

FRONT SIGHT



SCI
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

April 2010, Issue 10



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Looking Ahead -

In our next issue --

Pronghorn Adventure 2009

by Tony Brown

Turkey

by Roger Card

Seat Time - is - Meat Time

by Robert Mills

Quick Moose

by Josh Christensen

Kansas Hunting

by Joanne Witte

Bear Hunt in Wawa, Canada

by Kenny Peters, Jr.

White Rhino, Close and Personal

by Mary Harter

Book Review

by Josh Christensen

And more articles, poems, recipes, and jokes yet to be submitted.



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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 400+.

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

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Debra Card Courage Award

by James A Fortino SFC Army Guard (RET)

Zachary Haynes is a long way from his home state of Colorado. Haynes is currently stationed at Ft. Knox Kentucky and being away from home is nothing new. Haynes is the 2009 recipient of the Debra Card Courage Award sponsored by Roger Card and Safari Club International Central Michigan Chapter in memory of his deceased wife Debra. Haynes a two time tour combat soldier had escaped death many times in his time spent in Bagdad. His courage in protecting not only himself and fellow soldiers but most importantly our freedom is exemplary of the courage that Debra fought in her battle against cancer. As the winner of the Debra Card Courage Award, Haynes was presented with a free whitetail hunt at Cards Draw, a hunting preserve in Mecosta Michigan owned by Roger Card. Upon his arrival Haynes was met by the staff of Cards Draw and greeted by all. Haynes and his hunting gear was quickly escorted to the ranch house and after a quick lunch, was taken to the firing range to make sure his rifle was zeroed in.



The Deb Card Courage Award recipient, Zachary Haynes with his 8 point Card's Draw buck

hunting clothes and waited anxiously. Upon arrival to the blind, Haynes and his guide Roger Card waited patiently and hoped for the whitetail deer to move and especially in their direction. Approximately 5:00 p.m. a nice 8 point buck came into the field and was quickly and accurately harvested by the combat veteran. Haynes just could not say thank you enough and Card and his staff were touched by the appreciation that Haynes joyfully expressed. A fine Michigan whitetail for a combat soldier far from home.



Wally Bontrager, Zachary Haynes, Jim Fortino, and Roger Card

It was pretty obvious to Roger Card that this combat veteran was not a stranger to the range and he was quickly zeroed in at 100 yds. Next inline was the wait for the evening hunt, Haynes readied his gear, laid out his



Roger Card and Deb Card Courage Award recipient, Zachary Haynes with Zach's 8 point buck

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SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

Date	Meeting Type	Time	Location
April 5, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
May 3, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
June 7, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
Aug. 2, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Harter's House
Sept. 13, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
Oct. 4, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
Nov. 1, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
Dec. 6, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Cheers Neighborhood Grill & Bar

Reservations required. Please call and leave a message at 989-944-5140

Message from your President

Don Harter, President

I would like to thank all the outfitters, donors, sponsors and buyers, who, because of their generosity helped make our 31st Hunter's Convention such a great success. And it was a great success. We had more people attend our Friday auction than ever before even with very icy and slippery roads. Saturday we had a full house for the dinner and the auction. A special thank you to the members and their friends who came. You made our event fun and successful. Our gross revenues are up 10% over last year. Thanks to all our Board Members, their families and the many others who worked so hard putting this together and making it happen.

On another note, our account established with the Mt. Pleasant Community Foundation grew at 9.4% last year and all of the earnings on these funds can be used for

sending kids to camp, teachers to the American Wilderness Leadership School, or any other educational activities that we support. Remember us when making your donations and it is tax deductible. For more information, please call them at 989-773-7322 or email info@mpacf.org. Check out www.mpacf.org.

Our next general membership meeting will be Monday, April 5, 2010, just before our turkey season opens. Our guest speaker, Don MacMillen, a professional turkey caller, will be putting on a Turkey Calling Seminar for us. He is excellent and very entertaining. Mark your calendar and plan on attending. Come and bring a friend!!

Hunt Often, Hunt Safe,

Don Harter



Don and Mary Harter in Reno with Shane Quinn of Alpine Hunting, New Zealand



President George Bush was the Saturday night speaker at the National SCI Convention in Reno, January 23. During the day on Saturday he greeted the crowd at the convention and Mary Harter received a handshake and hug from him.

Editor's Comments

Having just finished a very busy fundraiser weekend, I'm reflecting on all of the 'time' many people have spent making it happen. Especially when one gets older, you realize that time is ones most valuable possession. We only have so much of it. We have so many people in our organization who volunteer and spent many, many hours making our events what they are. I want all of them to know that all of their efforts are greatly appreciated.

JFK is remembered for saying, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

This is also the same for our organization. No matter what else we have, we all have the same number of hours in a day. As we state in the purpose and intent of our organization, we promote good fellowship, promote and help conservation, educate our youth, share our experiences, and operate our organization, all with the intent to help conserve and preserve the animals which we love to hunt not only for today but for tomorrow. We can only achieve this because of the time people give and share with us.

Every year that we spend as members of SCI we reap more and more rewards with friendships and pride in the many

projects that we help support. The more we volunteer in SCI, the more we receive from SCI. What a great organization!!

As you ask what you can do for this organization, remember to share your stories. An old Chinese proverb states, "When someone shares something of value with you and you benefit from it, you have a moral obligation to share it with others." That's where I come in. Please submit your stories and we can share them together.

Thanks,

Mary J. Harter

The Conklin Foundation and The Conklin Award Selection Committee presented the 2010 Conklin Award to **LARRY B. HIGGINS**

for his lifetime dedication of pursuing big game in the most rugged terrain under the most difficult and demanding conditions while maintaining the highest standard of ethics, adhering to the rules of fair chase and showing a true conservation stewardship for the big game animals of the world.

The Conklin Award was made to create an award to honor the memory and legacy of James E. Conklin, for his lifetime of pursuing the toughest big game species in the world, his unquestionable high ethical standards, and his enormous contributions toward wildlife conservation. The Conklin Award was created to emulate the exact qualities which were held in the highest regard by Dr. Jim. While creating The Conklin Award criteria, these qualities were held in the forefront of the judges' minds. The end product is an award that is unique in its application, format, and the sustenance by which its applicants are decided and voted upon.

As the 2010 recipient of The Conklin Award, Larry Higgins is joining a select group of some of the greatest hunters of hard to obtain animals in the world. The word tough is often used to describe the animals these men hunt. There is also no better adjective to describe Larry B. Higgins.

Larry was born on March 16, 1953, the younger of two boys, to Clifford and Frieda Higgins. His brother, Cliff Jr., was fourteen years older than Larry and despite his premature death, continues to be an inspiration and source of admiration for Larry. In 1965, Larry was first able to begin hunting in his home state of Michigan, but it would have to wait another year. Cliff Jr. was away in Vietnam, serving our country as a green beret, and it was decided by Larry's dad that Cliff Jr. would be on Larry's first hunt. A year passed and Cliff Jr. came home. Small game season was upon them and after careful instruction from his dad on

Previous Conklin Award Recipients:

Donald Cox, 2002
Gary Ingersoll, 2003
Jesus Yuren, 2005
Pete Papac, 2006
Robert E. Speegle, 2007
William E. Poole, 2008
Craig T. Boddington, 2009

gun safety and intense tutelage from Cliff on shot accuracy they took to the field. As Larry's first pheasant was bagged, his brother congratulated him, handed him his pheasant and told him that "now you are a hunter". Over the years, Cliff was constantly coaching Larry about shot accuracy and a special bond was forged, a bond that remains unbroken. It would be a few years before Larry took his first big game animal, a whitetail deer, and this species still holds a place of honor among his favorites to hunt.



Larry graduated in 1975 from Michigan State University with degrees in criminal justice and business. While in college Larry also continued to excel athletically, playing football and hockey. Upon graduation, Larry began work as a police officer in the city of Detroit. For fourteen years Larry held a very dangerous occupation and retired to concentrate his efforts in tube fabrication and manufacturing business. His strong work ethic and

commitment to precision construction enabled the H-H Tube and Manufacturing Company to prosper and for more than three decades Larry's work was highly regarded and desired.

Larry's first hunt outside of the United States was in 1984. It was a trip to British Columbia for elk and it was successful with Larry taking a big six-point bull. This began a quest for Larry, a challenge to take all of the animals of North America. In the 1980s and 1990s, Larry



hunted at an amazing pace, taking many of the continents greatest species and leaving few animals unhunted. His collection includes all of the elk with many duplicates, a dozen black bear including several with a bow, seven mule deer including two desert mule deer, and dozens of his beloved whitetail deer taken with a rifle, bow, and muzzleloader. Larry has taken all of the North American sheep for a Grand Slam, including a tremendous Rocky Mountain and desert bighorn and a superb California bighorn. In Mexico, Larry was even persistent enough to take a white-lipped peccary, a red brocket deer and a Yucatan gray-brown brocket deer. To date, he has taken every species available in North America except polar bear and walrus.

Although Larry has continued to hunt extensively in North America, in 2000 he turned his focus elsewhere. Africa was calling and Larry answered that call with his trademark workman-like attitude. Aside from one brief trip to South Africa in 1994, in the last nine years, Larry has hunted virtually all of Africa's hardest to get and premier species. Larry has been on more than fifteen safaris to eight different countries. He has taken the Big Five with several Cape buffalo and has also taken the nine spiral horned antelope of Africa, and he did not stop there. Larry has taken almost all of the spiral horned sub-species,

lacking only the western and Abyssinian greater kudu and the Sesse Island sitatunga. His bongo, Lord Derby eland, and Zambezi sitatunga are particularly good and he was the first hunter in almost thirty years to take a Nile buffalo in Uganda. He has taken all of the eland and hushbuck sub-species and several pygmy antelope including the seldom-obtained East African suni and Bates pygmy antelope. Recently, he was in Ghana where he shot a royal antelope, only to have it stolen by a civit during its recovery. He already has another trip planned.



In South America Larry has hunted virtually all of the toughest species and he has done it on his terms, free range. In the South Pacific, he lacks only the whitetail deer and sambar to have this entire regions species.

Of all of his hunting accomplishments, Larry is perhaps best known for his mountain hunting, specifically in Asia. Larry has taken more than thirty different species of sheep, and more than twenty capra species. These accomplishments have enabled Larry to obtain the Ovis World Slam at the Super Thirty level and Capra World Slam at the Super Twenty level. This feat has only been completed by ten other people. In total, he has thirty-two different species with thirty-seven different specimens of sheep. He has twenty-three different capra species with twenty-four different specimens. In Europe, Larry has taken all of the mountain game available. His worldwide capra collection includes all of the huntable ibex and all





of the huntable chamois species. He has taken the Mid Caucasian and Dagestan tur, the Afghan and Punjab urial, a free range Konya mouflon, all of the Russian snow sheep except the Putorana, the Severtzov argali, a Maro Polo argali, a Hume argali, and all of the blue sheep including two Himalayan, the Helan Shan, and the dwarf blue sheep. Amazingly, all of Larry's Asian and European mountain hunts have occurred in the last eleven years. To average five sheep or capra specimens a year is utterly remarkable.

To give one an idea of Larry's fortitude and toughness, it should be mentioned that his latest hunt was in September of 2009 for Kolyma and Yakutia snow sheep. His month long hunt was successful and he was able to take each sheep. Less than two months prior to these hunts, Larry had back surgery to remove and repair two cervical discs that were damaged during his college football career.

Larry received SCI's Crowing Achievement Award in 2005, the World Hunting Award in 2007, and the World Hunting and Conservation Award in 2009. He has been a past president of the Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI, a regional representative, and currently serves as a director-at-large. He is a life or regular member of Safari Club International, Grand Slam Clubs/Ovis, Wild Sheep Foundation, National Rifle Association, North American Hunting Club, and recently joined Dallas Safari Club.

Larry feels that as important as it is to be a hunter, it is equally important to be a conservationist. He has volunteered his time and leadership skills by serving in different positions for many national and local conservation organizations. He has also financially contributed to several organizations in substantial and meaningful ways. Larry was a major contributor to the Mongolian Argali Research Initiative. The funds Larry directly donated through Dr. Mike Frisina and GSCO

enabled them to perform research that helped establish sustainable use in the successful Argali Lawsuit. Larry also owns a ranch in Michigan where he provides several youth



hunts per year for under-privileged children. The ranch also annually provides more than two thousand pounds of venison to the Sportsmen Against Hunger program in his area. Larry believes in a simple hunting code: hunt ethically, be courteous in the field, leave it better than you found it, and be a proper steward of our sport.

Larry still has many hunting goals. He loves jungle hunting for the pygmy antelope, wants to hunt more sheep and capra species, and will hunt his beloved whitetail deer everywhere they are found. Along with Cindy, his loving and supportive wife of fifteen years, Larry can always be found searching the world for adventures. Larry B. Higgins is indeed a very "tough hunter" and a worthy recipient of the 2010 Conklin Award. Larry has asked that his \$2,500.00 honorarium for receiving the Conklin Award go to the American Wilderness Leadership School in Jackson, Wyoming.



MY FIRST Buck

by Matt Mills (age 12)

All summer, I was practicing shooting the rifle that I was going to use for opening day at my grandpa's hunting camp, the Pine Hill Club. The rifle was a 7 mm 08 that belonged to my older brother. Every shot in practice, I was dead on the target.

The night before opening day was filled with card playing and good eating. All the older guys at the hunting camp were telling stories about previous hunts. During those stories, all I could think about was the next morning. That night, we packed our lunches that we were going to take with us the next day and had an early bedtime.

Morning finally came. We ate bacon, eggs, and pancakes. My dad and I got dressed in all our camo and orange and headed out for an exciting day. It was a long walk in through the muddy swamp to get to our hunting blind. By the time we got in our blind, it was still dark. The only voices we heard were the sounds of nature, and the smell of the swamp filled the air.

During the long morning, a doe crept across our shooting lane. My dad whispered in my ear that hopefully there was a buck behind it. Not even two minutes passed by and sure enough, there was a buck in the shooting lane. I slowly pulled my gun up to look through my scope. By the time I got my scope up, the buck had just left out of



Pine Hill Club hunters assemble for group picture. Note the neckties - night before opening day. (Matt has bright red tie with big grin.)



Matt will never forget his first buck - horns are being mounted on plaque.



Matt and his first buck by buck-pole at Pine Hill Club - 2nd day of season (11/16/09)

sight. Then, a huge BANG came out of my Dad's 30-06. I whispered to my dad, "Did you hit it?" His response was "No".

We ate our lunches with no deer in sight. After lunch in our blinds, my dad and I heard movement in the water to our right. Then, a 5-point buck came creeping out of the swamp. My dad said, "This is a good one to shoot", so I got the 7 mm 08 that I had been so anxious to use up to my shoulder and took aim. The crosshairs were held right in the buck's vitals and I slowly pulled the trigger. The buck dropped right away. I re-racked

my gun while my dad was whispering, "Do you think it's dead?" My response was, "I don't know, it's just squirming around." While my heart was still pounding, the buck got up and bolted away. My jaw dropped as I watched it run away.



About half an hour later, my dad and I put on our waders to go blood-track the deer. When we approached the spot where it fell, there was no blood or hair in sight. My dad and I were confused as to what happened. We followed where we thought the buck had headed. After about 100 yards of guess-trailing, my dad spotted frothy blood on the side of a tree. My dad said that I probably hit the lungs. Twenty yards later, a 5-point buck was laying on the ground. All my practice had paid off. I had shot my first buck.

Pictures taken at **SCI**

FIRST FOR HUNTERS

38th Hunters' Convention in Reno



Jeff Chold and Don Harter



John Calitz, Mary Harter, and Ivan Carter,
elephant expert



Lance Norris and Roger Card



Pat and Nancy Bellman with Sam Fajos at his booth



John Mogul, Christensen Arms, and Don Harter



Mey Grande Ranch and Resort booth



Sheri and Roger Froling with Roger Card



Larry Higgins, Dr. Terry Braden, and Don Harter



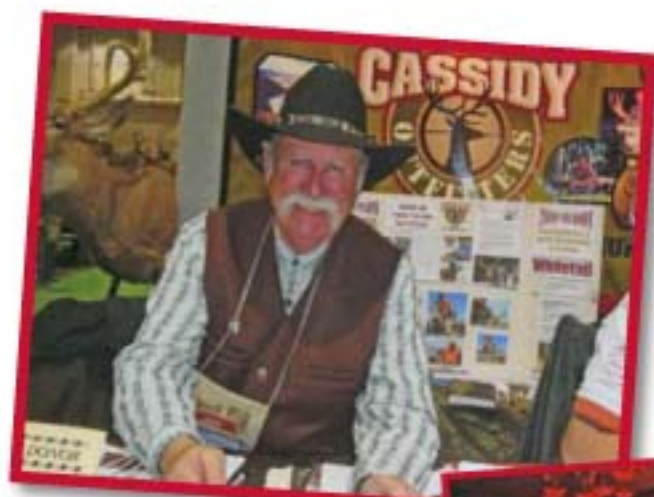
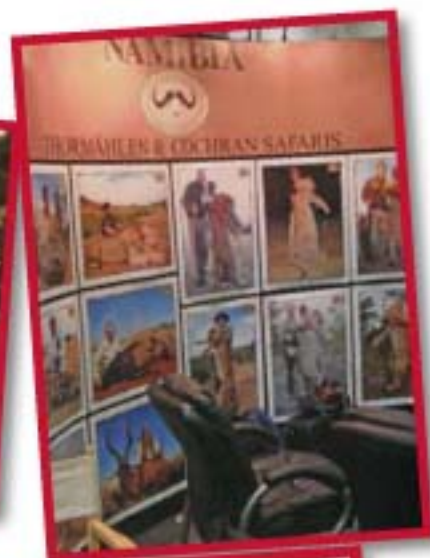
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Merle Shepherd, Past President of SCI International



Ashleigh George, jewelry designer and wife of Ivan Carter



Louise Shockey, Mary Harter, and Jim Shockey



Jack Cassidy, Cassidy Outfitters



Dr. and Mrs. Dave Petrella



The Sanctuary display

Honoring Ben Benzing

Ben Benzing, our member in charge of the Veteran Hunters Program and on the membership committee, shared at one of our meetings, his experience being the first successful hunter, with an 8-point Upper Peninsula deer, to cross the new Mackinac Bridge on November 15, 1957. Here is the Field and Stream article, dated January 1958, showing Woodie Jarvis presenting Benzing with the Field and Stream plaque. (This Field and Stream magazine sold for 35 cents)

Ben Benzing also received a special tribute from the State of Michigan in 1998 and the wording is below. What a special tribute to a very special member of our chapter.

State of Michigan Special Tribute Presented to Ben Benzing

LET IT BE KNOWN, That it is a great pleasure to honor Ben Benzing for his service as the State DAV Commander of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Department of Michigan, at a Testimonial Dinner honoring him on Friday, April 3, 1998, in Clare, Michigan.

Ben was born in Harsey, Michigan, and entered the military at the age of 17, where he served in the infantry for 23 years, 13 years of which he served as an officer. A Vietnam veteran, Ben served with the 25th Infantry Division, "Tropic Lightning", and was involved in five major campaigns during his 1968-1969 tour of duty. He became eligible for membership in the DAV as a result of being wounded twice during the 1968 Tet offensive. He has been awarded the Combat Infantryman's Badge (C.I.B.), and twice awarded the order of the Purple Heart. He has been decorated for valor, including the award of the Army Commendation Medal.

Ben returned to attend the University of Columbia in South Carolina. He taught military science at the University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada. He was employed as a police officer in Phoenix, Arizona until disability forced his retirement. Ben is a professional hunter and hunting guide, and also a weapons expert. He has also been active as a Third World Missionary through the United Methodist Church (UMC). He has taken two UMC "Work Groups" to Haiti, and was a member of the UMC World Board of International Childcare.

Ben became an active member of the DAV in 1979, and has served many chapter offices including Commander, for many years. He has served numerous convention committee assignments and has served in the elected State Vice-Commander position.

Ben and his wife, Betty, have 12 children, 32 grandchildren, and 5 great-grandchildren.

IN SPECIAL TRIBUTE, Therefore, This document is signed and dedicated to honor Ben Benzing, one of Michigan's most distinguished citizens. May he know of the respect and gratitude that we hold for him.

Bill Schutte, State Senator
Representative
Thirty-Fifth District

John J. Llewellyn, State
The One Hundredth District

The Eighty-Ninth Legislature
At Lansing - April 3, 1998



Ben Benzing this year with the Field and Stream plaque from 1958 and a picture of his famous deer draped on the right front fender of his car.

Ahead of the Game WITH THE EDITOR

ONLY one First & Stream contributor—so far—has become President of the United States, and since this year is the 100th anniversary of his birth, we take particular pleasure in adding our voice to the many others that will be lifted in honor of the occasion. His name, of course, was Theodore Roosevelt. World history, we suppose, will remember him best as the President who got the Panama Canal built, who regulated an end to the Russo-Japanese War, because will remember him as a fine naturalist and great collector of museum specimens. He will be remembered as a soldier, a hunter, an explorer and—most likely—a vivid speaker and writer. But every American who enjoys the outdoors should feel a special gratitude to Theodore Roosevelt, for without him, there would not be so much to enjoy as there is.

Roosevelt greatly loved nature and open spaces and wildlife, and understood the importance of protecting them far better than most men of his time did—and indeed better than some people do yet. For the story of the last great adventure of his far-ranging life, see "Teddy Roosevelt's Little Adventure" on page 22. For a truly ancient that tells you a little more about the whole man, see the piece following that tells you a little more about the T.R. who never did get along very well with horses but who never quit trying—the T.R. who did more to save America's outdoors for all of us today than any other President the United States has ever had.

ON NOVEMBER 15, 1957, a hunter named Gordon Benzing of Reed City, Michigan, was driving his car in a normal manner along the handsome new bridge connecting Michigan's Lower Peninsula with its Upper Peninsula across the Straits of Mackinac. Nearly draped on the right front fender of his car was a fine 8-point buck. Hunter Benzing had crossed the bridge northbound the night before, reached a hunting ground he knew well, and, with the sun, pulled his deer with one shot, and now, at 8:45 a.m., was headed homeward, tired but content. Four minutes later he got the surprise of his life.

As he stopped at the tollgate a throng burst upon him. An authoritative gentleman stepped up, paid Benzing's toll for him (\$25) and imperiously waved him out of the stream of traffic. As cameras clicked and flashes popped, other gentlemen converged. Benzing had suddenly become a celebrity.

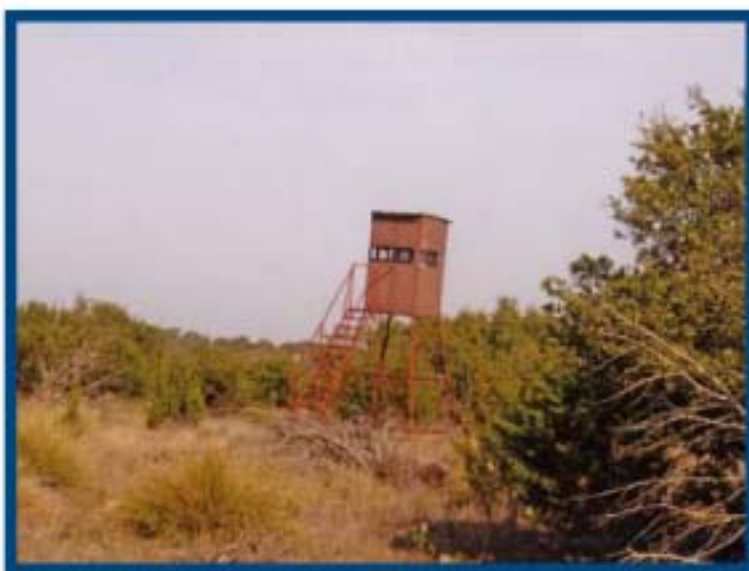
That day tied to his head was the first Upper Peninsula deer to cross the new bridge. As such it was big news for sportsmen, signaling that Upper Peninsula is within easy reach. To mark the event we had a representative of our own on hand, Woodie Jarvis, to present Mr. Benzing with a plaque from First & Stream.

It was a big event in Michigan—on in all the papers and all that. We got a lot of good publicity, and naturally we enjoy that. But the main thing was that Mr. Benzing and his deer got a lot of publicity, showing us nothing else could that the Mackinac Bridge can be rightly called the Sportsman's Bridge. A great area has been made more accessible to hunters and fishermen by this bridge. That's what is important.

H. G.



Gordon Benzing of Reed City, Michigan, first hunter to take deer across the Sportsman's Bridge, receives Field & Stream plaque from Woodie Jarvis.



One of the boxblinds in Texas

When the trucks come in with returning hunters before noon and after dark they head for the skinning shed if anyone has an animal. We all gather there to admire the trophies, and hear about the hunt, take pictures, and weigh and age the animals. The station keeps detailed records of all the animals taken.

Each night we draw for a blind. Some people use single blinds and some use double blinds. There are five "pastures" and a staff member is responsible for delivering his hunters to his pasture. There are about 24 blinds on the ranch and this year there were about 30 participants, including hunters and non-hunters, many of whom hunted together.

The first night we get our pep talk and go over the rules. This year I asked if anything interesting was happening on the station. We got an earful about how the billy kids impregnated some nannies and nannie kids and messed up their whole year's research. It seems that some of the billy kids weighed 65 pounds and were feeling really frisky. The kids are very cute with long velvety ears and pretty colors of black and white. They gambol around like playful puppies.

We have seen our share of critters on the ranch. One year we had a huge spider, probably a tarantula, on the water heater in the house where we were staying. The spider came out from behind the water heater if one of us was in the shower. I tried to kill it once but only wounded it. It escaped and for the rest of the hunt it came out if the water heater was hot and retreated when it was cold. We have also had scorpions in our shoes. This year for the first time two rattlesnakes were killed in the yard of a staff member.

For two weeks before the hunters come the staff fills corn feeders that go off at 7:00AM and 5:00PM. Oftentimes the deer will wait till they hear the feeder go off and then they come running in. We always see lots of deer. Usually there are 8 or 10 deer at a time at the feeders. I am often too busy watching deer to read my book. They feed the deer cottonseed year round but use corn when the hunters are there because it a better attractant, though not as nutritionally sound as the cottonseed. They have had to build a high fence in the yard of the station around the cottonseed pile to keep the deer from coming right in the yard and raiding the cottonseed.

For the last 4 years the area has experienced a severe drought. Because of the lack of spring precipitation the antler growth has been substandard. This year, Nov. 2009, the deer were in good shape bodywise, due to ample fall precipitation, but the antlers were poor.

There is an employee who skins, bones, and cuts up the meat for the hunters for a reasonable fee. He freezes the meat in ziplock bags for the hunters to take home and process however they like.

The staff likes to get the hunters into the blinds at least a half-hour before daylight. I love that time! When it starts to get light you can see shapes with your binoculars and soon they develop into deer. The staff member who delivers you to your blind tells you where the feeder is in relation to the blind but I have been in a blind new to me and not been able to locate the feeder until it began to get light.

On Nov. 13 this year as it got light I saw three bucks at the feeder which was 57 yards from me. Off to the



Closeup of a feeder



Mitch Wood, son of Mike and Jenn Wood of Bath, with his first buck taken on his grandfather's property near Bath, on October 20th, the first day of the Youth Hunt



Chris Rau of Mt. Pleasant with his archery buck taken in the Oil City area. Notice the antler from another buck protruding from behind his left eye which must have broken off during a fight. Chris used a Ben Pearson Diamond Back bow with G5 arrows

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"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Jim Hall

has been doing a lot of hunting & has shared these pictures

Jim said he flew in to White Horse, Yukon Territory, and had to stay a couple of days until it cleared enough to fly out to camp. They flew in a Beaver about three hours and then went down river about 1/2 hour to the spike camp and then on to the hunting camp. After they settled in to camp they drifted down river about six miles to Ox Bow Lake. The guide touched him on the shoulder with the paddle and pointed towards shore where a big moose stood. After checking him out the guide said he was the one to shoot and one shot later from Jim's .416 Remington magnum, and he was down for the count. Jim had harvested a 60" moose. Then the work began with the skinning and cutting up of the meat. It was after ten that night before they returned to camp and supper. They went back the next morning to finish up.

Every day they checked the carcass which was left hoping to attract bear and wolf. They saw game most every day. Finally on the 6th day, when they went back to check the carcass, it had been hit by a bear and wolf. Jim managed to get a nice grizzly, 8 to 8 1/2'. They skinned it and took it back to camp. The rest of the trip was spent drifting down the river looking for wolf but they didn't see any. He flew back to the main camp for a day where he fished for lake trout and then back to White Horse and on home. The trip was wonderful experiencing really wild country.



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 1620 and changes yearly. Please carry membership identification on you when you visit the range.



Jim Hall with his Grizzly



Jim Hall with his Yukon Moose



Jim Hall with his Elk harvested in Isabella County

Gold Medal Donation

Special Thanks to Record Buck Ranch

by Tony Brown

Your donation of a Dybowski Sika Deer Hunt for two was a great hunt! My wife and I bought the hunt at the Mt. Pleasant, Michigan SCI fundraiser.

We decided that an October 22 - 25, 2009 hunt would work for us. After some quick planning of a flight from Flint, Michigan to San Antio, Texas and a short drive to the west we arrived at the Record Buck Ranch in Utopia, Texas.

The ranch was loaded with many different types of game. Almost immediately we saw Sika, Red Stag, Elk, Rams, and many African animals. Our drive into the main lodge was the most exciting two mile drive ever.

We were greeted with a great welcome by many wonderful guides, chefs, and hosts. We met all the other hunters, most were bow hunters that week. The lodge was newly built in 2009. Everything was top notch. Our room was better than any five-star hotel room. I felt that the meals were even better than the lodging.

We were quickly greeted by our guide, Huston. After quick refreshment we were on our way to sight in the 30.06 Savage, my weapon of choice. In a short time we were on the way to see the large ranch. The total hunting area was over 20,000 acres. I was sure that in my two days of hunting, I would not see it all. We decided the first night out we would only be hunting feral hogs. By dusk we had seen many animals and I had shot my first hog at over 180 yards. Huston was extremely happy that we did not have to track it.



Tony Brown with his Dybowski Sika
Record Buck Ranch, Texas 10/23/2009

On day two after an early start and breakfast we were on our way out. The air was crisp and there were clear skies. After many days of rain we knew it would be a great day. We spent most of the morning just driving and glassing. Many Sika deer were spotted but they were all too small. My guide told me to be



patient. He had seen a couple of nice ones last week. The area was very thick and wet, the two tracks were muddy, but the sun was out and it was 70 degrees.

We saw many animals and were even fortunate enough to meet the owner's grandson and his mother. The grandson was only nine and was able to take a great nine point buck on his first morning out.

As we returned hunting we started calling with an elk call, and much to my surprise, the call was answered. Huston said a large Sika is close.

After calling them for over an hour we moved on, looking for another one. After a short while of driving, we returned for one more look. Before heading in, as we rounded the corner, there it was, a beautiful Sika. It was over 400 yards out. We slowly closed the gap to less than 150 yards. We stopped and glassed some more. My guide asked if I could get a good shot. We talked quickly about the size, the points, and the spread. He felt it would be a good one to take now. The only problem was the Sika was looking right at me, straight on. Huston asked if I could hit it in the chest. Only seconds passed and the 30.06 had delivered a Winchester Supreme 150 grain silver tip to the Sika. Our Sika hunt was over. After a photo shoot and a short trip back to the ranch house again we indulged in a wonderful meal and spirits.

The stories around the buck pole were great. Everyone was very happy with their hunts. I still had a whole day of hunting so my guide filled it by hunting hogs. We took two more hogs by night fall.

After returning home the Sika was scored at 135 4/8. Our SCI chapter and the national SCI both felt it would score a gold medallion.

Thank you Record Buck Ranch!!
from Tony Brown, Carson City, Michigan





Safari Club International

International Muzzle Loading Hunting – Chapter 183

Press Release January 22, 2010



Dear Sirs:

On January 22, 2010, *Safari Club International* took great pleasure in inducting Mr. Ken Johnston of the Lansing and Mid-Michigan Chapters into the Safari Club International Hall of Fame during the 2010 Safari Club International Convention. Ken Johnston is the 26th honoree and just the 6th honoree in this decade to be bestowed this prestigious award by a panel of international judges.

Ken Johnston was presented with a plaque and a patch in honor of being initiated into the Safari Club International Hall of Fame. Safari Club International is the world's largest hunting and wildlife conservation organization.

Ken Johnston is hereby awarded one of Safari Club International's highest honors for his invention and development of "The Ultimate Muzzleloader", for his ingenious advancements to primitive weapons, for his exceptional prominence within the international muzzle loading hunting community and for accomplishing great levels of success, far above the standard, in international big game muzzle loading hunting.

Sincerely,

Dan Hartzler, President



Ken Johnston giving a presentation at the Reno Convention for his Ultimate Firearm, "The Ultimate Muzzleloading Rifle"
Ken was inducted into the Safari Club International Hall of Fame, being the 26th honoree and just the 6th honoree in this decade.



BIG *Brown Bears*

by Brad Eldred



Brad Eldred and his father, Dick, with Brad's Brown Bear. What a trophy!!

In the last days of October 2008 I found myself once again heading to one of my favorite places in the world. The small fishing village of Larsen Bay on Kodiak Island Alaska has been one of my favorites since my first visit twelve years ago. The snow covered mountain peaks and foothills, along with the abundant sea life, waterfowl, black tail deer and of course the Brown Bear, have lured many a hunter to its beauty. I am just one of many blessed to experience it.

This trip for me however would be most special because my Dad (Dick) has joined me on this adventure. I would be toting a rifle and Dad a camera. I have to tell you a lot of the excitement in hunting is the planning that takes place leading up to the hunt itself and the stories and scenarios that start to play over in one's mind.

Four years earlier I had been to this same exact location and had the hunt of a lifetime, except for the ending. On the second day of that bear hunt I put a 375 round through the chest of an enormous Brown Bear only to never recover that awesome animal. I don't think I will ever fully recover from the experience, but I was certainly going to go at it again on this trip, only much more aware of the tremendous power and drive an animal of this

size possesses. I did however get to experience my Uncle Denny's success in harvesting a trophy brown bear!

So, with the past behind me and my Dad at my side, I again landed on the shores of Larsen Bay. There to meet us again was a now good friend and awesome outfitter, Mike and Lisa Carlson. Mike and Lisa have been great sponsors of Mid Michigan SCI for several years now, and have donated great deer hunts and special hunts (Denny Riley memorial hunt) to our chapter time after time. These are world-class people!

We shared a great dinner and were tucked in for the night in Kodiak awaiting the morning flight to Larsen Bay and then on into Bear camp. Morning brought a bit of fog and rain, which delayed our departure some, but we managed to get into camp by mid afternoon. The small plane ride over Kodiak Island is in itself a beautiful thing. God's artistry is displayed like few other places I've seen. Right away we began to spot bear right from camp and let me tell you that is so cool. Boars, sows, and cubs were walking the shore lines and foothill, cleaning up the final run of Salmon and putting on the last bit of fat they will need for the long winter ahead. What a sight!

As daylight began to fade and our eyes began to tire from peering through the optics, we put a warm supper in our tummies and slipped into the bag for the night, to dream of big bears.

Like kids at Christmas we rose early to begin 10 days of hunting the big brown bear. Again, only now in our hunting clothes we began glassing the countryside for bear. We slipped into the boat and began to work along the shore exploring every nook and cranny of the lake and the hills. Being here before I was well aware of the fact that we were hunting the best possible places in the entire world for trophy Brown bear. Bears squaring 10 ft and larger are here and can be found if one is patient. Excitement was in the air!

What happens next is still unbelievable to me. While glassing several smaller bears that were fishing along the shore, a big, old, battle scared bear with one tooth ripped out but still hanging from a now healed gum line stepped out of the brush and began walking our way. Quickly getting the bino's on him I could see he was a beauty. He was long and heavy with a huge head and very little ears (a good sign that a bear is old) However, I have learned only to get really excited about a trophy animal if the guide himself gets excited. So I turned and looked to Mike for a sign. I could read his lips say Big Bear, Big Bear and the look in his eyes and on his face let me know that this was a good bear. We were as still as could be in the boat

as the bruin closed the distance. He was trying to make out what exactly we were and what we were doing in his domain. I knew it would only be seconds before this old boy figured us out and left the scene. I quietly put a round in the chamber and let my guides know my intention was now to take this bear. One hundred and seven yards was the last thing I heard as my Ruger 375 roared and sent its 300-grain solid straight into the Browns front shoulders. Because of my experience four years earlier I had asked my guide to go ahead and follow my shot with a back up. He shot and as fast as I could had racked in another round and hit the bear again. It was over! The big bear lay on the shore quiet and quickly silent. I had accomplished something that I had long awaited. My four-year wait had ended successfully.

My dad, well, he has a new respect for the size of these monsters and their power and strength. Just to see these beautiful animals in the wild was a thrill for him. To have him there was the best thrill for me. Good work on the videotaping Dad! Where shall we go next? Special thanks to Mike and Lisa Carlson for their hard work and friendship. Also, thank you for supporting our chapter here in Mid Michigan. If anyone would like to hunt the Brown Bear, Blacktail deer, waterfowl, or fish Kodiaks awesome landscape: these are your people. They will take care of you like no one else. It's an awesome place!! Special thanks to my guides, Mike and Lisa Carlson. What a blast!

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Jeffrey J. Thoenes
775-2201

Assistant Principal
Jennifer L. Verleger
775-2202

Assistant Principal
Jeff Platte
775-2202

Athletic Director
Jim Conway
775-2204

January 4, 2010

Don Harter
President of the Local Chapter of Archery in the Schools Program
1375 N. Cedar Point Drive
Weidman, MI 48893

Don:

On behalf of the administration, physical education department, and student body of Mt. Pleasant High School, I wish to formally extend to you our deepest appreciation for your generous support of our physical education archery program. As a result of your efforts, we anticipate including archery as a part of our physical education program as soon as possible and we expect it will be met with an enthusiastic and positive welcome. Having enjoyed archery as a boy scout, I can assure you that I will also take full advantage of the equipment.

Thank you for the support you have shown the Mt. Pleasant Public School District. Best of luck in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeffrey J. Thoenes
Principal
Mt. Pleasant High School

Mt. Pleasant Public Schools, together with our community, inspires each student through exceptional educational opportunities to become an engaged citizen in a diverse, changing world.

Our Aggie Bucks Hunt

by Joanne Witte

Every year for the past 8 years Larry and I have traveled to a Texas A & M University Research Station, established in 1915, near Sonora Texas, to hunt free range whitetail deer. As Dr. Charles "Butch" Taylor, the director says, "If you want trophy deer this is not the place to come." But if you want to have a great time with great people and see lots of deer this IS the place to come. Butch has christened this "The Aggie Bucks Hunt" in honor of the Texas A & M Aggies sports teams.

The ranch consists of about 3500 acres on the Edwards plateau, with an adjoining leased 3000 acres called the Hill Ranch. The staff is primarily engaged in research on goats and sheep, rangeland hydrology, prickly pear as forage and juniper consumption in goats. They are trying to breed a variety of meat goats that thrives on scrub juniper and still tastes good. The station recently imported a variety of sheep from South Africa that self sheers. Another major endeavor is developing good controlled burn practices. Dr. Taylor is a nationally recognized expert in that area.

Each year for four days (Fri. through Mon.) two weeks before Thanksgiving the ranch takes hunters. They have 11 hunts. A hunt consists of 2 bucks, 2 does, 2 turkeys, all the hogs you see (usually one or two are shot) and this year a free ranging Axis deer was added. In past years there



Our room

was a charge for Axis deer but now there are so many that the staff wants to keep the population in check. The Hill Ranch has 10 hunts. For these two hunts the staff takes time off from their regular duties and tends to the hunters.

The group we hunt with is almost all Michigan hunters. Larry's brother, nephew and his wife participate along with Willie Longshore, a Lansing SCI member, and his wife and son and daughter-in-law. Most hunts are shared between two people and Butch likes to have family groups especially young children. They no longer need to market the hunts. There is a waiting list that goes on forever. The Hill Ranch hunt is fully subscribed by an extended family from Florida and their friends.

There are nine dwellings at the station. Couples and families get a house and the single men sleep in the Pavilion where the meals are served. We have to bring our own sleeping bags and towels. Larry and I leave two big tubs of bedding and towels and odds and ends there so we don't have to take so much every year.

The routine is to have a continental breakfast at 5:00AM and hit the trucks at 5:30AM. We hunt out of elevated box blinds until about 10:00AM whereupon we are picked up and taken to the Pavilion for a delicious lunch. We go out again about 2:30 and come in at dark for another great meal. Very often it is quite cold in the morning but it warms up to the high seventies in the afternoon. It is fun to go deer hunting in light clothing.



Feeder in Texas

The fence is to keep the sheep and goats out.
The sling feeder on the left is full of cottonseed.
See the turkeys!



Our bathroom in Texas

side I saw a family of Axis deer and actually whispered to myself, "Oh my gosh!" The buck was huge! Larry and I had agreed we would not shoot an Axis deer unless it was spectacular because we already have several including two great ones. With this one I had no doubts when I shot. It dropped. I got out of the blind, posed the deer, and took pictures. I was back in the blind by 7:10AM and shortly thereafter several deer reappeared.

That afternoon at about 4:30PM 9 tom turkeys came running into the feeder. I have not had good luck shooting turkeys with my rifle. (Shooting turkeys with a rifle is legal in Texas in the fall.) I have wounded two but not retrieved them so this time I was a bit wary but I decided to try it. I shot and it dropped. These are Rio Grande turkeys. This time of year we see groups of toms or hens but no mixed groups.

Larry and I hunted in a double blind the next morning so we could be picked up early. We had made arrangements to take the Axis deer to Junction Texas where representatives from Rhodes Taxidermy in Kerrville met us to take the deer to make Italian sausage for us and mount the deer. We could not take it back to Michigan because we were going to hunt deer in Missouri before we went home.

I shot an 8 point buck on Nov. 15 and on the 16th I shot a small 10 point with huge brow tines which is very unusual for this ranch.

Larry harvested a very wide 5 ½ year old 8 point buck and passed on a large number of smaller bucks. Since we didn't need any more venison, we were being conservative shooters. The three bucks we did shoot we gave to a Michigan hunter friend.

As usual we had a great time. The staff members have become friends and we always enjoy sharing stories with them. This year Colin, who used to be a graduate student

there and is now a full time employee, introduced us to his new wife. She is from New York but loves the Texas life. She helped with the cooking.

Even though we don't usually see really big deer we love this hunt because we enjoy the camaraderie of the other participants and the staff, the accommodations, and the large number of deer we see every year.



Joanne's Texas deer with the big brow tines



Joanne's axis deer

COUNTIES IN MICHIGAN



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CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

By Larry Witte

The SCI-Michigan Involvement Committee (SCI-MIC) is comprised of 12 Michigan SCI Chapters which meet and interact with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division on resource management issues and provide funding support for a number of important wildlife projects.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE)

On January 17, 2010, the new Department of Natural Resources and Environment was created under Governor Granholm's Executive Orders 45 of 2009 which combines the Departments of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality. Governor Granholm named Becky Humphries Director of the new DNRE. Humphries is a hunter and angler with an impressive background in natural resources management. She led the former DNR for a number of years before accepting this new challenge.

Michigan Deer Hunting

DNRE reported 722,545 people purchased 1,574,034 deer kill tags through December 10, 2009. The number of purchasers declined by 1% while the number of tags purchased remained nearly unchanged from 2008. Crossbow hunters obtained 45,303 crossbow stamps during this same period.

Early estimates by wildlife biologists indicate the harvest was down 20 to 30 percent in the U.P., 15 to 25 percent in the northern L.P. and 5 to 10 percent in the southern L. P. The DNR attributes the lower harvest estimates to a number of causes including the harsh 2008-2009 winter, warm temperatures during most of the firearm season and a late corn harvest, which provided sanctuary for deer in many areas. Preliminary estimates were made more difficult this year due to the very limited number of check stations in operation. Those check stations in operation reported a lower than usual percentage of 1½ year old bucks in the U.P. and northern Lower Peninsula, an indication of poor survival of last years fawns. Antler development was below average as well, another indication of the impact of last winter's severity.

DNRE verifies Cougar Tracks in U.P.

In November 2009 wildlife biologists verified cougar tracks near Detour (eastern Mackinaw County) and Gulliver (eastern Schoolcraft County) and confirmed a cougar photo in the eastern U.P. DNR was able to verify several sets of cougar tracks in Marquette and Delta Counties in 2008.

Continuing DNR Research Projects Predator-Prey Project

This project continues into 2010 to provide a better understanding of the impact of predators on deer populations. In 2009, of 48 fawns captured and collared, 24 were lost, 19 of those lost to predators. To assess the role of predation on white-tailed deer fawns, wildlife biologists capture and radio-collar newborn fawns to estimate their survival and determine cause of mortality.

Project partners include SCI-MIC, SCIE, Mississippi State University, Michigan Tech and DNRE Wildlife Division.

Gray Wolf Population Project

This project started in 1999 and will continue for at least five years following federal removal of the wolf from the federal list of threatened and endangered species. This project puts Michigan in an excellent position to defend delisting and future management programs. DNR estimates at least 575 wolves in the U.P. and wolves were documented in the northern Lower Peninsula as late as July 2009. Over 200 wolves have been captured and radio-collared.

Project partners include SCI-MIC, Michigan Tech and DNRE Wildlife Division.

Southern Michigan Black Bear Project

This project was delayed in 2009 and will restart in the spring of 2010. DNRE will live trap and outfit 6 bears a year for 2 years (12 bears total) to characterize the movement and habitat use of bears in southern Michigan generally south of a line from Muskegon to Bay City.

Project Partners include SCI-MIC, University of Wisconsin-Madison and DNRE Wildlife Division.

Bear Management Project

This project is changing in 2010 in part due to expansion of Lower Peninsula bear populations. The DNRE will address issues that increase with expanding bear/human contact such as population goals, nuisance bears and orphaned cubs. Multiple objectives of this project include evaluating new traps and nuisance bear procedures, training biologists in the safe handling of bears and relocation of orphaned cubs with surrogate sows, and public education. This project started in 2004 and has no end date.

Project Partners include SCI-MIC and DNR Law Division and Wildlife Division





TONY SEMPLE
FOUNDATION FOR HOPE

16980 Wood Road, Lansing, MI 48906

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October 8, 2009

Mid Michigan SCI
P.O. Box 486
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0486

Dear Mid Michigan SCI,

On behalf of the Tony Semple Foundation for Hope, I want to personally thank you and your SCI chapter for your commitment and donation of **\$2,500**. We feel blessed to have your support and partnership! Together we are providing meaningful "Outdoor Adventures" for youth who suffer life-threatening or life-altering medical conditions.

This funding on behalf of the **Mid Michigan SCI chapter** will solidify a Co-Sponsorship spot for a participant in one of this year's 2009 Outdoor Adventure camps. We are looking forward to having a representative from Mid Michigan SCI experience our Outdoor Adventures first hand, and to continue to develop this great partnership.

These special individuals receive an escape from their daily lives and are transformed for a moment with complete peace, without a care or worry for the future, just contentment for the present! Your participation and sponsorship enables us to provide these adventures with no cost to the families.

Thank you again for your dedication to this great cause and passion of mine. Together, we are turning dreams into reality. From the bottom of my heart, your commitment and generosity is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Tony Semple
Executive Director

THE TONY SEMPLE FOUNDATION FOR HOPE® is a registered non-profit 501(c) 3 organization.

All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.
Federal tax ID# 20-3209385

No gift or service was given in exchange for the tax deductible gift.

Nine Countries - Seven Weeks - Sixteen Animals

What was I Thinking?

by Roger Card

In January 2007, I was very privileged to win the World Hunting Award, SCI's highest honor. Unfortunately, later that same year, the Awards Committee created a new, higher level of achievement, The World Hunting Conservation Award, which would require the Diamond Level in all twenty-four Inner Circles and all fourteen Grand Slams.

This became my new goal and by the summer of 2008 I was only sixteen animals short of the two hundred and fifty species needed. The bad news was that almost all sixteen were mountain animals in Europe and Asia. The good news was they were located in the same general area geographically so I put my booking agent, Michael Valencia to work trying to find out how many animals I could collect on one concentrated "super hunt".

Michael's answer was, "It would be theoretically possible to hunt all my remaining animals in one trip. However, it would be a seven week marathon covering nine countries and everything would have to be near perfect for 100% success.

I knew that, physically and mentally, this would be one of the most challenging hunts of my life and as the days wore on, my endurance level would certainly be tested.

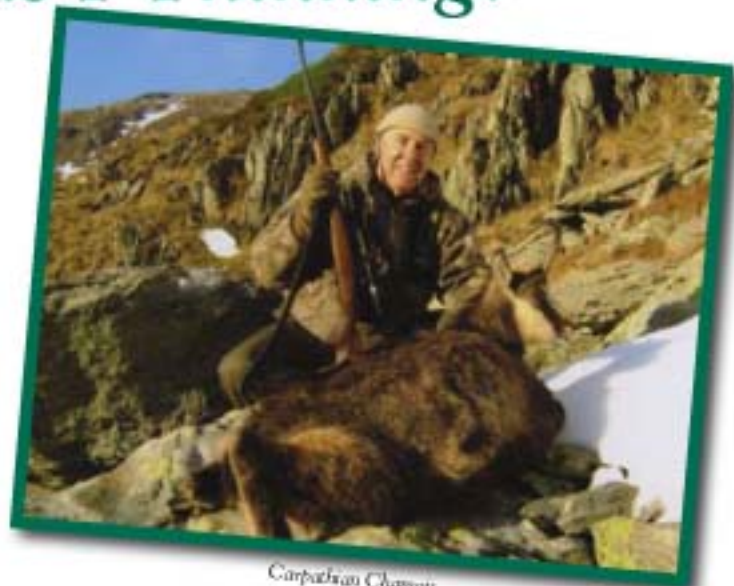
My first problem to be solved before I could return Michael's call with a definite answer was to contact my long time hunting partner, Rod Merchant, to see if he could be persuaded into one more crazy trip. Obviously this journey would be too long (forty-eight days), the mountains extremely high, the travel schedule physically draining, and the chances for success probably not that good.

When I first approached Rod with my idea he thought maybe I had taken too many malaria pills, possibly mixing them with high altitude sickness tablets, to even consider this hunt!

The last couple of years I have been nursing a bad knee that I'm sure will soon require surgery and, at my age, in all likelihood, end my mountain climbing hunts. I played this scenario to the max with Rod and after a large infusion of Crown Royal we shook hands and called Michael. We were "all in" for the sixteen animal, Europe to Asia hunting marathon. It would be kind of a "Hail Mary" but what the heck, sometimes the Hail Mary pass works!

MADRID - SPAIN - "LET'S GO HUNTING!"

Full of excitement and anticipation we were up early for a ten hour drive into northern Spain. The weather is dark and rainy with occasional thundershowers. We reach our destination, a small inn located high in the Pyrenean Mountains.



Carpathian Chamois

Felix LaLanne, owner of Safari Brokers, is personally driving us on the first part of this hunting extravaganza. Felix introduces us to Javier, who will be our local guide. We enjoy a wonderful supper at the inn and turn in early as tomorrow will likely be a long day.

We are up at 4:00 a.m. and begin a ninety minute drive high into the mountains. Felix has his hands full as the driver. The road is a tiny, twisting, turning, glorified horse trail that is unbelievably steep in some locations and dangerously narrow in others. The rain that was intermittent yesterday is a steady downpour today. We eventually reach the plateau we are seeking but it is raining so hard we remain in the Land Cruiser until 11:30 a.m. when it finally lets up. Remembering the old farmers' saying, "Rain before seven, quits by eleven", we grab our gear and head off, climbing about an hour before we reach a summit for some spectacular glassing.

Javier soon spots several chamois and a plan is devised to ambush our quarry. Because of the heavy rains the stream about two miles down the valley is a noisy torrent and being quiet will not be a problem on our stalk. The wind is in our favor and we are experiencing a strange phenomenon where clouds of fog slowly roll up the mountain side, completely engulfing us. At times our vision is reduced to less than twenty feet. As these clouds move by we use them to slip down into an adjacent valley getting below the chamois and waiting for a clear shot. This entire sequence took approximately two hours but eventually I found myself near the bottom of the valley putting the cross hairs on a nice Pyrenean chamois. My first shot sealed the deal. It was picture taking time before we knew it.

We caped the ram, had a nice little lunch and began an excruciating, three hour climb back to the jeep. The rains had



left everything very slippery which added a little more challenge to each step.

We returned to the little stone inn and said our good-byes to Javier. After a pleasant supper we turned in, knowing tomorrow would be a fourteen hour journey by car to the south of Spain for a sheep hunt.

MARCIA - SPAIN

We check into our hotel in Marcia at 1:00 a.m. exhausted. We have been traveling nonstop, eating mostly junk food and drinking caffeine to stay awake. At 5:00 a.m. they beat on our door and we meet Alfonso, our new local guide. Next we are driven to the hunting area where we will wait for daylight before starting our ascent on foot. By 11:00 a.m. we have reached the top and begin glassing, trying to find some sheep before they bed down for the day.

After an hour, seeing nothing, a decision is made. Apparently there are no sheep in the area so we must either climb higher to the next mountain or return to the car. Quitting is not an option so we begin what was probably the toughest climb I have made since completing the Grand Slam of Sheep many years ago. The rocks allowed great footing and slipping and falling was not much of a hazard. You kind of had to see it to believe it but our mountain was just straight up.

Finally we reached a new plateau, looked out over the edge and bingo! Three hundred and ten yards directly below me stood an excellent Barbary ram. The ram was not bedded down but I could tell he was thinking about it as he just stood still, looking out over the valley below. I had lots of time to position my rifle for a good steady shot but that also meant I had a lot of time to worry about the three hundred yard shot, straight down, and what it meant if I missed. I ran all the calculations of wind direction, velocity, long shot and aiming low for shooting straight down, through my mind several times, then squeezed the trigger. The ram traveled less than twenty-five feet after the impact and I had my second trophy. It was a long hour and a half down and around the mountain to where the ram lay and another two hours to the vehicle.

As you can see in the picture, it is a beautiful animal, scoring 121 SCI and I was really pleased. The good news was I had my ram and we were still on schedule. The bad news being we were all exhausted and had to drive to Madrid for an early flight to Greece in the morning. We somehow managed to stay awake arriving in Madrid at 2:00 a.m. Again there was little sleep as it was an all day event getting to Athens, then two hours to the hunting area.

ATHENS - GREECE

We are picked up at the airport by taxi service and transported south to the coast where we are met by our local guide, Chris. We are treated to a wonderful supper at a local



Barbary Ram

restaurant where we go over the details of how we will conduct a kri kri ibex hunt in Greece.

I have to tell you this will be a weird hunt. The only area where the government allows hunting is at an island in the Mediterranean Sea. It has a population of pure kri kri and with absolutely no predators, each year a few must be culled out for over-population reasons. This is looked at by the bureaucrats as more of a mundane job program that must be performed rather than facilitating any of the needs of the hunters. The paperwork to shoot this ram is unbelievable! No less than seven federal employees accompanied me to the island - none of them actually helping with the hunt. Instead they each had some little mediocre job to perform or a form to fill out, after which they took the rest of the day off drinking coffee, taking naps, and playing cards. Did I mention the only time they allow hunting on the island is Friday mornings from 7:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.! Talk about pressure!!

We loaded into a boat in the dark for the trip to the island. There we were provided a nice little cottage/office complete with a kitchen and fireplace for heat. We eventually signed all the forms and permission papers and are off to hunt.

Chris, our guide, had brought me a shot gun (12 gauge only on the island). The serial numbers were carefully read and recorded, then I was issued my five slugs. We jumped into a wagon behind a tractor and were driven approximately three miles to the spot where they preferred I set.

Just so you have the picture correct, I am hunting ibex on an island in the Mediterranean Sea, my transportation is a tractor and extremely noisy wagon. We have a five hour hunt and I have been issued a 12 gauge shot gun with five slugs. Instead of sneaking on to the top of the mountain in stealth mode, I am driven with a tractor sitting in a trailer. Different, huh?





Eurasian Brown Bear

With less than an hour of hunting left, about 12:15 p.m., a ram showed up around fifty yards from us. He was a very young ram and I decided to let him go, ending my chance for a kri kri ibex. Sometimes hunts are not successful and I guess that's why it's called hunting. We left and after two and a half hours on a twisting, turning, but wonderfully scenic road, we arrived at the hotel. I'm very tired - with my bobber down just a little as we were now short one of sixteen. I have some options to make this up but still it was not good news. That evening found us enjoying a nice Greek meal for the conclusion of a very unique hunt. The following day we visited the Parthenon in Athens and a couple other tourist sights, then caught a 5:00 flight for Romania.

BUCHAREST - ROMANIA

Today we are met at the airport by Mickey, our new local guide, driven three hours in the countryside and check into another tiny hotel. Slept until 9:00 the next morning and it felt wonderful! We had not had eight hours of sleep in a single night since we started.

In Romania I need to hunt a Eurasian brown bear and a Carpathian chamois. Immediately following our lunch we gather our gear and drive up into the mountains to begin the bear hunt. This area of Romania is loaded with bear. In fact they are a very real threat to the local population, to their livestock and crops. The farmers of this area raise mostly hay and corn for their small herds of horses and cows. The hay and corn are harvested by hand and shocked much as our ancestors did a century ago. If you have several bears marauding around in your fields, killing your livestock, it is a tremendous problem. The Romanian government works closely with the local people on keeping the bear population at manageable numbers.

Just before we reach our destination we stop to see the local government official and all our papers, licenses, and documents are checked. This is a very strict and precise

process yet it is done in an extremely friendly and jovial atmosphere. They want the bears harvested; however they are careful to obey all the rules. After paperwork is finished we follow a small road up into the hillsides to its eventual end. Then, as always, we begin the trek up the mountain on foot. I was accompanied by three government officials plus Felix and Rod on this trip and I could not imagine how we would all fit into my bear blind. As it turned out, it was not a problem because the blind was actually a small stone structure, two stories high and approximately twenty by twenty feet. Felix said we would probably not see a large bear but if we did it would have a larger trophy fee. This was an "Oh, by the way..." type of statement and we didn't pursue it because they said the bears in the area would be in the six to seven foot range.

Just before dark, a huge bear came into sight and the government guys went nuts, trying to get me to take him. We were close enough that any noise would scare the bear, so in complete silence they were showing me that he was gigantic and I should shoot him, NOW! "Oh, no, you don't!" They weren't going to fool me with that trick. I was just as excited as they were but before I squeezed the trigger I wanted to know exactly what my "slightly larger" trophy fee might be. The huge bruin checked our bait, and then walked away. We were all nervous but I was determined to find out what amount it would cost me before I squeezed the trigger. Finally an agreement was reached and we shook hands. I sure hoped he would return before dark.

In probably the last ten minutes of daylight he returned and I flattened him. I was using the local official's rifle and it did the job that night. The bear ended up less than fifty feet from where I had shot him. As soon as we were sure he was dead we climbed down and carefully approached my eight foot, two inch, six hundred pound Eurasian brown bear. He will get a full mount and end up in the Card Wildlife Education Center as soon as possible.

A runner was dispatched to return with the vehicle and from someplace a crew of about eight men arrived in a pickup truck, driving as close as possible. They dragged the bear down the mountain, loaded it and returned to the local village. By the time we arrived they were in full celebration mode. Apparently this bear was large enough to cause a good deal of excitement and a lot of people came to see it. Also they knew there would be lots of coveted free bear meat distributed and it was one less menace they had to worry about.

After a few shots of Romanian White Lightning (which tastes like gasoline, only worse) we returned to our hotel. After an 11:00 supper, we turned in as it was up again at 4:00 a.m. for my chamois hunt.

TRANSYLVANIA - ROMANIA

Sometime in the middle of the night they knock on my door. Partially awake, I get dressed, grab my gear and stagger

down to the vehicle. I sleep as much as possible in the Land Cruiser while they drive me up into the mountains, eventually reaching the end of the trail. Just before daylight they wake me and we start the climb to the summit. Sunrise finds me on top of another spectacular mountain with incredible views in every direction. Each area we have hunted has lots of chamois so our hunting decisions have been based on finding a nice, representative male with our best chance of success on taking the trophy.

Today would be the same and, after a two hour game of cat and mouse, I squeeze the trigger on my fourth trophy of the hunt, a Carpathian chamois. We have a small lunch and did the normal hour and a half, excruciating walk back to the truck. Tomorrow is a travel day, taking us to Austria for sika deer.

VIENNA - AUSTRIA

We arrive at noon and drive three hours directly to the sika deer hunting area. This really is becoming a marathon. We unload our gear at a local hotel and twenty minutes after arrival we are on our way to a deer blind. This area of Austria is farmland with small fields of corn, wheat, and hay, surrounded by huge forests. It is fall and the aspens and oaks are turning all the brilliant shades, from bright yellows and orange to purple. These are intermixed with gorgeous Austrian pines so again, I must say, the scenery is spectacular. It also doesn't hurt that, as we say in Michigan, we are here for the "peak week of colors".

After a short walk from the road, we climb in a deer blind on the edge of a forest. Just before dark a Japanese sika deer shows himself. Bad mistake. I now have five of my trophies in the bag.

By the time we take the deer to the local taxidermist it is late but we have a nice supper, enjoying the moment, and turn in. A car will arrive at 4:00 in the morning to drive us where we will hunt the Manchurian sika deer.

This turns out to be quite a distance and I believe we actually hunted in a forest area very near Hungary. About 10:00 a.m. a stag scoring 177 SCI walked into my clearing and number six is headed for the Card Wildlife Education Center.

I am trying something new on this trip. Because we are visiting so many countries I have decided to borrow or rent a rifle from each of the outfitters. They have provided me with excellent gear at each location and, to this point, I have bagged each animal with one shot. Nevertheless, I have to say I still feel rather naked traveling on a hunting trip without my trusty 7 m/m.

By the time we return to the hotel, Mickey has made connections and the vehicle has been sent to drive us high into the Austrian Alps for my Alpine chamois hunt the next morning. Rod and I try to calculate and we think we are actually a day ahead of schedule, but we are so tired we are not sure if we are correct.

AUSTRIAN ALPS

Truck arrives at 5:00 p.m. and we load up and drive three hours up into the Alps to a small hotel where we get some sleep. Kurt, our local guide, is there at 5:00 in the morning for the one hour drive on the final leg, going even higher. By flashlight I ascent possibly the steepest mountain I have ever climbed. It is just straight up. When the sun finally shows its face through the darkness, even I am amazed at what we have accomplished.

Daylight does not bring an end to our upward assault so, one step after another, we continue towards the summit. About 8:00 Kurt holds his hands up to signal us to halt and points at a chamois about one hundred and fifty yards away, looking directly at us. I grab the rifle and try to settle in for a shot but it was not possible. I did find the trophy in the scope but was huffing and puffing so hard I never felt comfortable squeezing the trigger before he walked off.

Onward and upward. At times, while making our four hour, upward ascent, we walked on a tiny sheep trail which was only twelve inches wide, right along the edge of a sheer cliff. It was scary as hell!! Several times we turned around and faced the mountain, holding each others' hands, as we climbed around boulders and other obstacles.

We reached our destination around 10:00 and I was surprised to find this new area of the Alps mostly wooded. It was still very rugged but now we had actually climbed up into a forest area. Spotting a chamois would be difficult and getting a clean shot at one seemed impossible. Kurt selected a spot where a huge rock slide had made an opening through the forest, saying the chamois would cross the clearing throughout the day so we should be ready. It goes without saying I worked up a good sweat on the ascent so now, as we sat on top of the mountain in the wind, I suddenly became very cold. As the day wore on I became even colder and dreamed of the wool hat and gloves I had left in the truck down below. About 11:30 we spotted a chamois moving across our clearing about four hundred yards below us. I snapped off a shot just before he entered the trees. It had been hurried and both Mickey and Kurt said I shot over top of my target. A full grown chamois body is only twelve or fourteen inches high and between shooting downhill, the wind, an unfamiliar gun, and me being just about frozen solid, I missed. What can I say?

Later, around 3:30, I had a chance to redeem myself with a two hundred yard, downhill shot and finally did the job. Wow, was I happy! We climbed down to where the Alpine chamois lay, took our pictures and returned to the truck. The descent took three hours and it was dark when we reached the bottom.

As it was close to evening when I shot the chamois, Kurt said he would carry it down on his back. He reached the truck looking like he had hardly broken a sweat despite carrying the rifle, our pack, and a full grown chamois on his back! Mickey



Japanese Sika Deer

looked almost as healthy but I on the other hand, was a mess. I had made most of the climb fearing for my life and spent the entire day either burning up, drenched with sweat, or sitting on a rock ledge, freezing to death.

Number seven was in the bag and I was really glad to move on. After a nice meal with

Kurt, a driver took us on the four hour jaunt back to the hotel, the same place from where we had hunted sika deer. I slept the entire trip back, barely able to stumble into the hotel and climb into bed. Again it would be a short night. Mickey needed to catch a plane in Vienna at noon the next day.

Upon arrival in Vienna we made contact with Felix, our outfitter from Spain. We learned that we would not be leaving until noon the next day so we had twenty-four hours with nothing on the agenda. What do you think a couple of guys like us would do with a free day in one of the most beautiful, exotic capital cities in the world? Nope! We did a tiny little sightseeing and shopping, had a massage and went to bed at 8:00, totally exhausted. Our wake up call was for at 8:00 the next morning and it was needed, as both of us were still asleep when the phone rang. Twelve hours of sleep and we were still tired. Trains, planes and automobiles - we are traveling again as our plane leaves for Spain at noon.

BILBAO - SPAIN

Bilbao happens to be the home of the world famous Guggenheim Art Museum. After an hour of cultural tourism we continue on our journey, another three hours up into the Cantabrian Mountains. I am hoping this hunt will be like the others - high majestic mountains, gorgeous views and, somehow like magic, I manage to get my trophy in one day so we can continue my quest.

Well, it was not to be and this hunt deserves a chapter all its own. The first morning we got off on the wrong foot when we all overslept and were a half hour late meeting Oscar, our local guide. Next there was some sort of license snafu that detained us another hour. When we finally were able to start, I became optimistic because the road appeared like it was going to take us all the way to the top of the mountain. We kept climbing and

climbing. The blacktop road changed to a nice, hard, dirt trail an eventually turned into a two track, finally becoming so rough we had to halt. Oscar was able to spot several small groups of chamois but a problem became apparent. The Cantabrian chamois were in full rut, running all over the place like a band of crazy, love-struck teenagers. They seemed oblivious to us and were chasing each other from one valley to the next.

Our only option seemed to be to get up into the high country and try to intersect a group while they were moving around. Oscar led us on an ascent that seemed to go up and up and up forever. We left the trees and crossed over into the snow, still climbing. The sun was shining brightly so the temperature on the top of the mountain was quite warm. The snow was deep in places and we had no choice except just trudging forward. We became very damp but this was not a problem until late in the afternoon. As the temperature fell we became really cold, wet and uncomfortable. Actually those are not good adjectives. We were frozen and absolutely miserable! We followed Oscar all day, reaching the truck an hour after dark, so cold and exhausted it is not possible to describe.

I had one opportunity for a shot. About five in the afternoon I hunkered down and squeezed the trigger at a nice ram about three hundred yards away. My gun just went "click". The firing pin hit the primer but it never fired. Kind of fitting for our whole day, just one big misfire!!

The following morning brought a little more adventure. The weather channel showed a large storm blowing in that would probably suspend all hunting for four or five days. In the dark we traveled again, high into the mountains, hoping to get in a few hours of hunting before the snow storm started.

One more time Oscar led us on an insane journey, trying to get as high as possible to intersect a chamois. The sunrise brought huge, ominous black clouds that actually sprinkled us with a cold drizzle but we just kept climbing. Finally about 11:00 we peeked over the edge of a cliff and looked into a valley where several groups of chamois were running back and forth. They were on the right and on the left, below us and above us. We were sure if we waited, one of them would move close enough to allow us a shot.

As we sat hunkered down on the mountain top, the rain and snow began falling at a more consistent pace and those black clouds rolled in, one after the other, completely engulfing us. We needed to get off that mountain soon as it was becoming extremely dangerous. The rock slides, loose stones and the lichen covered boulders, difficult on the ascent, were going to be impossible to safely descend, covered with four to five inches of this new, heavy falling snow.

As we were about to throw in the towel and retreat, a nice Cantabrian chamois ram made a fatal move and ran directly up, barely two hundred and seventy-five yards across from us.

He stood on a rock, looking for a girlfriend. Bad mistake, as I was ready. There was no question, the ram lay dead on the rock where he had stood, but it was a long climb up and down the valley to reach him. A plan was made where Oscar would retrieve the ram and we would start our descent immediately. Oscar was young and strong, used to this terrain, and as was our plan, he crossed the valley, loaded the chamois on his back and caught up with us about half way down the mountain.

Every single step of that descent was scary and very treacherous. The snow and rain fell steadily, the wind picked up to gale force and everything was covered with wet lichen slime. We slipped, slid, and crawled for three hours, eventually reaching the road. Twice a branch that I was holding broke, causing me to free fall several feet before crashing into boulders. How I managed those falls without breaking my neck is still a mystery to me. The Hunting Gods were looking after me, is all I can say.

Upon reaching the road, Oscar was dispatched to retrieve the truck. It seemed to be an absolute eternity before he returned. We were standing in the middle of the road in a blizzard, soaking wet, freezing to death. Our route for the decent down the mountain was based solely on the shortest, safest path to the road. Unfortunately for Oscar, we intersected the road around five miles from where we had left the Land Cruiser. It was a long wait but eventually our team all loaded into the vehicle, turned the heat on high and drove back to the hotel.

The storm that had been dumping snow at the higher elevations was a down pouring of rain for the balance of our trip. Being cold, wet and tired does not compare to what we were feeling upon arrival. This hunt had pushed me to the limits of my endurance. I was happy to have my Grand Slam of Spanish Chamois but was too exhausted to celebrate.

It rained hard all night and continued the following day as we gathered our soggy clothes and loaded them in the Land Cruiser for the eleven hour trip across Spain to Valencia, for my final Spanish animal, the Mouflon sheep.

VALENCIA - SPAIN

Finally - an easy one. We spot the small herd of European free-range Mouflon from the Land Cruiser and were able to drive within a mile of where they are grazing. Our guide, Oscar, did an excellent job of moving us quietly through the brushy landscape to where I was able to dispose of a nice ram with a single shot. He was standing on the ledge of a steep canyon and I'm glad he dropped in his tracks. There were no loose rocks or life threatening, slippery boulders on this hunt. It was just two hundred and fifty yards straight ahead. I really needed this as the previous hunts had taken a toll on me.


My hunt is now about two thirds over and we have received some bad news. Rod has to return home to deal with health

problems of a family member. I would like to take a moment to express how lucky I am to have him as a hunting partner. He always says he does not share my "Noah's Ark" thing, where I want to hunt one of everything. He is content hunting an occasional chamois, red deer and an ibex. We travel up and down the mountains and across the desert as a team, supporting each other at every opportunity. Rod is an accomplished magician and at night, no matter how tired we are, out comes the magic box and we do a show. I cannot tell you how much fun we have had playing with the local waiters, cooks, staff, guides, drivers, and at times even complete strangers staying in our hotel. Rod's magic shows have changed the way I feel about hunting. Today I return from a trip far richer, having had so much more interaction with the local people. I am certainly happy he could travel with me the first month and I will miss him for the last three weeks of this journey.

SOPHIA- BULGARIA

As I said in the beginning of this story, I am on a mission to collect representative species and unfortunately many of my chamois hunts are beginning to sound alike. The mountains of Bulgaria are very beautiful, the climbing, as always, is too hard. The Balkan chamois I was able to locate and dispatch of is headed for the Card Wildlife Education Center at Ferris State University, just like the others. I now have a total of ten trophies on this journey.

My next stop is Istanbul, Turkey, for another chamois, ibex, and red deer hunt. That will be in the next issue of this magazine.



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This turns out to be quite a distance and I believe we actually hunted in a forest area very near Hungary. About 10:00 a.m. a stag scoring 177 SCI walked into my clearing and number six is headed for the Card Wildlife Education Center.

I am trying something new on this trip. Because we are visiting so many countries I have decided to borrow or rent a rifle from each of the outfitters. They have provided me with excellent gear at each location and, to this point, I have bagged each animal with one shot. Nevertheless, I have to say I still feel rather naked traveling on a hunting trip without my trusty 7 m/m.

By the time we return to the hotel, Mickey has made connections and the vehicle has been sent to drive us high into the Austrian Alps for my Alpine chamois hunt the next morning. Rod and I try to calculate and we think we are actually a day ahead of schedule, but we are so tired we are not sure if we are correct.

AUSTRIAN ALPS

Truck arrives at 5:00 p.m. and we load up and drive three hours up into the Alps to a small hotel where we get some sleep. Kurt, our local guide, is there at 5:00 in the morning for the one hour drive on the final leg, going even higher. By flashlight I ascent possibly the steepest mountain I have ever climbed. It is just straight up. When the sun finally shows its face through the darkness, even I am amazed at what we have accomplished.

Daylight does not bring an end to our upward assault so, one step after another, we continue towards the summit. About 8:00 Kurt holds his hands up to signal us to halt and points at a chamois about one hundred and fifty yards away, looking directly at us. I grab the rifle and try to settle in for a shot but it was not possible. I did find the trophy in the scope but was huffing and puffing so hard I never felt comfortable squeezing the trigger before he walked off.

Onward and upward. At times, while making our four hour, upward ascent, we walked on a tiny sheep trail which was only twelve inches wide, right along the edge of a sheer cliff. It was scary as hell!! Several times we turned around and faced the mountain, holding each others' hands, as we climbed around boulders and other obstacles.

We reached our destination around 10:00 and I was surprised to find this new area of the Alps mostly wooded. It was still very rugged but now we had actually climbed up into a forest area. Spotting a chamois would be difficult and getting a clean shot at one seemed impossible. Kurt selected a spot where a huge rock slide had made an opening through the forest, saying the chamois would cross the clearing throughout the day so we should be ready. It goes without saying I worked up a good sweat on the ascent so now, as we sat on top of the mountain in the wind, I suddenly became very cold. As the day wore on I became even colder and dreamed of the wool hat and gloves I had left in the truck down below. About 11:30 we spotted a chamois moving across our clearing about four hundred yards below us. I snapped off a shot just before he entered the trees. It had been hurried and both Mickey and Kurt said I shot over top of my target. A full grown chamois body is only twelve or fourteen inches high and between shooting downhill, the wind, an unfamiliar gun, and me being just about frozen solid, I missed. What can I say?

Later, around 3:30, I had a chance to redeem myself with a two hundred yard, downhill shot and finally did the job. Wow, was I happy! We climbed down to where the Alpine chamois lay, took our pictures and returned to the truck. The descent took three hours and it was dark when we reached the bottom.

As it was close to evening when I shot the chamois, Kurt said he would carry it down on his back. He reached the truck looking like he had hardly broken a sweat despite carrying the rifle, our pack, and a full grown chamois on his back! Mickey

To the Kilombero River, Tanzania

by Mary Harter

During our 21 day Royal Hunt with Johan and Human Pieterse, two of the many animals we wanted to take were a crocodile and a hippopotamus. As they described the process of hunting them I decided to hunt the hippo and let Don hunt the croc. The brain on a hippo is a little larger target and I let Don hunt the croc with a smaller brain because he is a better shot. We had also studied "The Perfect Shot" by Kevin Robertson before we flew to Africa. This book is very helpful for all of the African animals showing the anatomy of the animals to insure the perfect shot.

On the eighth day of our hunt we all decided to drive the three hours from camp to the Kilombero River to hunt hippos and crocs. First we checked our baits set up for lions and leopards, stalked a hyena and then an elephant, and then we were on our way to the river. The second truck followed us with more staff and a boat in the back.

The Kilombero was full of hippos, "the river horse". We drove to look at the river in several places and looked and looked at many hippos and crocs. We put the boat in the water and crossed over to an island. We saw lots of



Mary Harter with her hippopotamus

hippos and quickly set up to shoot.

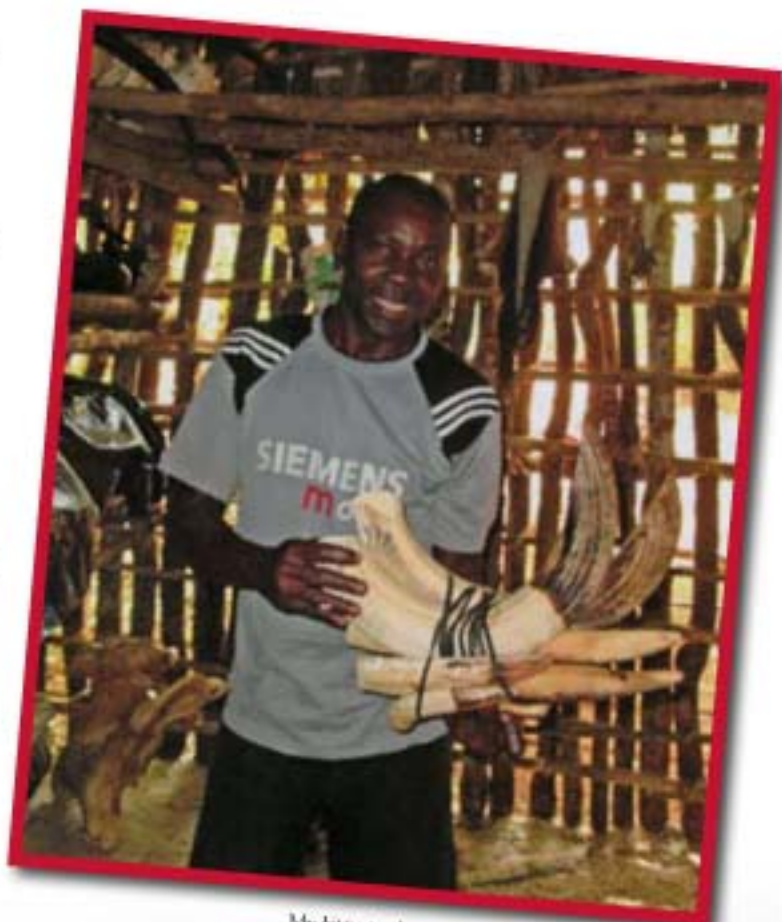
One hippo in a group raised part way up out of the water to poop. Don and I watched the whirl of his little flat tail as he spread his poop all over in the water but Human looked at all of the scars on his large body and judged that he was huge. I was sitting on a high bank, set up with my bipods and Human said to shoot him, to aim right between the eyes because of the angle of his head. That was right where I hit him. It was about a 50 yard shot. He went down. Then we needed to wait at least two hours for him to surface.

After I shot the hippo I counted over 100 hippo heads that I could see peeking up to see what was going on. All you could see was their ears and eyes. Some of them had hair in their ears and some of their ears were green with moss. One had pink lips. It all happened so fast, I wondered what size hippo I had shot. We had read all about them, how to judge them and Human had picked out one to shoot very quickly and I wondered just what I had done.



Previously, Johan and Human had told us the legend about when God placed all of the animals in the world and he had placed the hippos entirely on land. After a few days the hippos said they were too hot and asked God if they could live in the water. God told them, "You will eat all of my fish!" The hippos assured God that they would not. God said, "How will I know?" Then the hippos agreed to come on land every night and spread out their poop so God could see there were no fish scales in it. Then God agreed that they could live in the water. We did see many hippos not living up to their agreement and were popping in the water but they spread it all over like it was hitting a fan, their tail. I'm sure there were no fish scales in it.

After about one and one half hours Human and the trackers, Ashumani, Amos, Chiva, and the assistant guide, Greg, went out to search for my hippo. They took the boat to where they last thought they saw the hippo and began to poke around in the water with the oars. Don directed them to a little different spot and one of the trackers got out and stood on my hippo. Then the work began. They towed, rolled, and shoved him until he was finally near shore. We all took off our shoes and stood in the water for pictures. The hippo was huge. He had very long teeth which were extremely sharp. Johan said the two longest teeth would make SCI book all by themselves. What a trophy!



My hippo teeth.

Sunset in Tanzania



A few hippo heads peeking up to see what is going on



Don and Mary Harter on an island in the Kilombero River, Tanzania

The boys tried to tow the hippo around the island to get him to the other shore but the river was also full of crocs and it was getting dark so they left him secured on a sand bar and made plans to return for him the next day. We had a long ride home.

On day nine of our hunt we were on our way to the Kilombero River for the hippo but stopped to stalk a few cape buffalo and then a couple of sable. Finally we arrived at the river and found that they boys had the hippo all cut up and were starting to haul him back. It took five trips with the boat to haul back all of the meat. They used the wench on the truck to haul the meat up the bank and put it in the back of the two trucks with the help of leverage over tree limbs.



My hippo's tail and some scars on his back

We crossed over to the island in the boat and on hands and knees crawled to see all of the crocs eating the rib cage left of the hippo near the sand bar where he was cut up. The crocs had dragged the rib cage out into deeper water about 150 yards from us and there must have been at least 35 crocs fighting over pieces of the carcass.

Don set up to shoot using the bipods but then decided it was just too far to make the type of shot he needed to make, plus there were so many crocs it would have made for very unsafe recovery. But what fun we had watching them eat, roll in the water, open their mouths wide, and swim around in a frenzy. When we started on the way home it was

126 degrees in the sun but it cooled down to 112 degrees while we traveled.

On day ten we went out to check our baits and set up a few more. We saw hyena tracks in the parking lot as we left camp and had heard lions roar about 5:00 a.m. Again, on the way we saw many animals. We saw so many Liechtenstein hartebeest I remarked that there must be one behind every tree.

One of the baits had not been hit so they decided to use it for croc bait. We drove to the river and they secured the bait in the water near shore. They placed sticks in the water nearby 12 feet apart to help judge the size of crocs that hopefully would approach. The bait was set out about 10:30 a.m. and a blind was also set up. About noon we ate lunch and then returned to the blind. Five different crocs came to the bait which was out about 40 yards but they were all small.

Then Johan spotted a larger croc across the river. He was keeping the larger crocs away from the bait but just wouldn't come closer himself. They decided to wait until dark for him, if necessary. At 4:00 p.m. I went back to the truck for our flashlights and head lamps. All of a sudden - BOOM! BOOM! The big croc had come in. Don shot him right in the brain but Johan said, "Oh, shit!" so Don shot him again. All of the trackers, Human, and Johan ran down the bank and out into the water to grab the croc before he floated out into the current. Johan grabbed what he thought was his tail but it was his snout. Later he said he just about had a heart attack when he did. Don's



Don Harter with his 12' crocodile



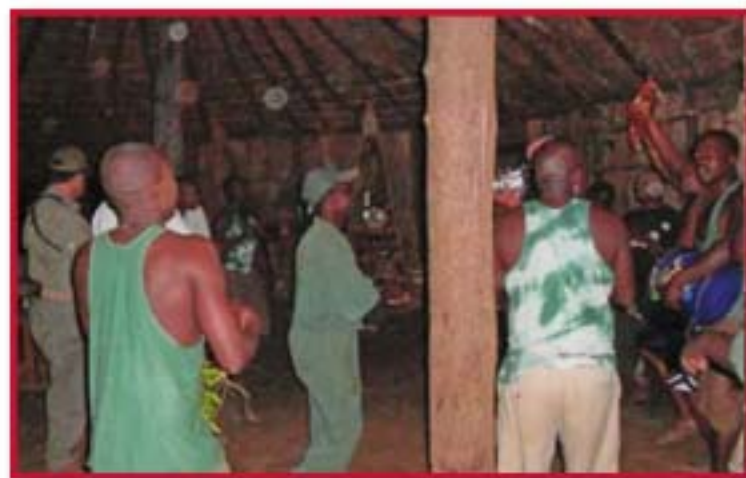
Don and JP in the croc band



JP Pieterse giving the high sign that Don had successfully shot a croc

second shot had flipped the croc around from the position after the first shot. They secured his snout with a rope and brought him to shore. What a beauty! Many crocs have the end broken off their tails from fighting but this one had every segment. He had many teeth marks from fighting but was all intact and measured 12 feet. After much picture taking at the water's edge they wrenched him up the embankment near the pickup for more pictures.

On the way home, just outside of camp, Johan had Don shoot his gun to signal our success and near arrival while the trackers decorated the truck with leaves and branches. As we got to camp we were greeted by all of the camp staff singing and dancing for us. Ashumani did his special croc dance and as we entered the main lodge they played drums and Henry carried me on his shoulders. What a special welcome! This was a Kabubi-Kabubi, a special celebration for a special hunt. Don is now "Bwana Moja!" - SIR FIRST.



Our Kabubi-Kabubi celebration

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