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Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

October 2010, Issue 12



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Looking Ahead -

In our next issue -

With Kiwi Safaris in New Zealand by Neil French

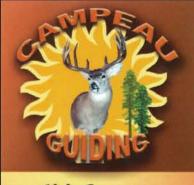
Uganda -2009 by Roger Card and Rod Merchant

Our 2010 Turkey Hunt by Joanne Witte

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Alberta Winter Wolf Hunt by Paul Conner





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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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Location

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

Time

Oct. 4, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Nov. 1, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Dec. 6, 2010	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Jan. 10, 2011	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Big Buck Night	5:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Feb. 18, 2011	Hunter's Convention	2-10:00 p.m.	Soaring Eagle Casino
Feb. 19, 2011	Hunter's Convention	10:00 a.mClose	Soaring Eagle Casino



Message from your President

SCI's purpose is to protect your freedom to hunt and promote wildlife conservation worldwide.

Hunting season is close at hand and there are changes in the crossbow rules. The big change coming is that anyone 10 years old or older can now use a crossbow to hunt with if they want to. I believe this is a very positive change because it will give more people the opportunity to hunt. For those of us who are getting older and cannot shoot our bows, the crossbow will allow us to archery hunt many more years. So get out there and hunt. It's a beautiful time to be in the woods.

I have just returned from our August Board of Directors Meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. It was an important meeting in that we were voting on ten bylaw changes. SCI also hired a new executive director who will start by mid September. You can read all about this in your next "Safari Times".

Included in this issue are applications for the Veterans Hunt and the Deb Card Courage Award. I encourage you to help us find



Kevin Unger - vice president, Mary Harter editor, Don Harter - president, and Scott Holmes - treasurer at the leadership training at the beautiful Granite Ranch.

qualified candidates for these hunts. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for "Big Buck Night" at the Comfort Inn, January 10th, 2011 and our Hunter's Convention, February 18th and 19th at the Soaring Eagle Casino. (Note: This is one week earlier than last year.)

Hunt Often, Hunt Safe,

Don Harter

Editor's Comments

Don and I just returned from leadership training, accompanied by Scott Holmes and Kevin Unger, and the Board of Director's meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. For the leadership training we stayed at Granite Ranch owned by SCI where all of the AWLS (American Wilderness Leadership Schools) schooling takes place. What a magnificent setting for education of and in the out-of-doors! No wonder the many teachers we have sent there over the years have come back so energized!



Scott Holmes - treasurer, Mary Harter - editor, Don Harter - president, and Kevin Unger - vice president attending the leadership training at the Granite Ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming where AWLS classes are held.

The ranch itself consists of the lodge, several cabins and out buildings plus a caretakers home. They have shooting ranges and hiking trails plus a teepee and bonfire area. The Granite River runs in front of the lodge and mountains are all around it. You can hike up the road to a waterfall and a little further to natural hot springs. You are encouraged to carry pepper spray (provided) when you hike as bears are throughout the area. We saw a bull moose and several mule deer right from the lodge. Snowshoe rabbits were all over and starting to turn white, feet first. We awoke to frost in August and a thin line of smoke from a controlled burn over the ridge.

If ever you are lucky enough to be in this area, check it out. If they have room, you can stay here. Also check out the SCI museum in Tucson, Arizona if you are ever in that area. SCI has many, wonderful things to offer.

Mary J. Harter

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BOOK REVIEW

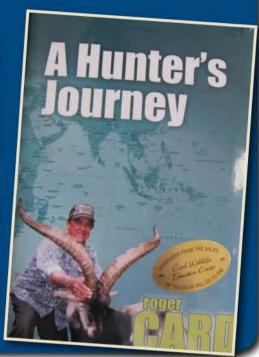
by Josh Christensen

TITLE: A HUNTER'S JOURNEY AUTHOR: Roger Card PUBLISHER: PGI Publishing COPYRIGHT: 2009

LIST PRICE: \$20.00 with all proceeds going to the Card Wildlife Education Center

Roger Card takes us around the world on some of his many hunts in A Hunter's Journey. He allows us to hunt vicariously through him and in doing so the reader is able to learn about other cultures and even catch Roger with his pants down, or I should say off...literally. A Hunter's Journey is split into nice short chapters which make for an easy and enjoyable read. Plenty of color photographs accompany each chapter to put a picture with the animal or face we read about. This book can be an emotional rollercoaster; having you wiping your eyes at one point and laughing out loud at another.

I don't personally know Roger Card, but after reading the first chapter in his book it sure felt like I did. His compilation of stories are different from other hunting books I have read in that he writes about hunts from all over the world and not just one continent. After reading his book my wife (Sara), my son (Elijah who was two at the time) and I went to Ferris State University to see the Card Wildlife Educational Center and we all loved it. It was an awesome experience for our whole family, and I enjoyed knowing the stories behind many of the animals. If for no other reason I would recommend this book to support one of our Mid-Michigan Chapter members and his Wildlife Center.



NOTICE TROPHY RECORDS COMPETITION

DEADLINE FOR AWARDS SELECTION

The deadline for submitting score sheets to be included in this year's Hunter's Convention Awards Program is WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 1, 2010

The period covered for the Awards is December 1, 2008 to December 1, 2010.

Remember! You must be a member when you shot the animal to be eligible for a major award. Once you are a member any animal you harvested can be entered in the cumulative record book. Spouses must have their own local membership to enter animals in the competition.

The only exception to the above rule is that children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews (under age 18) of active members may enter animals in the awards competition without being members themselves.

Send your entries to

JOANNE WITTE 11219 BIRCH PARK DRIVE STANWOOD MI 49346 Phone: 231-796-4927

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20/0 Turkey Hunting By Lexi Strope With My Dad

One of my dad's biggest passions has always been hunting and spending time outdoors. As far back as I can remember he has been sharing his experiences with my mom, sister and I and I have always been interested in one thing in particular... turkey hunting!

Five years back my dad bought me a shotgun to shoot at targets with, and to finally learn to hunt. After lots of practice with the gun my dad told me the words that I had been waiting forever to hear, it's time we hunt for real. In 2005 we went on our first wild turkey hunt together and it has been a tradition we have shared every spring since.

We have many places to hunt but we usually hunt on one property in particular owned by a family friend and we have been successful there every year. We have doubled up on turkeys twice but my dad always makes sure that I have



harvested my turkey before he shoots his. This year on April 19th, 2010 was one of those days. We were in the blind and set up 30 minutes before day break. We heard a few gobbles out of the roost and called to them but none came in. At 9:30 a.m. after seeing only one lone jake, a nice sized tom came in but was at my 20 gauges maximum shooting range. My dad tried talking me into shooting it with

his 12 gauge but I didn't want to. It wasn't interested in coming in any closer and it left.

Around 10a.m. another nice sized tom came in and was really interested in the call but we didn't have decoys out so he couldn't see the hen and was really hesitant about coming much closer than about 40 yards. Luckily a hen came in just as it was about to leave and that got him interested. He came in within 25 yards and I went to shoot him but I couldn't get my gun over far enough to put my



Lexi Strope, age 12, with her Charles Daley 20 gauge shotgun, Opening Day of Turkey Season 2010

bead on his head. I had to move my chair to get my gun farther out the window, so my dad went to move me when the turkey wasn't looking and somehow it saw me, got spooked and ran away.

A little while later it crossed to the other side of the clearing, still spooked though, it stayed to the far side and ignored the call. It quickly passed and was gone for about an hour when it came back...again! Once again it was ignoring the call and it was disappearing in the brush when my dad let out an aggressive call. That made it really mad so it started working its way through the brush to another clearing to our left. I switched chairs and got my gun ready. It made its way all the way through the brush and stuck only his head out from behind a bush and was pecking at the ground when I shot at him and hit him! I accidentally shot part of its beard off with a BB but I kept the hairs and had my dad glue them back on later. It turned out to be a 9½ inch beard! I was really excited!

We put my turkey behind the blind and about an hour later we were on the verge of leaving when my dad spotted two toms in the back of the clearing. He managed to call them in within his shooting range but the biggest one was already half way in the woods so he just shot the smaller one. His turned out to be a 9 ½ inch beard so I beat him by a ¼ of an inch. Though it was a slow day for seeing turkeys it gave me my most exciting hunting story to tell yet. I look forward to next year and possibly deer hunting in the fall.

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A Great Adventure Turke by Art Gonzalez

A turkey, taken in Roscommon Twp, south of Emery Road on Tuesday April 27 around 7:45 PM by Art Gonzalez turned out to be a great adventure. He was tuning up fourteen calls from his bag of calls with chalk and testing them as he put them back in the bag. This took about a half of an hour around seven fifteen, and not thinking that a bird would actually respond. One of the calls was a gobble call which was used to let out a gobble with before putting the bag away.

Art said, a few seconds later, I thought I heard a faint gobble quite a ways away, and not really sure that it was a gobble. I pulled out my old favorite Lohman box call that had worked very well since you could first hunt turkeys in Michigan, Jim remembers that. I let out a very loud call and got good response, still quite a distance away. I had set up three hen decoys in the two-track where I was hunting off the edge of the road in a small pop-up blind.

Not wanting to over call, I waited a half a minute or so and gave out another call and got a gobble back before I had finished my call. I could now see the turkey fanned out and strutting at well over 80 yards away near the pond. My heart sank as I knew from past experience that it is almost impossible to get a bird to move that far toward you to get it into shooting range. I switched to four different plunger small box calls and alternated with the different calls to make it sound as if there were more than one hen around. There was no time to move and set up in a different location closer to the bird for fear that I would be detected. With roosting time getting closer by the minute I kept up the putty- cluck sounds going alternating the four calls. I did not get any gobble responses during this time and did not expect any. I had lost sight of the bird several minutes ago, and was thinking this was it, the bird had left and gone away. My neatly put away calls were scattered all over the ground now in the blind.

One last try, I picked up the trust/old box call and let out a fairly loud call and immediately got a very loud response. With my heart pounding now, I knew the bird had to be within forty yards well within the range of my 1930's made thirty-two inch double barreled twelve gauge full choke shotgun. I had zipped closed the blind window on the west side of the blind earlier as the bright sun and



Art Gonzalez with his Tom

wind were bothering me. That figures, the bird would present himself on that side. I carefully started unzipping the window half way down which provided a narrow slit to slide the barrels through. The setting sun was blinding as I tried to look down the barrels, the bird was fanned out and strutting, I could not see the bead on the gun because of the glare.

It was crunch time, now or never. I pulled the shotgun off to one side of the bird to be able to see the bead out of direct sun light. Swinging the barrels back in to the blinding sun. I put the shining barrels on to the bird as best I could and fired the shot. The old shotgun belched and rocked me back as I suspected it would. With the sun back lighting this event there was a large cloud of feathers floating down to the ground, I had never noticed that in previous hunts, the sun behind the bird pronounced a huge plume cloud of feathers that were slowly carried off by the north wind. With a few short flops it was all over. It was great to have called a bird in from so far away. The bird sported a seven and half inch beard and one and three eighths inch spurs, weighed twenty-four and half pounds.

As I reached for the ten round box of Winchester two and three quarter inch number six shot to put away the unused shell, I noticed the price tag was from Lenny's Sporting Goods. There were five left in the box, enough for five more hunts. I thought of Lenny Kauffman, an avid turkey hunter that would have really enjoyed this hunt with me, maybe he did. Thanks Terry Anderson for letting me hunt.

Labelievable by Steve Marshall TURKEY TURKEY

This spring, I had a once in a lifetime experience while turkey hunting.

I was hunting on Larry Higgins' Redpine Whitetail Ranch up in the Pigeon River country north of Gaylord. I was sitting in my ground blind (30" tall) with my back to a tree. As the blind was in a U shape, I was exposed to the rear except for what cover the tree provided. I had three dekes out in front of me at about 25 yards. It was mid-morning and the roosted birds I had set up on had come off the roost and headed in the wrong direction inspite of my best calling attempts. (Unfortunately, the toms were henned up.)

I was about to call it quits and start some run and gun hunting, when I was surprised by a gobbler on a ridge directly behind me answering my call. In spite of the limited cover to my rear, I was able to turn around behind the tree undetected and get into shooting position as the big gobbler was coming on a line toward my set-up. I had a bead on him and figured twenty yards more and I would have him. As he passed behind a tree, I lost sight of him and he never emerged. After looking for some time, I finally spotted him headed back up the ridge!

I was positive he hadn't spotted me and was puzzling over what went wrong, when I heard some "flapping and flopping" behind me in my dekes. I thought, #8&@%@, another gobbler had come up behind me and attacked my Jake deke while I was preoccupied. But as I turned around, I saw one of my dekes rolling on the ground with its support stake bent over at a 30 degree angle and a big coyote hightailing it away. It was now clear what had spooked my gobbler and cost me a

blown chance at a really nice bird.

In all my years of hunting I have never had a coyote actually come into my decoys and attack them. Yet this one did it at the precise time I was about to close the deal on a big tom. I could hunt 10 lifetimes and never experience anything like it again. Even though I didn't get that bird, I wouldn't change the experience for anything. It provided me with a memory I will never forget!



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A Photo Safari Soaring with An Eagle

By Dick Stockmar, Ph.D. Retired Steve Foutz, Managing Member Of HDR

On February 25 of this year, I found myself enjoying a beautiful drive through central New Mexico toward High Desert Ranch (HDR). I was planning on spending eight days at the ranch with two primary goals. The first goal was to participate in the census of deer in the 3200 acre preserve. The second goal was to take high quality digital pictures of the new lodge, the landscape and of mule deer so that we could build a website for the new hunting operation at the ranch. We would essentially be hunting with a digital camera.

Rising out of the desert grasses of east-central New Mexico, is the mule deer hunting paradise. In a high section of the 70,000 acres of High Desert Ranch is a 3200 acre class A park that is home to a mule deer herd that is second to none. As one leaves the highway, the elevation is 5000 feet and the terrain is rolling grassland that is dotted with cholla cactus. You might see several of the Black Angus cattle that make up the 800 head in the cow/calf operation. The road winds and climbs for over 11 miles to an elevation of over 6200 feet. As the elevation





and his son-in-law Brian Cline, hunt manager, had scheduled a helicopter for an aerial survey and count of the number of deer. The survey was started on Friday the 26th shortly after the McDonald Douglas (MD

50) arrived at the ranch headquarters. I have participated in a lot of whitetail herd counts over the past 30 years, but I had never been in a helicopter and never experienced the counting of mule deer for a census.



I was quite amazed at the ability of the pilot to encircle small gatherings of mule deer and allow us to count them. The ranch habitat is very thick with pines and small oak yet from the air, it was very efficient to count the number of does, fawns, and antlered bucks. The survey was a great success with the count very close to anticipated numbers based on previous surveys and an applied recruitment rate. Additionally, the helicopter ride gave us an opportunity to take aerial photographs of the lodge.

SCI PROT FOR HENTERS



By mid day, I felt very fortunate to have the experience of an aerial survey although my stomach was quite queasy. We had successfully completed the first goal and had the start of a good photo album for the website and brochures. We were now ready to begin hunting with the camera. If you have never hunted deer with a camera, it is extremely challenging. I think it is more challenging than bow hunting for a trophy. In addition to having to get close for a good picture, the lighting has to be acceptable. Trophy deer and many other animals do not often present themselves with good lighting. Trail cams have gathered some good photos; many are not of the high quality desired for a website and brochures. On Friday afternoon and evening and Saturday morning, Steve and I spent many hours afield with some success, however, we didn't capture photos of any of the larger deer we had seen from the air. We had seen several big bucks but the conditions never worked out for a good photo. We had also seen a number of bald and golden eagles that inhabit the ranch but were unable to get within less than 200 yards.

Then on Saturday afternoon, our luck completely changed. As we were driving on a two track toward the south part of the preserve, we spotted a bald eagle at less than 25 yards. Wow! What an awesome bird; it's no wonder that the bald eagle is so revered and an important symbol for the United States. He was perched on a pinion stump and posing for photos. Steve and I were able to get over 80 pictures of this magnificent eagle. One of the photos is on the cover of this publication. Steve was able to stalk up to less than 5 yards and get full frame pictures of just the white head. The encounter lasted for less than 10 minutes but will last a life time in both of our minds. As we left the scene, we couldn't help but wonder why he stayed and allowed us to get so close...perhaps he had a kill close by. At one point, he fluffed up his feathers and wings as if he would attack at any second. However, he must have known that we meant no harm; he soon relaxed www.midmichigansci.org

and continued to pose. Needless to say, Steve and I were very excited about our capture...on a digital camera.

As the evening light continued to diminish, we also were fortunate to catch several respectable bucks with the Canon. It was very exciting to stalk through the heavy cover and get close enough for acceptable pictures.



After the sun set, we returned to the lodge. We were as excited as any hunters could be. We relaxed by the fireplace, and we reminisced about our good fortune. We had shot a Boone and Crockett eagle...with a Canon. On Sunday morning I opened my daily devotional from the Crystal Cathedral, and the title was "Soaring with the Eagles". It was a very spiritual experience; we had experienced so much of what the Creator has offered. "But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." - Isaiah 40:31, NKJV



Quail Hunting

by John Baker

The spring air that brought warm temperatures to Southeast Georgia was bringing quail season to a close. April was approaching and my chances of quail hunting in Georgia were becoming slim before our construction project ended and the consequent trip back to Michigan. I travel around the country working for a demolition company and this traveling allows me to see and experience many different aspects of hunting and fishing. I am always looking for my next adventure.

I have read about the fruits of plantation style hunting in magazines and books for years. The mystique seemed just a bit out of reach for a flat lander from Michigan. The writers and editors of hunting magazines portrayed quail hunting as a gentlemen's sport; made for the privileged and very elite in the hunting world. I am a very experienced wing shooter of water fowl and upland game however I have never experienced a truly southern style quail hunt.

I had spent the winter in Georgia working at Fort Benning, home to the Infantry and Army Rangers. I met some of the nicest people on the army base. It was a wonderful place to work. It was clean and well organized. On more than one occasion I observed random cars pulled over on the side of the road picking up litter. This is not common practice around the United States. The men and women of Fort Benning take pride in their jobs and it showed every day. Since I was in Georgia already for business it seemed silly not to try and have an outdoor adventure of some kind. After many hours of research on where and when to go quail hunting, my search lead me to Piney Creek Plantation in Dawson Georgia. This proved to be a great place to get acquainted with the southern outdoors. After a short phone call we were booked for an afternoon of plantation style hunting. I was not sure what to expect when I arrived at Piney Creek.

When we pulled in the gate to Piney Creek the first thing that caught my eye were several modified pickups in the drive way. The trucks were referred to as



John Baker quail hunting at the Piney Creek Plantation in Dawson, Georgia

"JEEPS" they were pickups with the roof cut off and chairs mounted on the front bumper and dog boxes and stadium seating for the bed. This contraption looked like it was right out of the mail order catalog, Redneck's Inc. It was at that moment that I knew I was on an adventure. We were greeted with a smile and a handshake. We felt welcome right away. The staff seemed very professional and eager to meet our needs

To get started Piney Creek offered a short and simple safety meeting. This is always a great idea when putting hunters of all experience levels into a new environment. Within a few minutes the hunting party was assembled, and we were on our way. Our hunting party consisted of two guides, my father and a buddy from work and a truckload of dogs. It felt like we were on safari in Africa with Hemmingway. All of this trouble and effort just to shoot a few little birds. When we arrived at the field, the guide, James dumped out a couple of dogs and we followed with the truck. The dogs were put on the ground so they could start hunting. The truck followed behind the dogs as they worked the hunting field back and forth with a almost scientific rhythm. We didn't even have to walk. This was beating the hell out of pheasant hunting out west. Within minutes the dogs were acting excited and looked very birdie. Before long the two dogs were all locked up and were on point. Time to bail out of the jeep and load our weapons. Piney Creek offers shotguns for customers who



are unable to bring their own. Since we were in Georgia for work not hunting, we did not have our shotguns with us. We had a choice between 28 or 20 gauges. I was not really sure how I would feel about using an unfamiliar gun; however it worked out very well.

After loading up, the hunt was on. Wow those little bastards are really fast. Both barrels were empty and not even a feather was floating in the air. This was going to take some getting used to. After a couple of what happened looks James said "let's go find some more birds." Within minutes we were on to the next covey which was just down the trail. The dogs were on point. This time the birds flew straight away and it was a done deal. My buddy Greg Never actually got a double. I was impressed. The tall pines and long grass

made excellent cover for the birds. I was right on top of several coveys and for the life of me I could not see where they were. The dog's nose told me where they were but it seemed startling every time they went up in front of me. Shooting lanes proved difficult as well, lead shot does not go through brush and pines. I was not really sure who





Beautiful Southern outdoors

had the advantage. The same scenario played out all afternoon, follow the dogs, get out of the jeep, and shoot the birds. It was nonstop action and never a dull moment. There was lots of time for heckling when someone missed an easy one or when one of us forgot to take our safety off, or when someone pulled up on a bird with an unloaded gun. This happened to me on more than one occasion. It was very easy to get disoriented with all the birds flying, the bird dogs running around at a frantic pace and let's not forget the laughing when someone missed or made an excellent shot. It was nonstop action. Quail hunting seemed to be a very social sport with lots of interaction with your hunting partners. This fast paced hunting I suppose is not for everyone but would be great for first time hunters and veteran hunters alike. Little kids who might lose interest fast would also enjoy the fast pace.

As darkness filled the woods it was almost time to go. When the sun finally set I had time to reflect on my day. I knew that this would not be my last quail hunt. There is a spot in my heart for the outdoors and now I understand why people romanticize the great sport of quail hunting. It made me forget about everything else for a few short hours. I cannot wait to get back down south and give quail hunting another try.



Frankfort's Fish Hunter Charters Experience

My attempt at getting my girlfriend, Bethany, into the hunting and fishing world was successful when she won the bid for the fishing charter at this year's SCI Fund Raiser. The charter was donated by Captain Dave James who owns and operates Fish Hunter Charters based at East Shore Marina in Frankfort, MI. To make the trip more memorable, my sister Ann and her husband Mark joined us. Mark's vast knowledge of fishing, his Canadian roots and the fact that he's just plain funny makes him an asset on any trip.

We drove to Frankfort on a Saturday afternoon. We wanted to spend a couple days taking in the local flavor before our Monday morning charter. There is so much to see and do in the Frankfort area. We started by finding the marina

and locating the boat. We were met by Dave's deck hand Steve. He lifted our brows by telling us of their recent fishing success. The boat is a 31' Tiara with an enclosed fly bridge and cabin. There is plenty of comfortable seating room in the boat. Now that we have our bearings set on where we need to be at 5:00 am, we were off to satisfy the ladies shopping hunger. After a few shops, Mark and I found a comfortable bench to wait out the shopping spree. There are many restaurants in Frankfort, some with outside dining that overlook the waters and marina. After shopping we marinated some ice cubes on the deck at Dinghy's and dined at the Roadhouse Mexican Bar & Grill in Benzonia. We ate great food in a beautiful outside dining area.

Sunday led us to the small town of Empire where we tried our skills at the newer sport of Paddle Boarding on South Bar Lake which is a stone's throw from the shores of Lake Michigan. After some paddling and a relaxing stay on the beach we took a break to watch the World Cup. Mark's



Mark and Ann Koch, Bethany Salinaz and Todd Harter with their catch

team didn't win so we put a smile on his face by taking an hour long tubing trip down the Lower Platte River out of Riverside Canoe Trips in Honor, MI. Later we enjoyed another culinary delight dining at the Manitou Restaurant in Frankfort. It was off to sleep after dinner because 4:30 a.m. comes awful early.

Monday morning we were met on the docks by Captain Dave James and his deck hand Steve. We stepped on the boat at 5:15 and were off to fish at 5:16. Dave guided us to his, "Honey Hole," and Steve was busy setting poles and adjusting the down riggers. When all was set, even though it was 6:00 a.m., there were bright eyes watching the rod tips. The boat really came alive when Mark yelled, "Fish On!" Bethany grabbed the pole, with a few instructions and 15 minutes later she caught her first Atlantic King Salmon. I've seen a lot of first timers handle a fish and Bethany was not the norm. She did a great job. During her fight we had a double and Ann landed her first fish of the day too. The morning continued with good fishing. Ann had another great fight reeling in a big one all the way to the boat when

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suddenly she lost it. There was some disappointment on her face but we all know its called fishing, not catching! Seven fish later, Bethany still had the biggest fish. I think Mark's fishing smarts were at work. He has let us land most of the fish but grabbed the pole on this strike. Sure enough, $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. bigger than Bethany's fish. The excitement of fishing is enough, but the competition to catch the biggest just adds to the fun.

We landed eight total, three kings and five lake trout. While pulling in the rods we had time to talk about more than fishing. Steve is from Mt. Pleasant and spends his summer in Frankfort working on the boat. He has years

of experience fishing these waters with his family who have a vacation home there. He commented that his mother had attended a garden tour hosted by my mother, Mary. He was told the Harter trophy room is a must see. Captain Dave not only charters but guides during the hunting season at the Sanctuary Ranch in Stanwood, MI. My point with this is you can search for charter fishing on line or grab the phone book to find your next adventure, or you can join SCI's Mid Michigan Chapter and network to find the best guides for your hunt or fish of choice. In my opinion, doing the latter will produce some of the best trips of a lifetime. You experience the outdoors with quality guides that are part of the SCI Family. Most

reading this already possess this knowledge and have experienced it for themselves. I ask that you share this story and others like it with your friends and their families.

Captain Dave James already donated fishing charters for the 2011 Fund Raiser. I encourage you to visit with him and bid on his charters to enjoy the same experience we did. If you are looking to fish this season, go to fishhuntercharters.net or call Captain Dave at (586) 419-3480.



Paddle Boarding on South Bar Lake



VETERANS HUNT APPLICATION GUIDED TROPHY WHITETAIL HUNTS

Name:	Phone: (H)				
Address:	(C)				
City, State & ZIP	Male Female Age				
Branch of Service:	Dates of Service:				
Type of Discharge:	Area of Service:				
	ements?				
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •					
Information Contacts: BEN BENZING KEVIN UNGER	Phone: (H) 231-832-5339 (C) 231-580-1006 Phone: (W) 989-773-1711 (C) 989-560-7288				
Mail Application To: BEN BENZING	14910 Craft Rd. Hersey, MI 49639				
Note: Each Application Received Will Be Expeditiously Acknowledged					
Any Additional Comments:					
Applicant Signature	Date				







The Debra Card Courage Award

Please list the name of the applicant and the sponsor.

Applicant name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:	Fax:	
E-Mail address:		
Sponsors name:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Phone:	Fax:	
E-Mail address:		

Safari Club International - Mid Michigan Chapter PO Box 486, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0486

COUNTRIES IN AFRICA

TOCKENNICGLAIBMAZRF CILBUPERNACIRFALART INEBPRBE HCNYC OPSEGE STZRRAU UBAMINERGVAR LLGEA TARAC OBEBGASAD ANOMUGU COU INTNZ EROABTNROANANNAO HIGGEUSZLAR IOCCOROMAUR GUP LGYAWT GSAMPUUMONLACBMAAY ULNEMMEAC IIAAHRWB CTOAKOGLNCRNSOCS

Algeria
Burkina Faso
Central African Republic
Djibouti
Ethiopia
Guinea Bissau
Lesotho
Malawi
Mozambique
Reunion
Seychilles
Sudan
Tunisia
Zimbabwe

Angola
Burundi
Chad
Egypt
Gabon
Guinea
Liberia
Mali
Namibia
Rwanda
Sierra Leone
Swaziland
Uganda

Benin
Cameroon
Congo
Equatorial Guinea
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Senegal
South Africa
Togo
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CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

by Larry Witte

The SCI-Michigan Involvment Committee (SCI-MIC) is comprised of representatives of the 11 Michigan SCI chapters. Pledges provided by Michigan SCI chapters along with matching grants from SCI Foundation enable SCI-MIC to participate with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) to provide funding support for a number of important wildlife activities and research projects.

DNR WILDLIFE PROJECTS

Predator-Prey Project

The purpose of this continuing research project is to assess the role of predation on newborn white-tailed deer fawns to estimate their survival and determine the cause of predation.

During the winter of 2009-2010 wildlife biologists captured and collared 36 deer. With 16 surviving does from the previous year this provides a total of 46 does "on the air". As of early June 33 fawns produced by these does were captured and collared. In addition a number of predators were also captured and collared. This includes 12 bear, 3 bobcat, 7 coyotes and 3 wolves. The collared wolves allow researchers to keep track of pack movement. Information obtained to date appears to confirm that coyotes have significant impact on white-tailed deer and fawns.

Study Partners: SCI-MIC, SCI Foundation, Mississippi State University, Michigan Technological University and DNRE Wildlife Division.

Wolf Population Project

The purpose of this continuing project is to monitor wolf population growth and expansion in order to defend removal of the wolf from the endangered list and provide for state management.

Wolf numbers are down slightly from last year's estimates of 585 wolves in the U.P. DNRE will trap and collar a northern Lower Peninsula wolf to determine location and range of wolves in the Lower Peninsula.

The endangered status of Great Lakes wolves has been an off-again, on-again thing with delisting by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Agency followed by challenges from animal protection groups. Minnesota and Wisconsin, who have large wolf populations, have petitioned for delisting. At the time of this report Michigan has not joined the two other Great Lakes States in petitioning for removal of Michigan wolves from the Federal Endangered list. The only management authority the state has at this time is removal of wolves that pose a threat to humans.

Project Partners: SCI-MIC, Michigan Technological University and DNRE Wildlife Division

Southern Michigan Bear Project

The purpose of this project, which was delayed in 2009, is to characterize the movement and habitat use of bear in Southern Michigan generally south of a line from Muskegon to Bay City. Bear are moving south, some reported in Jackson County and almost down to the Ohio border. This is a regional issue in which the same thing is happening in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

DNRE has been trapping and fitting southern Michigan black bear with global positioning collars during spring and summer of 2010. Two Oceana County bear have been captured and collared and efforts are underway to locate bear in Midland County. Michigan and Wisconsin are collaborating on black bear studies to find out why bear are moving south and if the bear movement is a random event or a response to an increased population.

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

HUNTING FERAL HOGS

Swine running loose may be taken at any time on public land and on private land with the permission of the landowner. A package of bills signed earlier this year by Governor Granholm allows land owners, licensed hunters, individuals with concealed carry permits, animal control officers and law enforcement officers to shoot loose free roaming hogs. Feral hogs are known vectors for diseases that can be transmitted to humans, livestock, and wildlife. In addition feral hogs damage habitat and are a threat to wildlife.

The Island of Luzon in the

by Roger Card

In April of 2009, Rod Merchant and I went on a hunting excursion to the island of Luzon in the Philippines. Although this might sound like just another of our crazy, globe crossing, carefully planned and researched hunting trips - it was not!

This journey was my first attempt of a big game safari where the success of the hunt had nothing to do with the collection of an animal. For thirty years I have worked within the Safari Club International award achievement programs, doggedly pursuing one species after another trying to fill in a slot on an Inner Circle, Diamond Level or a possible Grand Slam. No more. I now have collected more than two hundred and fifty species and SCI has granted me the World Hunting Conservation Award, their highest honor. As long as the Lord gives me sunrises I will continue to hunt. However, I will no longer feel the pressure of needing an animal just to fill the slot in an awards book. From now on my hunts will be chosen by how much fun I think they will be and more important, what trophies would look really cool in the Card Wildlife Education Center at Ferris State University.

I am starting to write this while we prepare for lift off on a Northwest flight that will take me on the fourteen hour ride to Manila, capitol of the Philippines. As I close my eyes the renewed Roger Card, big game hunter, is dreaming of a dwarf buffalo, bearded pig, and maybe a mouse deer.

Arriving in the Philippines, my first impression is, "Wow! It's hot!" We spend a day in town getting acclimated to the twelve hours of time zone change and the temperature. The streets of Manila are absolutely clogged with little motorcycles, each with its own sidecar. They belch blue smoke and zip in and out of the traffic with all the organization of a buffalo stampede. These "tricycles" are often loaded with up to eight people or possibly stacked unbelievably high with huge bags of rice. Another unique vehicle found here is called a Jeepney, which gets its origin in the old W.W. II. jeeps that were left on the island after the war. Stretched to make a kind of open air limo, they are still used today in the public transportation system.



Rod Merchant and Roger Card with his water buffalo, the largest ever taken in the Philippines

One day after arrival we boarded a ferry for the trip to Mindoro, one of the Philippines' largest islands and again my impression of the area is, "My word, it is hot!"

Jay Carlson, our outfitter, has been traveling with us since arrival in Manila, taking care of all our requests -- with the exception of turning down the outside heat.

Once in Mindoro, Jay checks us into a tiny little resort right on the ocean. This will be our base. Each day we travel about an hour and a half up into the mountains to his spike camp.

In my life I have been fortunate to have hunted most of the jungles of the world and I have never seen thicker

vegetation than that growing on the mountain sides in this area. The good news is the jungle is so thick even the animals follow the trails. There is so much food growing on both sides, why bother to fight your way into the thorny, tangled bush if it is not necessary.

Early each morning the trackers go out looking for fresh sign. If they find something they send a runner back to spike camp and off we go. Our first day was not very productive, but it did give us an idea of how the next few days would play out. Above everything else I have to say, "Man, it's hot!!"



Roger crossing on a bamboo bridge over a raging torrent

The next day our native Mangyan trackers, Mott and Juanito, took us on an incredible stalk high into the foothills where eventually they tracked down a beautiful bearded pig and carefully moved me into position, about forty feet above it. Once the hog was shot we took a few pictures and, just as quietly as the trip up, we moved back down the mountain, being very careful not to disturb any animals in the area that we could possibly hunt tomorrow.

The following morning brought relief from the suffocating heat but it came in the form of monsoontype rain. The hunt was quickly called off as it would be impossible to reach the spike camp, let alone climb the mountain. Jay used this day to take care of details, making sure everything was perfect for our next assault. Rod and I spent the next twelve hours reading and continuing our perpetual game of gin.

The next day dawned with a bright, clear sunrise and right on schedule the suffocating heat returned. By 9:00 a.m. we were approaching 100 degrees and the steam gently rose from the wet, soggy earth. The river near the base camp was swollen, at least five times deeper than it had been the previous day.

We parked our Land Rover, knowing we would have to climb the last couple of miles on foot. The natives had

erected a simple little bamboo bridge in order to cross the raging torrent. I hoped the photos I took would turn out as it was insane. If we slipped or the bamboo failed, we wouldn't be found until we washed up miles downstream, at the ocean side. I am definitely too old for this craziness!

We make it across the river and reach the camp, ready to hunt. Everywhere you step is soft and mushy like a sponge or unbelievably muddy, slimy and slippery. Rod and I both fall several times just trying to get into camp. Now the adventure really begins.

Guns and ammo are checked and rechecked. Walking sticks are cut with sharp points to help us from sliding backwards on the trail and we are off. Jay does an excellent job of keeping the guides in check, making sure we stay in contact as a group. (No small feat!!) Today we are going to start tracking a forest dwarf buffalo which has a reputation of being one of the meanest animals on earth.

When things go wrong in this environment it can be disastrous. Last year Jay was charged by a buffalo in this exact area and spent six days in intensive care before he could be airlifted to Florida for an additional two weeks in ICU. Jay's recovery took six months and I am sure it never leaves his mind. As we begin our assent I know it is on mine.

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Once we leave base every step is a slippery, sliding effort to gain an upward and forward motion. The sun is now full and bright; the jungle stifles your ability to breath. I am sucking air and guzzling water each time we stop, like my body cannot get enough of either. Today's hunt is not a fun walk in the jungle.

The Mangyans have been out early and spotted what they think is a good track and take us directly to that part of the mountain. Within an hour the runner has hooked us up with the trackers and now the hunt officially gets underway.

As I stated, the jungle is so thick here a buffalo will not try to penetrate it unless it is pushed. They will follow a trail stepping from side to side to eat but mostly staying in the cleared area. When an old bull feels threatened he will circle backwards and stand concealed, waiting to see what is entering his world. If what he finds is irritating or menacing to him he will try to dispatch it with the force and velocity of a Mack truck. This is what happened to Jay and what I do not want happening to me.

As we follow the bull tracks in the mud I am pumped

full of adrenaline, on absolutely full red alert. All of my senses are operating at 100% of their ability and every step is taken with care. I am straining, trying to see the glint of an eye, a patch of black, or possibly the swish of a tail behind every leaf, tree, or bush -- anything that will give me a split-second of an edge. This is how life is meant to be lived!

After about forty-five minutes of this pursuit the trackers slow down and with hand signals tell us old "Dugga Boy" is near. Twice they actually see him and give me a thumb's up. At this point in the hunt I am wondering if he knows he is being followed and exactly what will he do about it if he does.

My anxiety level gets ratcheted up a little higher, if that is even possible. Finally they give the signal so I step past Jay in the line and as they move me forward on point I can make out the shape of a huge bull standing nearby, looking away. He is quartered just a little and I take what I think is a pretty good shoulder shot from the left rear.

The shot turned out to be a couple inches to the left, also a couple inches high and ended up hitting him in the upper neck. As the crack of the rifle, the bull disappeared





into the jungle and an all new adventure began. We are now hunting a wounded buffalo in the jungles of Mindoro. Today will be a day I will remember for a long time. I hope it has a positive outcome.

As soon as the wounded buffalo disappeared, one of the trackers scooted up a coconut tree to observe its general direction. We were told to stay where we were and they immediately began enacting "Plan B".

The game trails on the mountain side certainly do not run north and south or east and west, yet some travel more up and down while others move laterally.

Using these trails, our Mangyan friends were able to keep tabs on what quadrant the bull was in. Finally they decided his tracks led into a large and extremely dense area. Circling around it several times, they had a long, animated conversation and then gave us the final word. The wounded buffalo tracks went in but did not come out. At this point we would probably have backed off for a couple of hours to let things quiet down but there was a huge rainstorm building on the horizon and we knew our hunting and tracking time was going to be extremely limited. With no good options we took a deep breath, I put a finger on the safety, and then followed the tracks into the dark, hot bush.

The buffalo had barged ahead, tearing a small hole through the entangled vegetation. The opening was only three to four foot high in most places, obviously made by the buffalo, so we just followed him in. I have to say it was completely unnerving, bobbing and weaving, usually off balance, trying to silently get through the briars and brambles. When you know you are extremely close to a wounded buffalo you focus on the job at hand. A thorny vine raking your face is irrelevant, yet it does draw your attention and you have to snap back. I have no idea how long this little cat and mouse game continued, but eventually Juanito pointed straight ahead then stuck his fingers in his ears and hit the ground. It would have been hilarious to see him do this if it had not been so deadly serious. Jay and I were able to dispatch the old bull at about a forty foot range and it was over. So much for my self made promises of no more tough hunts! This was probably my twelfth buffalo in fifty years of big game hunting and without a doubt, the hardest and scariest.

We took our traditional pictures, shared smiles and handshakes with the Mangyans and then returned to camp. The natives would return with the butchering equipment and a skinner later. As we were crossing the last 100 yards to the shelter it started raining and just as we reached cover the skies opened up like it can, only in the Philippines. The Hunting Gods had smiled upon us this day.

Over the next few days Jay's native trackers silently put me into positions to take a real nice, wild feral boar and a huge old Asian water buffalo. The buffalo scored over 108 SCI and is the largest one taken by a hunter in the Philippines! Ever!

As the trip wound down I found myself thinking of how grateful I am for the opportunity to hunt the Philippines with Jay and the Mangyans. They were a very special group and very few hunters have the opportunity to experience this. We made up a lot of jokes in these two weeks about Jay being one of the best outfitters in the Philippines. (He is the only one.) But the truth is, he was one of the best I have ever hunted with anyplace. Rod did his traditional magic tricks, engaging all the guides and staff, so I am sure this was a special time for them as well as us.

I am putting the finishing touches on this story as they close the door on this big old 747, in preparation for the flight home. I know we all have stories about the airlines with bad flights, poor food, delays, and surly help. Today, however, I am nostalgic, thinking of how incredible it is that NWA is about to seal me in an aluminum tube, then transport me through twelve time zones, back to Michigan. Along the way I will probably dream of a peacock bass in Brazil, a Kobe antelope in Uganda or possibly a walrus in the Arctic Circle. Maybe even an 800 pound boar in Russia. Now that would look cool in the Card Wildlife Education Center.



Taste of Home by Beth Altena Reminds Troops We Care



"Verky for the Troops" boxes packed and ready to go

Our men and women fighting in Iraq may be missing the sights and sounds of the holidays, but a local deer processor is making sure they are at least getting a taste of home. Kelly's Deer Processing had volunteers literally lined up as they packaged jerky made with donated buffalo and elk bound for the Company E First Battalion 125th Infantry. The efforts are part of Jerky for the Troops, a project to show support for soldiers by sending care packages of jerky. Colin Kelly, owner of Kelly's and an avid supporter of donating venison and game to local food pantries, said he believes such efforts make life on the lines a little more tolerable.

The 125th infantry receiving the packages recently made news when they lost one of their own to a roadside bomb. Spc. Bradley N. Shilling, 22, of Stanwood, died November 18, 2006 in Baghdad, Iraq, of injuries suffered when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle during combat operations.

Kelly said a devastating loss such as this—the second for the battalion, make it that much more important in recognizing their many sacrifices.

"These guys are already missing the holidays, and right now they are missing deer season," Kelly said. "At least they can have a little taste of home." Kelly said he believes providing support through care packages is a great morale booster to the troops. Although food and prayers cannot keep soldiers out of harm's way in the deadly conditions they face during war, Kelly and his volunteers believe in doing what they can to show support.

Kelly sent the first jerky care packages to Iraq on December 14, 2005, and again on March 9, 2006. Donations of meat, processing and cash to cover costs made it possible for over 400 pounds of jerky to be delivered to local soldiers.

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Sgt. First Class Alan Manville said soldiers have their basic needs provided for by the military while deployed, but appreciate the packages sent from home. "Something like this jerky is really a special treat," he said. To show his support of the project, he rolled up his sleeves along with fellow soldiers and civilian volunteers to weigh, package and seal one-pound jerky goodie bags. Some of those helping know they will be in Iraq next year when the packages come.

Jean Bennett, Commander of the Family Readiness Group, a troop support organization, said the project is definitely appreciated. "The soldiers who did this last year are now deployed in Bagdad," she said.

Kelly said a game ranch donated two bison and an elk for this year's holiday package. The elk, a 450-pound animal, and two bison— one weighing in at 250 pounds, the other at 650 pounds— were processed into 200 pounds of jerky. The rest of the meat— that not suitable for jerky— went to Sportmen Against Hunger, reaching 25 different food pantries in time for the holidays.

Kelly explained that the finished box of venison, at 210 pounds, will cost \$387.50 in shipping alone. He hopes to raise \$2,000 for Jerky for the Troops and send plenty more of the popular snack. The program is an extension of his long involvement with Sportsmen Against Hunger, which puts Michigan's plentiful whitetail into the pantries of those in need.

Kelly's Deer Processing has been involved with Sportsmen Against Hunger since 1991. This year Kelly's topped 100,000 pounds for the program, with meat donated by sportsmen who also pitch in dollars to help cover the costs. Kelly's staff donates time and hard work in processing the venison. This year, Kelly's is offering \$10 off the bill for hunters who donate one hind leg of their deer for the program. Kelly also hopes people will pitch in for costs of sending more jerky to our soldiers.

"It would be nice to get them another package before Christmas, but it takes time to process, to package and to mail," he explained. "We can send more after deer season, and I'm sure they will still be excited to get it."

To find out more about Sportsmen Against Hunger and Jerky for the Troops, call Colin Kelly at 231-796-5414.



Kelly's Deer Processing

introduces

Hunting Buddy Bucks



Kelly's Deer Processing
Colin Kelly
19077 12 Mile Road
Big Rapids, MI 49307
(231) 796-5414
Email: colin@cks-place.com
(888) 796-5414
www.kellysdeerprocessing.com
SCI Mid-Michigan Member

Bobcat Double

by Joanne Witte



Voanne driving the snowmobile after taking Larry out

Larry and I had a wonderful time hunting Bobcat with Dan Kirschner owner of Wild Spirit Guide Service, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula from January 8 to 12, 2010. Instead of going someplace warm during the dead of winter, we went someplace cold! Larry bought the hunts at our 2009 Mid-Michigan 30th Anniversary Hunter's Convention at the Soaring Eagle Casino.

Dan suggested we stay at the Island Resort and Casino outside of Escanaba during our hunt and this turned out to be a very good choice. Our room was relatively inexpensive during the week and every day we got a coupon book with a free drink and \$5.00 each off for meals. Some days we ate for less at the Casino that we did for lunch at a fast food place. We also got \$5.00 each per day to gamble with. I used the \$10.00 each day and came out about \$30.00 ahead.

The first day of our hunt, Fri. Jan. 8, Dan called to say there was too little snow around Escanaba to hunt so we should wait till Sat. We spent the day finding the house Larry lived in while attending High School in Escanaba, checking out some of his favorite places to fish, where his friends lived, and reminiscing about visits to his grandmother who lived there. Larry was born in Iron Mountain; his mother was from the North Side, the Italian Page 24

side, of Iron Mountain and is either related to or knows almost everyone there. He also has relatives in Marquette and Iron River. He is very familiar with the geography of the U.P.

The next day we were up very early and headed for Dickinson and Iron counties where there was plenty of snow, though none of it was very fresh. Dan had scouts out in most of the western UP looking for cat tracks. Nothing developed that day so we headed for the casino about 3:30PM. Dan does not like to put his dogs on a track after about 2:30 PM because it might be dark before they tree or bay a cat.

Dan pulled a trailer with a snowmobile on it in case we needed it to get close to a treed cat. He also had a GPS system for the dogs that showed exactly where they were and radios to contact his helpers. His truck was

very comfortable. I sat in the back seat with the supplies and my ever-present book while Larry sat in the front seat with Dan.

Larry and I had tossed a coin to see who would be the first shooter. Larry won the toss. We decided to alternate days for who would shoot first, but the second day I told Larry if he could make it to the cat, he should take it since his ability to walk is limited.



Larry's bobcat before it was shot





On Sun. Jan. 10, the second day, we left for the same area again very early. This time about mid-morning Daryl, one of Dan's "scouts" called to say he had spotted good cat tracks in a large jackpine clearcut in Western Iron County. We raced there and found a deer carcass that two Bobcats were feeding on. Dan also found several spots where the cats had dragged pieces off to eat. Once Dan and Daryl figured out where the bigger cat was headed they put down their dogs. Dan's dog was Smokey, and Daryl's dog was Lucy. They each had one other dog but said they would not put them down until the experienced dogs were hot on the cat's trail. Daryl took off after the dogs on foot. Dan dropped off the trailer and snowmobile so we could keep relatively close to the dogs unencumbered. Meanwhile we waited in the truck with Dan and the GPS system. Each dog had a particular color and number on the screen and Dan could tell the location and direction of the dog. This was much better than the old antenna system hound hunters used in the past.

This was the nerve-racking part for me! The dogs circled the large clearcut for about an hour and a half. It was full of huge logging machines and huge piles of



Smokey and Larry's dead bobcat



Joanne with her bobcat



Larry with his bobcat





Don and Darrin with Joanne's cat Taken in the swamp right after it was shot

jackpine logs, 20 feet high in some cases. The dogs could not seem to get a clear trail. At one point the three of us in the truck saw an animal cross the logging road we were waiting on. I said, "What's that animal?" We all agreed later that it must have been the cat. The GPS showed the dogs in a different part of the clearcut and Daryl could see the dogs the whole time. They were not close to our location. Several times we all got out of the truck as the dogs ran around and even on top of the huge log piles. We looked in the crevices between the piled logs to see if the cat was hiding there.

Finally, Dan drove the truck around the section to a snowmobile trail along a power line and walked down the power line to see if the cat had crossed. Daryl said he was going to walk the perimeter of the clearcut one last time to see if the cat went out anywhere. Dan and Daryl were determined to figure out where the cat was. Sure enough, Daryl found tracks. Soon after, we got an excited call from Daryl that the dogs were on the trail and Smokey had "opened up" and was in hot pursuit.

We raced back to the clearcut, picked up the trailer and snowmobile, went back to the power line, unloaded the snowmobile, and Larry and Dan roared down the trail. By now the dogs had bayed the cat. Daryl told us later the cat wrapped itself around his leg at one point and attacked the dogs at another point. There was a horrible commotion.

I walked down the trail (about 600 yards) so I could be there when Larry shot the cat. Dan took his .22 pistol and Larry took his 20-guage shotgun. Dan said if the cat was in the proper position Larry could shoot it with the pistol and not make a big mess of the fur. After dropping Larry off within 90 yards of the cat, Dan came back and got me on the snowmobile.

Larry struggled that last 90 yards in hip-deep snow. By now Daryl had the dogs tied off and the cat seemed to be trying to figure out what to do next. Dan handed Larry his pistol; Larry kneeled down in the jack pines and shot the cat handily. Many congratulations followed.

Then we had to get it and us out of there. Daryl walked all the way back to his truck. Dan took Larry out to the snowmobile trail on the snow machine while I stayed with the dogs and the dead cat. Then Dan came back and took me out to the trail. After that I drove Larry on the snowmobile back to the truck. This was my first time driving a snowmobile. What fun! Dan walked out with the bobcat over his shoulder and the two dogs following.

We tagged the bobcat which is no small feat. You must push a screwdriver through the edge of the eye socket into the roof of the mouth and use a cable tie to attach the kill tag. The cat must be taken to a DNR office to be sealed within 72 hours of the close of the season. They take a tooth for aging and seal the cat before it can go to a taxidermist. We are hoping to keep the skulls intact to display as trophies.

There was snow predicted that night and the morning of the next day. Dan called early Mon. morning and said we might as well take the day off. It was snowing but too windy to have good tracking snow. By Tues. the snow should be good for tracking.

Tues, Jan. 12 was my day to shoot! We hunted west of Escanaba. In fact, we started out south of the village of Hyde in the Escanaba State Forest and found 4 sets of tracks. Darrin and John, more scouts, were also out looking for tracks. Dan found a good set heading off into the forest; he called the other two guys and they joined us in the woods. John had dogs, but Darrin didn't. John and Dan put down 4 dogs. Two were very experienced —Smokey, Dan's dog, and Moose, John's dog. The other two dogs were younger and less experienced. Darrin went with the dogs to notify us when they had a cat.

Here I was again in my state of agitation. I told Dan I felt very anxious while we waited for the dogs to get a good trail on the cat. I imagined all the things that could go wrong. He said it's true that lots of things can go wrong but they usually don't. I felt a little better after hearing



John, Darrin, Joanne, Don with Joanne's bobcat

that. These guys were working so hard to make sure we were successful; I hoped I could perform my part properly.

At one point the 4 dogs split into two pairs and headed in different directions. You can see why this part is so nerve racking for me. Eventually they got back together as Dan said they would and headed in one direction. Dan said that sometimes if there are lots of cats in the area the dogs take off after a different cat than the one they started on. After a short time Darrin called and said the dogs would soon have the cat bayed and it was huge.

We were parked on a woods road. After a few minutes, Dan said, "Let's go, Joanne. It's about a half a mile either way to walk in to the dogs." Darrin was with the dogs and the bayed bobcat. The dogs were in a frenzy and he was trying to tie three of them off so they would not kill the cat. Smokey could be counted on to just bay the cat and not kill it. The terrain was terrible. It was a tag alder swamp. My hat kept getting torn off as I was trying to stay upright amidst the roots and tangled branches. Dan told me he needed to get ahead fast because Darrin was having trouble holding the dogs. I should follow his footsteps in the snow and the sound of the dogs. The noise was deafening!

When I finally did get up to the dogs, I was on the wrong side of the cat to get a shot so I tried to circle around to where Dan was standing. As I did so, the cat split. I thought, "Oh, no! I'll never catch it now!" Dan said not to worry, the dogs would catch the cat again. He

released the dogs and they bayed the cat within a few minutes. This time when I got within shooting range I was on the right side of the cat. Dan handed me my 20-gauge shotgun and said to shoot quickly before it broke and ran again. There was brush between the cat and me but I shot and was greatly relieved to see it go down.

We took a few pictures before heading back to the trucks. John had joined us by now with another dog so he was in on the kill. Getting the dogs back to the trucks was quite a feat. In fact, Smokey must has been after another cat because he didn't make it back and Dan had to fetch him. There were actually five dogs at the end. One of Dan's pups had never been in on a kill before so this was good training.

Smokey's ear was cut and he was dripping blood. Dan said he handles most of the dog's medical needs himself. He can sew up cuts and administer IV's. Even at that, he spends about \$3000.00 a year on vet bills. The bobcat scratched Darrin at one point so he needed a little attention too.

My cat, a male, weighed 39 pounds and Larry's cat, a female, weighed 29 pounds.

We had such a great time! Dan is a true professional. He went to great lengths to make our hunt successful and comfortable. His scouts were great too. This kind of a hunt is very much enhanced by having helpers like Daryl, Darrin, and John. Dan has great equipment and extensive knowledge about hunting bears and bobcats with dogs and how to take care of the clients. We want to hunt bear with him next!



Don's and John's trucks



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Dushanbe, Tajikistan (And then the wheels came off)

by Roger Card

This is part three and last of "Nine Countries - Seven Weeks - Sixteen Animals, What was I Thinking?" continued from the two previous issues.

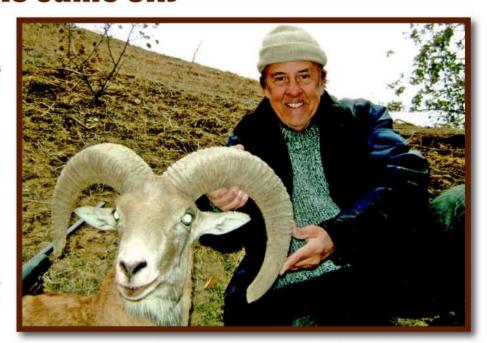
Michael and I left Istanbul at 8:00 p.m. and arrived in Dushanbe at 3 a.m., another two hour time change. By the time the local assistant guide secured our visa and passport permits it was 5 a.m. We went to the local hotel to get a little sleep. It is the middle of November with a temperature around 20 degrees. The hotel was probably the nicest in town yet had absolutely no heat. The rooms are so cold that we had to steel blankets from unoccupied rooms just to keep warm.

When we finally meet our outfitter, Fahrood, it was 3 p.m. He took our passports and papers to secure hunting permits then disappeared for 8 hours without a single word of what would happen next and when.

I should mention that my big duffel bag with all my hunting clothes, medicine, and almost everything I need, never arrived. It would be at least four days before the next plane arrival in Dushanbe and by then I was sure I would be someplace else. I had no idea where but I assumed I would be hunting someplace.

We went shopping at the local flea market and I got just what I would need for the Orial hunt. The permits weren't secured until the next afternoon and then we did not get organized to leave until 11 p.m. that night. This is my second hunt in this country and I remember all to well why it was one of my least favorite countries to visit. By 4:30 a.m. we were in the mountain range named Maxium Gorky. I was dressed up in my new flea market clothing and I was ready to go hunting. Our camp was a little house near town and it was again, an hour and a half drive each morning in the dark to reach the summit of the nearby mountains. Afghanistan was just across the valley from the mountain range we are hunting on and I am not sure why but I kept wanting to glass their side just to see what I could see.

In Dushanbe we met some other hunters that had flown in our same airplane from Istanbul. Two fellows were from Page 28



Australia, James, a pharmacist and John Mayhill. John was my guide in Australia for the hog deer hunt I bagged in 1996 and my quest for the South Pacific Malack Award. We went to dinner together and then James went with me to the local drug store to help me get some medicine as all my pills were in my lost duffel bag. We did okay with some translation and I got some extra for my upset stomach.

Later that evening, I was vomiting and came down with diarrhea. I really didn't feel well. It must have been food poisoning or something. All the next day I was still sick, but still able to travel to camp.

Once we reached the tops the routine was to walk the ridges glassing all the while for a couple of miles then return to the "machine", the name the locals call the truck. We would drive another 10 to 15 minutes then walk and glass another ridge line. This went on until dark.

The next day was the same deal, drive, walk, glass, and return to the machine. Finally about 2 p.m. we spotted some sheep and made a stalk to within 400 yards. The guide said, "Three hundred five meters." I thought he was telling me 305 meters. I took the shot using that range and had a complete miss. Later we determined the range was actually 375 meters. The guide meant a little more that 350 meters, not 306 meters. We looked the rest of the afternoon for him but discovered he had run into an area that the local army occupies and we couldn't enter.





The next day it was more driving, walking, and glassing. These mountains are very steep, maybe 1,000' to 1,500' deep valleys with very few trees. We can see the ridges five miles away on a clear day and view thousands of acres of real estate, but we couldn't find any more Afgan Urial. Michael left for home the following day so now I am alone in Tajikistan without anyone that speaks English.

On the fifth day of hunting, we again left camp at 5:30 a.m., drove until daylight at 7 a.m., then started the walking and glassing. We spotted a group but they were running a mile away. These sheep are the hardest to get a shot at according to Michael because they are always watching and will run for 2 to 3 miles without stopping if they "think" they see something.

We were traveling from one mountain range to another in the truck when we spotted a ram with four females and they hadn't seen us. They were just a little over a mile away. The stalk was planned and we departed down the mountain side across the canyon and up the next mountain to get within range. We crawled the last 20 yards up the ridge line and the rangefinder showed 379 yards. I had a steady rest and held right on his back. At the shot he ran uphill about 25 yards, died, and fell down the mountain side about 100 yards. I was the happiest American in all of Tajikistan at that moment. The horns measured a little over 24", just average, but he was a giant in my mind. Lots of pictures were taken. Too bad Michael had to leave but the guides got into lots of the photos. They were very happy after this hard five day hunt.

The trip back to camp that day was a lot of fun with the guides all reliving the hunt. They were speaking Russian but a victory celebration is the same regardless of language. We skinned out the ram, salted him down and prepared for departure. Packing up didn't take me long as I still hadn't gotten my duffel bag and all I had was my flea market stuff. It's only been seven days!

The little town, Maxim Gorky, we were staying near is right on the Afgan border. This place has not had any improvements since Russia left after their war from 1961 to 1963. The buildings, road, sidewalks, etc. are terrible. They are full of holes, windows are missing; it's a real mess. The electricity is only turned on at 6 a.m. until noon and then at 6 p.m. until 10 p.m. They have no running water, only water wells with hand pumps, no heat other than wood stoves. There is no wood unless you go up into the hills to gather it. Cooking is outside in a wood burning brick stove. Washing is hands and face only as there was no shower of any kind. The toilet is a little outhouse with a board missing in the floor. You need to practice to get lined up when you have to

go or clean up the mess when you miss. Me being sick, I had a hard time keeping everything in the hole. They wash their clothes by hand in a dish pan and hang them on the line in the rain. When it's cold they freeze every night. Needless to say, this is not the kind of place I'm used to. Food is served on the floor in the same room we tried to sleep. It's on 1" thick little mats and a wool blanket.

The men are only allowed to bring in the food dishes. The women can prepare it and bring it to the door but the guys have to set the dishes on the rug on the floor. The food is served family style in large bowls or dishes, then everyone helps themselves by hand. No silverware. We all just dip our fingers into the dishes and put the food into our mouths, then use the same dirty fingers to try another dish. I can't believe that I will ever get over my stomach problems until I get out of this place.

We were not allowed to walk down the streets as the army may spot us and then we have to provide all kinds of documents to prove that we are not terrorists or bad guys. It was a bit like last year in Tajikistan, under "house arrest"!

We headed back to Dushanbe about 6 p.m. Normal things happened. We ran out of gas and the driver didn't have Tajikistan money. I had given all mine away at camp for tips. The little fuel stations won't take dollars or credit cards. The driver got some fuel along the way from a truck driver somehow. The wheel bearing was almost gone and it was making a hell of a noise. The starter wouldn't work so we had to push the car several times to get it started. What a trip!

I finally arrived at the hotel where I had started but no duffel bag yet! The hot shower felt great but there was still no heat in the rooms. Slept until 8 a.m. when they promised to bring me my duffel bag but it didn't arrive until 2 p.m., a total of eight days late! The shave was great, my own clothes, shampoo, having my own things is so much better. True to Tajikistan form, the shower doesn't work right. There are seven light sockets in my room but only two bulbs. The carpet has holes and tears in it. The locks on the door don't work. The elevator only works part time so it's better to use the stairs for the fourth floor climb. The phones don't work. You only get one English channel on the little 15" black and white television, CNN Asia. I'm really starved for news from home.

Out on the streets it's the same thing, old run down buildings, holes in the sidewalks and roads that a car could fall into. The farmers along the way are using very old tractors to work the fields. Everything is mostly done by hand. My one guide told me he had hand picked 100 kilos of cotton in one day. They pick the fruit by hand and even



put up the hay by hand. They rake up the tree leaves to feed their cattle.

Going through most villages and the big cities, they have open ditches along the side of the road for storm water run off, but the cows, donkeys, sheep, and goats all drink from it. The people wash clothes and dishes and food in this running water, too. I can't believe that more people aren't sick. I still don't feel right.

I had my rest for one and a half days in the hotel waiting for word for my final hunt. They are arranging guides and a place to sleep at the next camp. I'm sure it will be like the last one, some little homes on the side of the mountain with no heat, toilet, shower, etc. It looks like rain but I am hoping for dry weather.

I only have three days left to hunt the wild boar, wolf, and Asian bucran deer. I hope they have some bait out.

It didn't happen. We drove about two hours northwest of Dushanbe to Acreams, my Afgan Urial guides home, where I met his family with four girls and two boys. They were pleased to have an American spend a couple of evenings with them. No heat again plus it was the same as the other home I stayed in. Eat on the floor, sleep on the floor, no shoes allowed in the house, no silverware, use hands only to eat with, lots of dry bread. They do make a kind of soup and we get a spoon with it. I used it for eating lots of things. No personal napkins, we get one or two cloth napkins that everyone shares. They were using old newspaper for toilet paper but I was given an actual roll. This paper is so rough, thick, and so coarse I actually got splinters from it. Remember I am now into my second week of diarrhea and would have paid a lot of money for a roll of Charmin. I washed up in the little stream running along side of the house. The goats and cows were all walking around the little door yard. You had to be careful where you stepped! The two littlest girls were about 8 to 10 years old and I tried to get them to come to America for a visit. They were taking English in school so we were able to talk a little. The one girl said she would come to visit but only for one month. Now what do I do?

The hunting didn't turn out as planned. The weather turned bad with lots of rain and snow. I had left my rain suit in Dushanbe to lighten our load. My jacket and coat were getting wet every time we went hunting. The plan is to drive as far up the canyons as the trail goes, then climb up the sides of the draws and glass the other sides and below where we were. No animals of any kind were seen. I think they knew that the weather was turning bad. The ground is a hard clay mixed with rocky areas and when the clay gets

wet from the rain it gets very muddy and slippery. I had a tough time slipping and sliding down the mountain side all the while we hunted this area.

The second morning the sun broke out and I really thought that things would come together but no way! We climbed the highest mountain to get the best vantage point. It took us over two hours to get up there. Then the skies darkened and down came the rain again. It was like a slip and slide all the way off the mountain. My boots had been just great on the seven week hunt in snow and over rocks and dry dirt slides. The mud was packing the lugs on the soles of my boots and they became very heavy. I had to stop and scrape the mud off every once in a while. Then they were very slippery.

On the way up the mountain, the guide passed a tree and had bent a branch back before letting it snap back at me. I hadn't seen it coming so it hit me across the face scratching my right eye. My only good eye! I had lost sight in my left eye years ago. Needless to say, I went down as the pain in my eye was very bad and I couldn't see anything.

After washing the tree bark junk out of my eye with water and clearing it with my handkerchief, my eye started to feel better. Within 15 minutes I could see again. It was blurry but I could still see through the rifle scope so we continued the hunt.

We climbed and glassed all day in the rain and snow seeing nothing. The guide said there had been many boars, wolves, and some bear in this area during September and October but maybe I was too late as it was now the end of November. Darkness found us sliding off the mountain and back to the little house. Good-byes were said to the family and it was off to Dushanbe to repack as my return flight starting for home left at 5:30 a.m.

I was not terribly surprised the guys in Tajikistan were not able to pull off a mixed bag hunt as this group seems to be challenged by the simplest of details even on a single safari. I boarded the plane exhausted and beat up beyond words. I was disappointed to have not reached my goal yet I felt confident I had given 110% every day. On this journey I have climbed higher, walked farther, and endured longer than I really thought possible. The final tally might be a couple animals short but it was not for lack of a valiant effort. As I closed my eyes and drifted off I was already dreaming of how I could probably talk Rod into a buffalo hunt in the Philippines to get this World Conservation Award completed. The guy sitting next to me was probably thinking, "my word this guy looks like crap -- I wonder why he is smiling!!"

SCI PRET FOR HANTERS











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"Paint your positions in bold colors, not pale pastels."

Ronald Reagan

Back to New Zealand



Mary and Bruce Rowe, our guide, with her rusa

When we hunted New Zealand in 2007 the rusa and sambar were in the velvet so we went back at a different time of the year to be able to hunt them. We had such a great time at Shane Quinn's Alpine Adventures with Bruce Rowe as our guide that we were very anxious to return. While in Reno at the SCI convention we are always invited to Shane's cocktail reception and have encouraged several people to book a hunt in New Zealand and here we go again.

On June 20, 2009, after 26 hours of travel from Grand Rapids to LA, to Auckland, and on to Palmerston North, we were picked up by Shane Quinn and driven to his ranch. After settling in we were welcomed by all of the familiar staff and a new cook, Joanne Arnott, who was Bruce's girlfriend and by now, his wife. Bruce drove us around on familiar trails to check out the animals.

We were out early the next morning which was very frosty. We checked out many areas looking for rusa which is an Indonesian animal, sambar which is from India, and sika which is Japanese and Manchurian. All of the New Zealand animals are introduced and many have done extremely well.

The next day we searched again for trophy animals and saw 18 red stag in a group that were all "wall hangers". Don added a Gold Medal red stag to our list.

On our third day of hunting we scoped a beautiful red stag that Bruce thought was Gold Medal and we drove closer down the mountain and then stalked quite a ways through the Manaka shrubs which is where tea tree oil is from. The stags were across the valley hidden by the brush. Don set up to shoot and as the stags crossed



through an opening he sorted out the big one and shot. I was behind him talking pictures like mad and fortunately got one of the stag hunched just as he was shot but before he went down. What a great red stag with beams measuring 31 and 32 inches. He was at least 9 years old and DRT, "Dead Right There".

Later that afternoon we found a huge rusa trailing two does. We were on top of the mountain on the edge of the 5,000 acre ranch. The high tines of the rusa showed white above the brush as he chased first one doe and then the other. I tried to follow his antlers keeping aim at where his body should be and finally he came into an opening. Bang! and down he went. I had connected with my first animal.

The next morning we hunted around the ranch but we decided to drive 3 1/2 hours north to a new area Shane had just purchased. On the way on very curvy roads we saw sheep, cattle, ducks, geese, pheasants, rabbits, and peacocks. We were surprised to learn that the peacocks are hunted.

That evening we scouted Shane's property for rusa and sambar and saw 40 in the first area and 75 in the next. Hunting was going to be great here. We checked in to the Silver Fern Motel for the night.

The next morning we were out early. It was warmer here. The property had an area with mature pines that were grassy beneath. There was a pond with huge fern "trees" around it and very different vegetation from the ranch. Avocados grew thick in trees nearby but wouldn't be ripe until September. Kiwis grew on supported vines like grapes. Black and white magpies flew overhead. Even turkeys walked across some of the fields and eventually roosted on nearby fence posts.

After a little scouting it was decided we would sit on a ridge of an open field while the guides drove the mature pine area hoping for a sambar to run our way. They drove and we waited. Soon one of the guides emerged and told us they had spotted a huge sambar resting in a small open area and we should sneak in for a better shot than a shot at him running across the field. He was only 1/2 miles away. They lied. He was much further up and down hills through some thick underbrush. Finally we spotted him still laying down looking away from us with a little sunshine on him peaking through the thick canopy. I was very sweaty and



Don with his red stag

out of breath but set up to shoot. He never got up. I shot him in the spine and eventually again in the heart to finish him off. He was old with many scars, probably resting after a recent battle.

We scouted all afternoon for more animals and enjoyed watching many. They had beautiful fallow deer, one being an albino, all works in progress. In a couple of years they will be great trophies. Lots of rusa and sambar but the old males come out last to feed. Finally near dusk, a large rusa came out to feed. Don took a 210 yard shot. He was DRT. He had fed under some large pines and finally wandered out to feed with the hinds and their young. He still had a little velvet hanging from his antlers. His main beams measured 29" and 31 1/8".



Inside the Alpine Hunting Lodge





Scenery in the area

Rain began about 3:30 a.m. and it rained all day. We hunted all morning and nothing was moving so they decided to drive the pines again as that is where all of the huge rusa tend to hide. One ran right through the "deer proof" fence and was off the property. Don got off a shot at him and he hid in the brush for quite awhile before running back to the pines where he lived. Don hit him again before he reached the fence. Down he went. He had been hit both times. He lost quite a bit of hair when he crashed through the fence breaking several boards in the process. Since it was still raining we decided to return to the lodge.

The next morning was a bright, frosty day with turkeys gobbling, ducks quacking, sikas squealing, and rusa roaring. We checked out lots of animals moving in the sunshine. We spotted a boar but he had a broken tusk or he would have been harvested. We spotted the huge sika Bruce wanted me to shoot but as we approached a hind whistled several times warning him and over the ridge he went. Those sika sound just like an air horn and really make you jump.

We did see a nice sambar and after driving around the ridge and stalking him for awhile, Don got off a shot and he was DRT.

A cold rain came the next day and became worse as the day progressed. We sat up high glassing for the sika. We saw many but not the right one. Bruce said many have hunted him but he is elusive. We got quite wet and cold and started to go back to the lodge to warm up but glassed back as we were nearing the lodge and Bruce spotted him. We snuck up a trail and up the side where he was with several others. I could see one buck to the left of a Manaka bush but he was right behind the bush. My scope was wet with rain but through the drops I could see his antlers above the brush. Bruce said he should come out on the right side and to be ready. At about 100 yards out he whirled and turned up into the brush. I got off a lucky shot with just seconds of exposure before he would have disappeared. He turned, dropped, and rolled downhill a little ways. Another DRT, just what we wanted. What a beauty! When your PH is excited you know you have a trophy. His brow tines were over 12" and his main beams were over 31". He had a little red on his back and neck, the sign on an old buck. Bruce called Chris and he came and helped haul him out. Sikas are used for camp meat because they are so good. We will enjoy him later. Most of the other meat is sold and available in the grocery stores.

The next day was rainy and we looked for a boar but could only find the one with a broken tusk.





Mary with her huge Sika

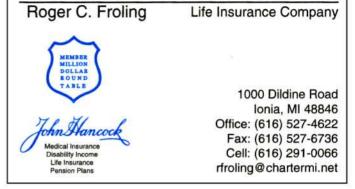
Mary and Shane Quinn with her sambar

Rain again the next day and we packed to go home. What a wonderful trip!

Just another paragraph about Joanne's wonderful cooking. Snacks were incredible with brown rye bread with cream cheese and smoked salmon, mussels with chutney, garlic and Italian dressing, a huge lobster caught by Shane off the coast while diving, beautifully presented. Main courses of lamb shanks, roasted leg of lamb, and lamb sandwiches, sika venison, Shepherd's pie with potatoes and parmesan cheese on top, and minted peas, cauliflower with cheese sauce and toasted slivered almonds, Yorkshire pudding which were soft rolls baked in cupcake pans, boiled plum pudding with hard sauce just like my grandmother used to make for Christmas, and vine ripened yellow kiwi were available every morning. These were only a few I remembered to write down. Ann Spence made our cocktails every night and helped serve the "nibbles", what they called our snacks.





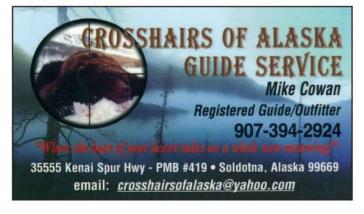














Laugh a little each day. It's better than chicken soup -- at least that is what the chickens say.











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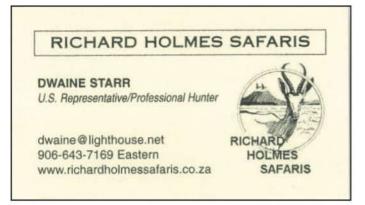
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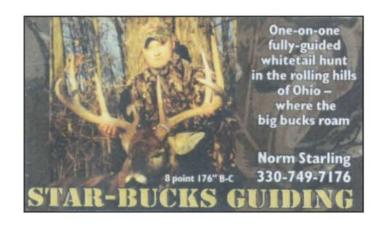
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"When you subsidize poverty and failure, you get more of both." -James Dale Davidson, National Taxpayers Union











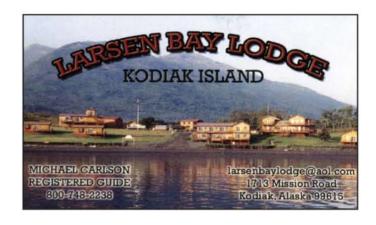






Only accurate rifles are interesting.

















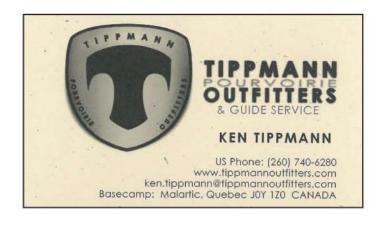
The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.



BEAR - BOBCATS - ARCHERY WHITETAIL

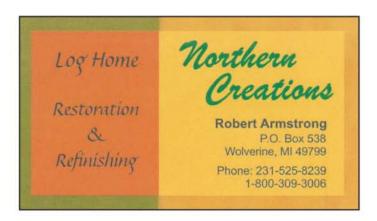
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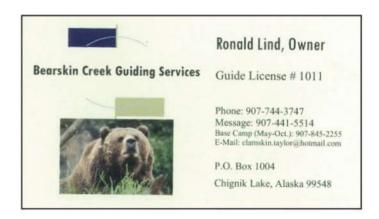
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When you get to your wit's end you'll find God lives there.