR
 BIGHORN SHEEP (RKY. MTN. or CA)
 ROCKY MOUNTAIN ELK

***Underlined words not in search** (36 choices)

Labor Day Bear Hunt

by John Baker

A family holiday weekend turns into a successful bear hunt. On Labor Day weekend, 2008, the Baker family spent the holiday in Sudbury, Ontario for a fall bear hunt. The trip was dual purpose; we had not been able to visit the family cabin all summer. The weather was very warm and the hunting hard. The baits were active and the chances of spotting bear were promising.

The first night in the stand is always exciting. Watching the sun go down, different scenarios racing through your mind, and work is the farthest thing from it. The first night of hunting was a success. As my brother and I returned to camp we arrived to see our father smiling. When questioned he informed us that he had shot a huge bear. As we approached the boat to ride to camp, we saw for ourselves that he indeed shot a bear. However, it was booboo. The bear, which was described as a monster as it came out of the woods, was only about 100 pounds. We had a laugh and decided it was a good learning situation because this was not the first and surely not the last time an experienced hunter will experience severe ground shrinkage.

The second night of hunting proved to be a test for my brother. A small bear came to his bait several times throughout the evening. He returned to camp white as a ghost telling the story of how fast he exited the bait site when darkness enclosed him.

My sister's boyfriend, Nick Perry, came along for the hunt, maybe as a test for future hunting trips. He seemed to be getting increasingly depressed, as he had been in the stand for two nights and not seen a bear. His luck would soon change.

As Nick went off to his stand on the third and final night we wished him good luck and told him perseverance would



300 pound bear taken by Nick Perry, Labor Day 2008

prevail. When I returned to the boat dock after hunting there was no one there to greet me. Someone had shot a bear and the crew was tracking or retrieving him. I was not sure which. As I waited impatiently wondering who had shot, the pickup lights shone on my four-wheeler and a very nice three hundred pound bear was in the back. Nick had success. He could hardly talk to us between the handshakes and calls to his buddies back home in Michigan. We were very happy for him. It is always a gratifying experience to have your invited guest tag out.

My brother and I were unsuccessful on this hunting trip but I am not sure if any hunting trip is truly unsuccessful. For myself, it is all about the experience and being away from the repetitions of day-to-day life. My family will remember this hunting trip for a long time. No one can take away your memories.

Author's note:

This bear hunt took place at the family cabin in Sudbury, Ontario, with a local guide baiting the stands a few weeks prior to our arrival. For questions about the hunt or guide, please e-mail me at bakej25@yahoo.com.

Don Harter's Black Bear Roast

Brown a 2 1/2 to 3 pound roast or equivalent in bacon fat in a skillet that has a cover. Add a can of chicken broth and a can of cream of mushroom soup. Add water, if necessary and cover. Simmer for at least 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hours. Remove meat and slice. Use remainder for gravy. This recipe will make you want to save the meat from every black bear you ever harvest.

Mary Harter's Bear Pastry

1 1/2 cups bear lard
5 cups unsifted white flour
1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
1 egg
1 tbs. white vinegar
Cold water

To render bear fat, set fat in a 200-250 degree oven in a large pan; let set all day. Pour off fat as it melts in freezer containers. Freeze what you are not going to use soon. Bear fat is unbelievably pure white and smells very clean.

Cut bear lard (be sure it is very cold), flour, baking powder and salt until pea size. Beat egg in measuring cup. To this egg add vinegar, then fill to 3/4 cup mark with very cold water. Cut all together very gently. Shape in a roll and refrigerate or immediately roll out into pie crusts. The colder you work it, the flakier the crust. Do not reroll because the more you work it, the tougher the crust becomes. Makes three large pie crusts.

Wild Game Salami from a friend of the Harters

Use ground deer, elk, moose, caribou,
snow goose, etc.

Mix: 5 pounds ground meat, 3 t. black peppercorns, 2 1/2 t. liquid smoke, 1 1/2 t. garlic powder, 5 t. Morton's Quick Salt, 2 1/2 t. mustard seed. Mix well, refrigerate 24 hours and mix again. Refrigerate another 24 hours and mix and form into five loaves rolled round. Place on broiler pan and bake at 150 degrees for 8 hours. Freeze unused portions.

Corned Venison

2 to 3 pound roast
2 quarts water
1/2 c. canning
and pickling salt
1/2 c. Morton's
Tender Quick salt

3 T. sugar
2 T. mixed pickling spices
2 bay leaves
8 whole peppercorns (optional)
1 or 2 cloves minced garlic

Place meat in large cooking bag. In sauce pan, combine all ingredients except meat. Heat to just boil. Remove and let cool. Pour cooled brine over meat in bag. Squeeze air out of bag and seal. Refrigerate for 4 to 5 days and every day move the meat around in the bag. After the 4 or 5 days, drain and rinse in cold water (will look awful). Cover meat with cold water and heat to boil. Pour water off. Cover again with water and bring to boil, then turn down and simmer for 3 to 4 hours until tender. (To substitute boiling, put in pressure cooker under pressure for one hour.)

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STREET			STREET				
_____			_____				
CITY	STATE	ZIP	CITY	STATE	ZIP		
_____			_____				
TELEPHONE			TELEPHONE				

MEMBERSHIP DUES		(PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)			
18 +	1 Year	\$ 55 National Dues	\$ 20 Local Dues	=	\$ 75
	3 Years	\$ 150 National Dues	\$ 60 Local Dues	=	\$ 210
	Life	\$1500 National Dues	\$200 Local Dues	=	\$ 1700
	Over 60	\$1250 National Dues	\$200 Local Dues	=	\$ 1450
17 & under:					
	1 Year	\$ 15 National Dues	\$ -0- Local Dues	=	\$ 15

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DATE OF APPLICATION	SPONSORS ADDRESS

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HUNT REPORT & EVALUATION

MAIL TO:

Mid-Michigan Chapter SCI

P.O. Box 486

Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0486

HUNT LOCATION: County _____ State/Province _____

Area/Concession _____

SPECIES HUNTED: _____ SPECIES TAKEN: _____

WERE TROPHY ANIMALS: Abundant _____ Occasional _____ Scarce _____

HUNT BOOKED THROUGH: _____

OUTFITTER: _____

YOUR PERSONAL GUIDE: _____

WAS YOUR GUIDE CAPABLE: _____

CAMP FACILITIES: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

EQUIPMENT CONDITION: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

FOOD: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

TROPHY PREPARATION: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

TROPHY SHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS: Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Poor _____

TIME REQUIRED FOR RECEIPT OF TROPHIES: _____

SEASON: HUNT DATE _____ Spring _____ Summer _____ Fall _____ Winter _____

Dry _____ Wet _____ Cold _____ Hot _____

HUNT TRANSPORTATION: Airplane _____ Boat _____ Vehicle _____ Horse _____

Foot _____ Other _____

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS HUNT & OUTFITTER TO OUR MEMBERS: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ DATE _____

STATE/ZIP _____ PHONE _____

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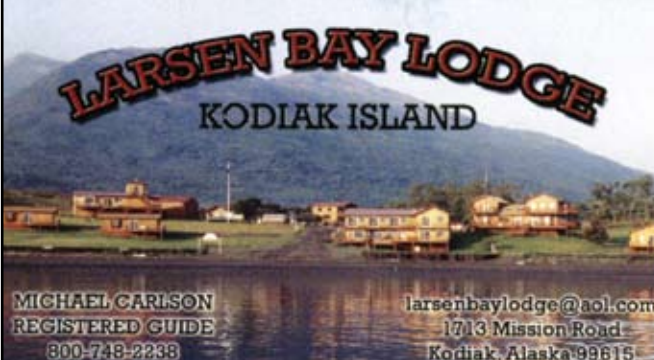
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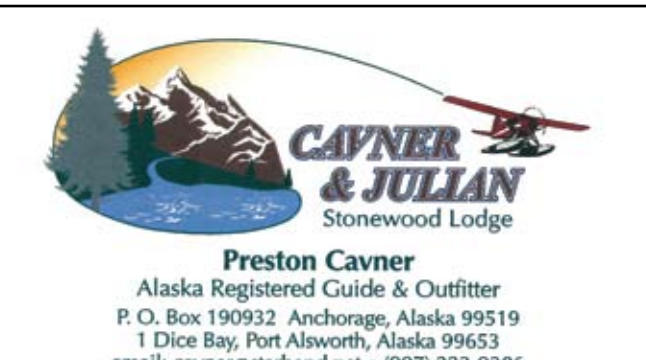
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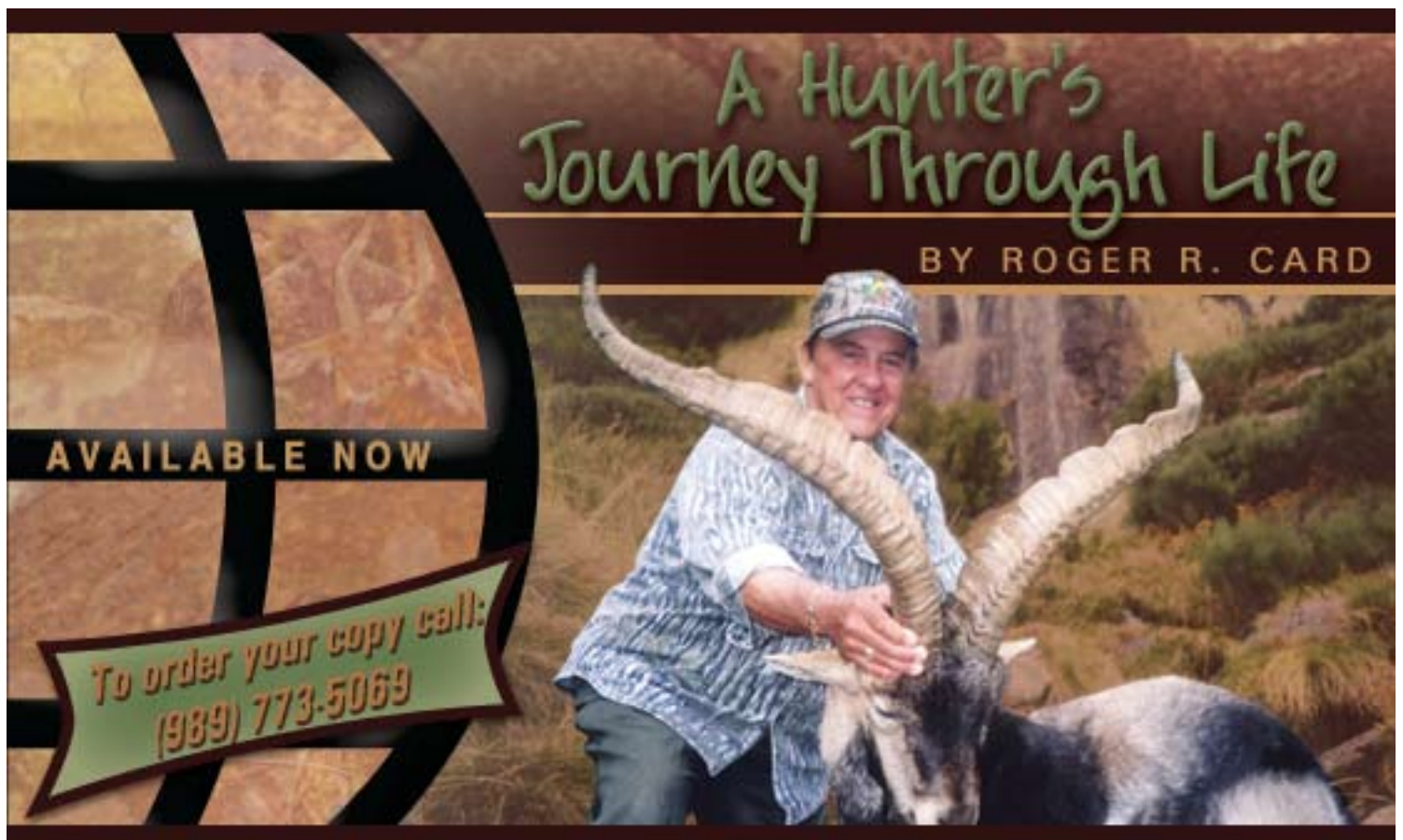
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