

FRONT SIGHT



SCI
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

April - June 2013, Issue 22



Cover Photo taken by M. Harter
Michigan Morel Mushrooms
Taken very close to home, but I
can't tell you where!

**CHAPTER MAGAZINE AWARD - SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL
THIRD YEAR IN A ROW**



JOHAN PIETERSE SAFARIS



SOUTH AFRICA
ZIMBABWE
MOZAMBIQUE



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Members of Mid-Michigan SCI or Isabella County Sportsman's Club may use the shooting range located at 2872 W. Millbrook Road just east of Winn Road. The lock combination is 4560 and changes yearly on February 15th. Please carry membership identification on you when you visit the range.



Standing Committees

Chairmen are listed first

Chapter Trophy Awards - Joanne Witte, Larry Witte, Tim Becker, Roger Card, Brad Eldred, Roger Froling, Don Harter, Larry Higgins, Scott Holmes, Mark Marlette, Joe Mulders, Bill Shelt, Art Street.

Conservation/Govt. Affairs - Larry Witte, Joe Mulders, Tim Schafer

Dispute Resolution - Don Harter, Tim Hauck, Kevin Unger

Matching Grants - Jon Ziemann

Front Sight Publication - Mary Harter

Education - Randy Raymond

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Nominating - Don Harter, Kevin Unger, Joe Mulders

Programs - Roger Froling

Special Events - Kevin Unger, Tim Schafer, Scott Holmes, Jim Walker, Randy Raymond, Mike Strobe

Annual Awards Banquet/Fundraiser - Joe Mulders, Don Harter, Mary Harter, Bill Shelt, Tim Schafer, Mike Strobe, Kevin Unger, Joanne Witte, Larry Witte

Outfitter Donations - Roger Froling, Mike Strobe

Shooting Sports - Tim Schafer, Kevin Unger

Humanitarian Services -

Handicapped Youth Hunt - Randy Raymond, Bill Shelt

Sportsmen Against Hunger - Mike Strobe

Veteran's Hunt - Bill Shelt, Randy Raymond

Public Relations - Jim Walker

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.

Please support our sponsors! Call or write them for catalogs and information on their products and services. Make sure you tell them you saw their information in **The Front Sight**.

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Roger Froling, left, and Tim Hauck, right, working on our fundraiser hunts in Reno meeting with Sam Fejes, Tsii River Lodge and C. J. McElroy Award Winner.

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Meeting Type	Time	Location
April 1, 2013	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
May 6, 2013	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
August 5, 2013	Board/Budget	4:30 p.m.	Harter's
Sun., Sept. 8, 2013	Membership Trap Shoot	1:00 p.m.	Camp Misery
October 7, 2013	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
December 2, 2013	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn

Reservations required. Please call and leave a message at 989-560-7288

Your President - Kevin Unger

We've just finished our 34th annual fundraiser at the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort. What a great turnout. We had over 500 people for dinner and over 40 outfitters from all around the world. We raffled off some of the nicest guns made including an AR15 and a Browning White Gold Medallion. I would like to give a special thank you to all of our board members. This is a very big endeavor to take on and we could not do it without the help of our board. At this point we don't have our final numbers but it looks like we had a very successful fundraiser.

I will be attending a meeting in Lansing on March 12th with the DNR and other chapter presidents from around the state where we will be discussing the topic of wolves being put back on the endangered species list. There has been a big push from anti hunters on this topic. The Michigan DNR has determined that there needs to be a hunting season for wolves to control the numbers. I will report back to the chapter on my findings at the meeting regarding the wolf initiative.

Also please keep in mind that we are now signing up kids age 9 - 15 for hunters safety. This is a week long camp at MUCC where kids will obtain their hunters safety certificate, shoot guns and learn about conservation. This is a first come first serve; so don't hesitate to call me to sign them up. We generally send about 15 kids each year.

Also we purchased a Laser Shot system which is a hunting simulator. We will have it at our next board membership meeting. With this system you can get training with rifles, shotguns and handguns. Make sure you don't miss that meeting, it should be exciting. Invites will be sent to all members before our next meeting.



Kevin Unger with Best Chapter Website Award and Mary Harter with the Best Chapter Publication Award received in Reno.

Editor's Message

Just finished our Chapter Fundraiser and had a great time seeing all of our hunting friends again. It is so much fun talking hunting with people who understand what it is all about. Check out the Fundraiser video at www.midmichigansci.org.

As you can see from the pictures on following pages, we had a great time at Big Buck Night and also at the SCI Show in Reno. Many notable guests were in Reno including Former Gov. Mike Huckabee, General Chuck Yeager, Larry and Brenda Potterfield, Wayne LaPierre, Ricky Schroder, Jim Shockey, Craig Boddington, Mike Rogers, Jr. and Sr., and The Honorable Dick and Liz Cheney. Contributions made were \$14.8 million for Hunter Advocacy and Wildlife Conservation, more than \$1.2 million for SCI Foundation's Scientific Lion Conservation Initiative, \$235,600 for SCI-PAC, and nearly \$100,000 for the Hunter Defense Fund. The International Show will be in Las Vegas next year from February 5-8, 2014 at the Mandalay Bay Resort and

Casino.

I would like to mention that State Senator Judy Emmons and State Representative Kevin Cotter both scored a perfect voting record for 2012. They both vote in favor of hunting issues.

Mary J. Harter

Mid - Michigan Chapter Safari Club International • www.midmichigansci.org APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I hereby apply for membership _____
FIRST MIDDLE LAST

Fill out both mailing addresses as well as email. Please indicate by placing a X in the appropriate box where you would like to receive club correspondence.

If at all possible we would like to utilize your email address for this purpose. ☐

☐ HOME

☐ BUSINESS

EMAIL ADDRESS

STREET _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

TELEPHONE _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)

18 +

1 Year

\$ 65 National Dues

\$ 20 Local Dues

= \$ 85

3 Years

\$ 150 National Dues

\$ 60 Local Dues

= \$ 210

Life

\$1500 National Dues

\$300 Local Dues

= \$ 1,800

Over 60

\$1250 National Dues

\$200 Local Dues

= \$ 1,550

Check/Cash attached \$ _____

Bill my credit card: VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)

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Mid-Michigan SCI

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Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: WHERE THE RED FERN GROWS
Author: Wilson Rawls
Publisher: Bantam Book

Copyright: 1961
List Price: \$6.99



I recently read an article in the Front Sight magazine written by Mary Harter about the dogs she had growing up. While reading this article I couldn't help but reminisce, which I'm sure many of you did as well, about the dogs I had growing up. The article also got me thinking about the books I've read over the years about dogs and hunting. One book in particular stood out in my mind, *Where the Red Fern Grows*.

My first encounter with this book was when I was in grade school. This was one of the books my teacher read to our class. I recall reading it again as I entered high school, but that was the last I thought of the story until now. I found a copy of the book, which wasn't hard because it has been reprinted many times, and sat down to read. I was unable to put it down!

This story takes place in the Ozarks, in a time before many people had vehicles, with a boy named Billy, and his relentless drive to have coon dogs. The journey takes us through the long and difficult process of raising the money necessary to purchase the dogs. Through Rawls writings we also experience the joy of trapping the first raccoon to train the dogs with, and the excitement of hunting the hills at night with only an axe and a lantern. Along the way there are hunting competitions, each with heart pumping endings.

The hunting aspect and the great use of language made this a great read, but that wasn't what I noticed most while reading through it now that I'm older and "wiser". I noticed how work ethic and devotion take center stage and how as this boy and his family prayed, God worked wonders with them. I look forward to the day when my boys get a little older so I can read this book to them, as my teacher did for me all those years ago, and I hope it has the same lasting impression on them as it did on me.

This book gets 10 out of 10 bullseyes, because it is a MUST read!!!!



Shooting Sports Donation Thank You!



Fudd Duster's Shotgun
Sporting Team

Sierra Club International
c/o Scott Holms
1105 North Mission Street
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

The Fudd Dusters Shotgun Sporting Team would like to say "Thank You" for the support you have shown to our club. Your generous gift of \$500.00 allowed us to buy much needed reloading supplies. Enclosed you will find the receipt showing what we purchased. Thank you again.

The Fudd Dusters Shotgun Sporting Team

Thank-you Tim and all of SCI
for helping us this year

From all of us at SCTP

To all of you at SCI

Thank-You Tim W. Ambrose

DEAR TIM:

10/31/12

ENCLOSED ARE THE RECEIPTS FROM JAY'S FOR THE PURCHASE OF 2A AMMO AND A MINI GENESIS BOW TO BE USED IN OUR JUNIOR PROGRAMS. YOU WILL NOTE THAT THE TOTAL OF THE RECEIPTS EXCEEDS THE AMOUNT OF THE SCI GRANT. THE ADDITIONAL AMOUNT WAS PAID FOR BY OUR CLUB.

THESE PURCHASES ALONG WITH EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES OBTAINED THRU PREVIOUS SCI GRANTS ALLOWED OUR CLUB TO INVOLVE A NUMBER OF YOUTHS IN THE SHOOTING SPORTS. THIS PAST YEAR OUR CLUB GRADUATED 39 HUNTER EDUCATION STUDENTS. AN ADDITIONAL 11 STUDENTS GRADUATED THRU THE NEW DNR ONLINE HUNTER EDUCATION PROGRAM AFTER PARTICIPATING IN OUR ONE DAY FIELD PROGRAM. OUR JUNIOR ARCHERY PROGRAM NOW HAS 38 ACTIVE SHOOTERS. THE JUNIOR RIFLE PROGRAM HAS 11 ACTIVE SHOOTERS. OUR CLUB IS VERY PROUD

OF OUR YOUTH ACTIVITIES, BUT WE COULD NOT INVOLVE SO MANY IF WE DID NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF SCI.

**YOU REALLY
MADE MY DAY!**



THANK YOU ALL!

Tom Oakley

HOUGHTON LAKE SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

Michigan United Conservation Camps (MUCC) Students



Certificates of
Appreciation from
our Youth Camps



Dear Mid-Michigan Set,
This week was a blast! Trapping was so awesome. We learned so many interesting facts. We got to keep two traps, gloves, underwear, and shoes. We also learned about hunter's set up. We learned the different types of traps and the berries. My favorite camp songs were the hippopotamus song when Tyler sings it. Also I liked the penguin song. Camp was so fun.

Sincerely,
Jenna Koch

The food was good and I like it. My experience at camp was fun. Some can trap some that are 17 bars in a lot of traps. I played too many Sully. I went to boys.

Please tell us what your camp experience was like.

As my name is Zach, I liked wolf lake, it was not as rowd as lake sturgeon! I also liked the campsite and fishing.

Please tell us what your camp experience was like.

I like MUSE because the staff is nice and it's fun. What I like
so far is Worlabe, fishing, and canoeing. I also like my book
director and Program director. One of my favorite things is free
Recreation time.

Please tell us about your camp experience.

This week I did lots of fishing, camping and being out side air. I am not alot of people and the computer are aswame. I Yeedy enjoye it and I'd like to go again.

Don't tell us about your camp experience

[illegible]

Thank you
-Polly

Big Buck Night

Winners! January 12, 2013

Thanks to Jeff Theisen, R.J. Meyer of the Trophy Room, and The Wildlife Gallery for donating shoulder mounts to our special hunters.

Jeremy Ramirez, Veteran Hunter of the Year with his 11 pointer. Story on page 35.



Youth

13 point buck
taken by our
Handicapped
Youth Hunter,
Bailey Dole, who
also won the
shotgun raffle!
See page 37.



Attendees

Workers



Safari Club International Reno Convention

January 23-26, 2013



SCI
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Mid-Michigan Sci Chapter past president Lance Norris with wife, Inja, and friend



Felix the lion helping encourage donations for the Lion conservation in Africa. Over \$1,000,000 was raised. Remember, in Africa what pays, stays.



Saturday Night Keynote Speakers The Honorable Dick and Liz Chaney



Wednesday Night Entertainer Travis Tritt



Lisa and Mike Carlson and their son - Larsen Bay Lodge, Kodiak Island, AK



Friday Night Entertainer Montgomery Gentry



Mike Huckabee, Former Governor of Arkansas, Wednesday Night Special Keynote Speaker



Dr. Terry Braden, North American Sub-Chair and Turkey Sub-Chair



PH Ivan Carter with Mary and Don Harter



Stony (President of Michigan Chapter) and Alma Bing. They will be celebrating the Chapter's 40th year this year.



SCIF Director of Education Sue Hankner and Todd Roggenkamp



Brad Eldred and Rob from The Wildlife Gallery



Outstanding Member of the Year, Dale Brueder, Lake Superior Chapter President with his wife, Bridgette



The Bollmans at their Sanctuary booth. Pat was Mid-Michigan's first president and a past president of SCI



A Chapter donor, Juan Toquero from Spain



Executive Vice President, WHA Division Vice Chair, and Asia Sub-Chair Larry and Cindy Higgins with Don Harter.



Jim and Eva Shockey with Don Harter



Cindy and Jeff Chadd, Majestic Mountain Outfitters, Montana



Past Presidents of SCI, Dennis Anderson and Ralph Cunningham



Eye of the Tiger entertainer, Artie Dean, for the Sables Luncheon



Lisa and Laura from D & L Custom House Broker from near Chicago



Nikki and Frank Sadlon from Idaho with Don Harter

Larry Potterfield of Midway USA, giving the sponsors address and "Thank you for your business"



Mike from Alaska, one of the 20 male team of volunteers serving at the Eye of the Tiger Sables Luncheon



Some of the many trophies awarded on Thursday night.



Danae and Dr. Dave Petrella

My First Deer

by J.R. Clock (Age 10)

My Grandpa took me deer hunting at Hidden Horns Game Ranch on Nov. 3, 2012. I woke up early at 5:00AM and got dressed for hunting. At 6:00AM we left for the ranch. It took us 30 minutes to get there. When we got there we ate breakfast. It was good. I had a cinnamon and sugar donut, and a Jimmy Dean breakfast muffin sandwich. My Grandpa's friend was there and the landowner.

At 7:30AM we left for the blind. It was small, the size of a large tool shed. There were two chairs and a couple of windows. I had to use two cushions to be high enough to shoot.

To the right of us there was a field. To the left there was some woods. We were half way in between both. At about 8:00 it was light enough to shoot. We saw two elk and a lot of rams. Eventually we started seeing some fallow deer. A little bit later we saw a white tailed doe being chased by a buck. There was a large group of fallow does with some white tailed bucks.

At about 9:20 we saw a white tailed doe and I put the .223 rifle out the window. It wasn't very big but it was nicely sized. It was facing the blind. It took a while but eventually I got a good shot. At 9:26 I squeezed the trigger. It went to exactly the right place. It was on the right shoulder through the heart and lungs.

At first I didn't know if it was alive or dead because I couldn't see. I knew it was dead when I saw it run into a tree. A minute later the owner came down because he had heard a shot. At first he thought it was my Grandpa's friend that had shot. He came down on a 4-wheeler with a trailer on the back. First my Grandpa and the owner took some pictures of me and my deer. After that he loaded it in the trailer and brought it back to clean it.

After that my Grandpa and I got all our stuff and we walked back to the camp. After we got home we took it to the meat processor. I am having sausage made.

Now I am looking forward to hunting on Thanksgiving Day with my Grandpa. I didn't think I would ever be able to shoot a deer. I am very proud.

Note from Grandpa Larry Witte:

As you will remember from our story in the January to March Front Sight magazine, in Aug, 2012, we took J.R. to hunter's safety training at Jay's in Clare. This was the outcome of his training.

I shot a big deer at Hidden Horn's Game Ranch on Sept. 26, 2012. When I told Brent Fisk, the owner, about J.R. wanting to hunt he offered to let me bring him to his ranch to shoot a doe. Since J.R. lives near Ann Arbor it took some careful planning to get him to our house and then home over one weekend.

J.R. used my single shot New England Firearms .223 with 60 grain Nosler Partition bullets. He did a great job of getting the deer in his sight, and squeezing the trigger. There were many deer so he had to wait for a clear shot and then wait for the deer to present a good target.

At the conclusion of our hunt Brent presented J.R. with a certificate of achievement stating that J.R. Clock has completed a "Successful Youth Hunt" at Hidden Horns Game Ranch. I want to thank Brent—a contributor to our annual Hunter's Convention—for making this hunt possible.

J.R. and I spent a day and a half hunting together over Thanksgiving on our property near Chippewa Lake in his quest for a first buck. While we were not successful, his enthusiasm was not diminished. We are looking forward to hunting together during the Youth Hunt in September 2013.

What a thrill this was to share such a great first outdoor experience with my grandchild. We now have a new hunter in the family! 🦌



J.R. with his first deer

CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

By Larry Witte

CONTINUING DNR-SCI WILDLIFE PROJECTS

The tentative SCI-Michigan Involvement Committee (MIC) budget for cooperative studies with DNR and for the Graduate Grant Program is approximately \$40,000.00 for 2013. SCI-MIC participation allows DNR to leverage matching funds from other sources. Members of SCI-MIC meet four times a year with DNR Wildlife Division to discuss direction and progress of joint studies. These studies for 2013 include:

Predator-Prey Project

This project assesses the impact of predators on whitetail deer in the medium snowfall area of the U.P.

Gray Wolf Population Project

Wolves are captured and radio collared to determine distribution, movement, and pack and territory size. This project is necessary for sound scientific management of the wolf in Michigan.

Southern Michigan Black Bear Project

Black bears south of a line from Muskegon to Bay City are captured and equipped with GPS collars with conventional VHF beacons to determine movement, habitat use, denning sites, and denning dates.

Diving Duck Project

This project investigates factors that contribute to the change in distribution of diving ducks in Lake St. Clair, the Detroit River and western Lake Erie during spring and fall migration.

Snowshoe Hare Distribution and Abundance Project

This project assesses the impact of changing land use and forest management practices, predator abundance and distribution, and climate patterns on hare abundance and distribution.

Graduate Grant Program

Grants are provided for promising students pursuing graduate level degrees in wildlife management and related natural resources.

OTHER CONSERVATION ISSUES

SCI Keeping Hunters In the Field

SCI is the only pro-hunting organization with offices in Washington DC where it works with Congress and Congressional staff to combat threats to hunting in North America.

Wolf Hunting and a Referendum on Scientific Wildlife Management

Legislation signed into law, Act 520 of 2012, at the end of 2012 designated the wolf as a game animal in Michigan. In early January 2013 the DNR outlined plans for managing wolves including population studies, defining human-wolf conflict areas, and a wolf hunting season. The DNR is proceeding carefully considering pack locations and agricultural predation as well as Wisconsin's and Minnesota's experience with their first hunts in 2012.

Anti-hunting and animal rights organizations led by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) are promoting a referendum petition drive to place Act 520 of 2012, the wolf law, on the ballot for 2014. The petition drive uses emotional scare tactics arguing the law allows the slaughter of wolves while ignoring the role of sound scientific wildlife management principles in managing wolves and wolf-human conflicts.



Larry Witte with his Moose from Newfoundland

Win Some!

The Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASP-CA) paid \$9.3 million to Ringling Brothers Circus to settle claims of racketeering and litigation abuse regarding circus elephants. Litigation continues against the remaining defendants, including the HSUS.

2012 Deer Season Safest on Record

Three firearms related injuries were reported with no fatalities in the 2012 firearm deer season. DNR officials compare these figures for the 600,000 to 700,000 deer hunters to the 16 fatalities reported in 2012 for 200,000 snowmobilers. DNR credits the 3000 strong core group of dedicated volunteers who conduct over 2500 hunter education classes in Michigan each year. Michigan is one of the leading states in the number of people going through hunter education. Upwards of 34,000 men, women, and children graduate from these classes each year.

2013 Michigan Hunting Licenses

Spring Turkey: If you forgot to apply for your license this year by the February due date, all is not lost. You may purchase a license for the Hunt 234 (Guaranteed Hunt Period) over the counter until May 1.

Michigan Elk: The application period is May 1 to June 1.

Black Bear: The application period is May 1 to June 1. Consider applying for a preference point each year you do not plan to hunt bear. You will have a better chance of drawing a permit in the future.

Antlerless Deer: The application period is July 15 to August 15 for public land and for private land in western and north central counties above a line from Muskegon to Bay City. Application may also be required in some counties in the U.P. See the 2013 Michigan Antlerless hunting digest for further information.

Fall Turkey: The application period is July 15 to August 15.

Hunting New Zealand and Australia

by Keith Davis

As any of my family or friends can tell you, I have a passion for hunting, whether it is Whitetails or Wildebeest. One of my favorite hunts was my trip with my wife, Julie, to New Zealand with the Mt. Cook Trophy Hunting Outfitter and then on to Australia with the Leithen Valley Trophy Hunts, June 2011. My goal was hunting for many different animals including Red Stag, Himalayan Tahr, Chamois, Arapawa Sheep, Wallaby, Water Buffalo, Dingo, and Wild Boar. I met my goal!

We arrived in New Zealand June 4th, very tired from our trip, but anxious for the days ahead.

June 5th we sighted in our guns with a little problem. On all previous hunts I always carried my own muzzleloader. On this hunt I decided to only pack my bow and use the Outfitters Ultimate Muzzleloader. While sighting in their gun we discovered that the previous client had fallen with it and the scope was bent. My only option was to use a different muzzleloader that had a short stock which didn't fit me.

You will see on my hunt I had some issues that ordinarily would not have happened, but with gun in hand we began our hunt for Arapawa Sheep. Upon climbing up the mountain I saw six but all were too small so continued scouting for bigger ones. Further up I came upon a big double curl but lost my footing and was unable to get the job done! I walked back to camp disappointed but will try again tomorrow.

The next day we went hunting for Red Stag. We did a lot of walking and saw a few good stags and a few does, but could not get a shot. We saw five fallow deer and a herd of Tahr that moved off the mountain because of snow, but no good Tahrs. Walking down to the truck in the evening we came upon an old scrub bull weighing about 2,000 pounds. I decided to try and get a shot with my bow. I stalked this large Bull for about two hours. I finally got close enough to get a shot off which appeared to be a good shot. I gave him about 45 minutes, tracked him, and came up on him to find he was still on the hoof. I was able to stalk him to get a second shot off, a good heart shot, and after about 15 minutes, he went down. I was delighted and after taking a closer look, found the arrow had gone right through his



Keith with his
Arapawa Sheep

heart. I couldn't understand how he still stood so long. He was about 10 years old.

On Day 4 we got up early and went hunting for Tahr. We 'glassed' the side of the mountain and spotted a few Bull Tahr and started our quest up the mountain. About 3/4 of the way up, the guide and I sat down to



Keith and Julie with a
Himalayan Tahr



'glass' and rest and after about twenty minutes, Glenn asked, "You have to see this!" I took his glasses and all I could see were BIG antlers. I asked Glenn if that was a Red Stag and he said, "No, they don't get that big". He said it had to be a South Pacific Wapiti which is similar to our elk. I instantly asked if we could hunt it and he said we could, but not from that location, so we headed back down to the truck and drove around to the back side of the mountain to try and drop in on him. We glassed and glassed and knew we were close, but could not find him.

All of a sudden and out of nowhere, there he stood about 260 yards away in the brush. To our excitement he started coming towards us, stopped and looked our way for what seemed like an eternity and then turned and ran straight up the far slope! At that point we were above him and I kept trying to get a running shot. I fired and missed which again would have been different if I had my own gun. I was beside myself and frustrated. So far, two shots and two misses! The massive horns were out of my sight and I was sick to my stomach. We went looking for him most of the day with no luck and I was dragging. Glenn said we better head to the truck, but we had to trudge back over the top to get there. He said he knew of a basin that would generally hold some Red Deer so decided to head in that direction and after arriving, there was only about one hour of daylight left. We only saw two cows so headed back to the truck.

We walked only ten minutes when Glenn stopped dead in his tracks and said, "Holy ----! There he is!" He was standing under some tall brush at about 226 yards facing away from us. I told Glenn that if I missed him at 120 yards there was a slim chance I would hit him at 226 yards, but he said, "We have nothing to lose. Let's go for it!" I waited for him to turn and let him have it! The smoke cleared and Glenn said, "You surely hit him as he is going backwards, but didn't fall down." We couldn't get another shot off and he disappeared so thought maybe he was down. As soon as we got close enough to where he was, he took off. I was able to get another shot and saw him go up the hill and lay down. YES!! When we walked up to him I could not believe the size. He was a 9 x 9 estimated to be 7 or 8 years old! By the time we skinned and packed him out it was way after dark. When we got back to the truck we had to tie the horns to the back of the topper because they would not fit inside. We headed back to camp exhausted and hungry, but successful.

The next morning we measured him and he scored a whopping 422 inches. After looking him over and many pictures we were off for the Tahr that we had started after the day before. Again, after a short climb, we were glassing the mountain side and spotted a very low Bull Tahr walking right down towards us. We would see him, then he would disappear. When he presented himself at 220 yards, I let him have it. He only ran 20 yards and he was down! He measured a nice 12 1/2" and was 7 1/2 years old. We had him skinned, packed, and back to the truck by 1:00 p.m. After three



days trudging, skinning and packing skins, I decided it was hard on a 52 year old body! As long as it was daylight our hunt wasn't over. We dropped our meat and hide at camp and headed for a sheep hunt until dark but never saw one. Wished I had hit the first one!

Day 6 the helicopter came at 8:30 a.m. and picked Julie and me up to hunt for Chamois and anticipated it to be a fun day! Boy, was I wrong! It was the scariest day of my life! The Chopper flew in the most rugged mountains I have ever seen and inside the gorges and out the ends. I held my breath most of the time and we flew almost an hour before we spotted a Chamois. We saw many Tahr but had all ready shot one so were on the hunt for a Chamois. Rob, the pilot, set us down on a rock out cropping for me to hunt down the Chamois. However, the Chamois had other ideas and the chopper couldn't get the Chamois over the top so came back to pick us up. He told us to crouch down and he would hover over us and to climb in. This was very scary but we got in again and off we went! After circling, he found another one and sat us down again and took off. The Chamois came within about 288 yards and stopped under a rock ledge and I shot and missed him clean. We radioed Rob to pick us back up. We crouched again and he landed and sat the ski of the chopper on a rock and we bellied in. About this time I was ready to call it off, BUT we were off to locate another one. After flying for about 35 minutes up and down the gorge, we spotted one, but could not find a spot to drop us and I was glad. But he was determined and drove the Chamois over the top and was able to drop us off and lifted off once again. The Chamois was running a rock edge and the closest it came was 220 yards running up hill. I fired the muzzleloader and another miss! I said, "Give me your .223!" The chopper flew over and up the mountain to move the Chamois and here he came within shooting range. I shot and hit him, but he kept going so I racked the gun and shot again. FINALLY, down he went! The guide worked his way over to him and rolled it down to a flatter spot where the chopper could land. He picked us up and not a minute too soon for either of us, but especially Julie, as she had been sick throwing up for two hours, but it was a blast!

We grabbed a bit for dinner and out hunting we went again, this time for a sheep, but with no luck.



Just before dark we spotted a Red Stag that looked real good. We looked him over with the glasses and said, "This is a keeper", so I fired. After the smoke cleared I couldn't see it so we climbed up the hill and there it was! He was a huge 21 point Red Stag with 10 1/2' bases and a 32" spread. We scored him at a rough 359 3/4 inches which will make him "Gold"! Great day of hunting. It was a blast and the only thing left to shoot of my goal was a sheep!

The last day of our hunt had arrived and we woke up to a heavy, wet snow coming down hard. We waited until 9:30 a.m. but it was still snowing hard so we tried to drive part way up the mountain. We couldn't so we went back to camp and traded the truck for an Argo and headed back up. This time we made it. We scouted all day and never found a Ram to shoot so back to camp we went. About a half mile outside of camp we came around a curve and saw a Ram run across the trail. We stopped and walked up the flat and he was standing looking down at us. Glen had glass on him and he said, "It's a Ram! Take him!" I shot, the smoke cleared, and he was gone. Glenn said, "You hit him hard!" So up the trail we went and there he was! After hunting hard all over the mountain for a week, we shot him less than a half mile from camp. It wasn't as nice as the two I had seen the first night, but I filled my quota and we were leaving in the morning for Timaru to stay with Neville, our guide. We were going to try and shoot a goat and some Wallaby, then go to a Rugby game in the evening.

It is now Day 8 and we packed everything up and headed for Timaru. We stopped along the way and did

a little shopping and got a bite to eat. We arrived at Neville's home, which was a very nice, three story home overlooking Mount Cook. Neville said he had been seeing Feral Goats coming out of timber, jumping his fence, and eating his pasture. He asked if we would like to hunt them and, of course, the answer was YES! Both Julie and I shot a goat for him and at night attended a Pro Rugby Game.

After we returned from the game, we went on a Wallaby hunt. We traveled about 45 minutes to the edge of the mountain, climbed in the back of the pick-up with a spot light, and while Neville drove, we went Wallaby hunting. The Wallaby would run across the trails and the fun began. I shot five Wallaby and one opossum. We arrived back at Neville's about 1:30 a.m. in the morning. It was a short night as we had to be at the airport at 10:00 a.m. and it was a three hour drive, but it was worth it!

The next day we woke up early and had breakfast and off to the airport, just to find our flight had been cancelled because of volcano ash in the air. There was a volcano eruption the 4th of June which we did not know about that was spreading volcano ash. We were put up in a Holiday Inn.

The following day we went to the airport again only to find our travel had been canceled again. We



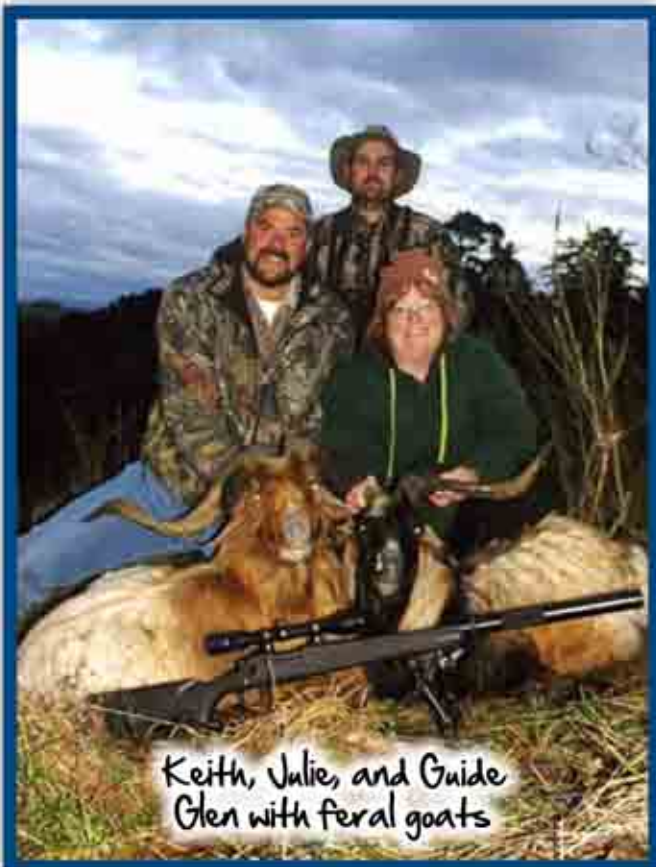
Keith with his feral bull

rebooked with New Zealand Air for a flight to Cannes early in the morning. They put us in a lovely 5-Star Motel and we toured the town and went to bed hoping we could fly out the next day.

Day 11 we were up at 4:00 a.m. and headed back to the airport, this time off to Cannes, Australia. We weren't able to fly out until 6:30 p.m. and missed all the tours to the Coral Reefs so went on a trolley ride over the Rain Forest. I did not like being a half mile above the ground on a cable, but I survived it. We got a cab back to the airport and we were off to Darwin. We arrived at 10:00 p.m. and met our guide, Yogi, and he took us to our motel for the night.

In the morning, Yogi and his friends took us on a seven hour drive from Catherine to our camp. It was a lovely place. We unloaded our gear and shot the bow a couple times and headed out for an afternoon hunt. The guide drove a land cruiser with the top cut off so we had a fun time seeing five Bull Water Buffalo and many kinds of birds.

The next morning we were up at 6:00 a.m. for breakfast and off to see if we could shoot a water buffalo. About 11:00 a.m. we spotted a nice bull and put a stalk on him to about 25 yards away, but he would not turn broad side. He looked up and he was gone. Back in the truck and about 1/4 mile up the road we spotted a bigger one so we drove ahead and walked back to see if we could stalk him. He was feeding away into



Keith, Julie, and Guide Glen with feral goats



Keith with his Water Buffalo

the wind so we backed out and made a big circle and waited for him. The water buffalo was not quite where I wanted to shoot, but he gave me a 35 yard shot so I waited for him to put his leg ahead and released the arrow. I thought it was a perfect shot, but Yogi said it was a little low. We waited 10 minutes and started tracking. There was lots of blood where he stood, but he went in some tall grass and it was very thick so it was very hard to see any. Yogi said, "I do not like this. I am going to get the truck." We started to circle the big thick grass area and there he was still standing about 200 yards away. Yogi said, "Take him with the rifle." I said, "NO WAY, I want him with the bow." So we worked our way in, down wind, to about 40 yards and I shot again, this time tight behind the shoulder. He bolted for 100 yards, stopped, stood there 35 minutes leaning against a tree watching us. After 40 minutes we could not stand it any more so we got in the truck and slowly worked toward him. At about 60 yards he took off running and went 75 yards and lay down. We gave him another 20 minutes and snuck in to take a look. He was in some brush angling away and his head was up so I pulled down in the brush about 10 inches and released another arrow. He quickly lunged to his feet and tore out of there, but only made it another 60 yards and went down. I have never seen anything go down so hard in my life but three arrows and 55 minutes later I had a big 97 inch Water Buffalo DEAD! My heart finally slowed down 20 minutes later. What a rush! We took pictures, skinned him out, loaded the meat in the truck and headed back to camp. On our way a pair of Dingoes ran out in front of us. I grabbed the .300 and one of them hit the ground but the other one ran away. Wow! What a great day!

We were on Day 14 and our hunting time was winding down. After breakfast we went with Yogi to watch them muster the cattle up with dogs. It was very interesting to watch the dogs round them up and bring them to the corral. After dinner we went hunting to see if we could shoot a boar pig. We saw many buffalo and another Dingo so brought out the .300 and laid another one down. The countryside was beautiful!

The next morning we were up at 6:00 a.m. for

breakfast and off hunting. We covered lots of beautiful terrain and saw many buffalo, wild cattle, and wild donkeys while hunting for a pig. Yogi wanted a donkey for pig and Dingo bait so I shot one with the .300 and dragged him up on a high spot where we could see from a long distance. Later while driving we spotted another Dingo about 125 yards so out came the .300 and there was #3 Dingo, dead. We finally saw some Pigs so stalked up on them within bow range, but they were all sows. Returned back to camp at dark.

This was our last day at camp before our long return trip home. Again we awoke at 6:00 a.m. to try and get in a couple hours of hunting. We saw many buffalo and kangaroo, but no boar pigs. We returned to camp to load all our gear in the truck for our return to Darwin to catch our flight out. It was a 6 1/2 hour drive, stopping for dinner at a beautiful harbor on the ocean. It was a great sight. Off to the motel for a quick snooze before our flight out at 6:00 a.m.

Reality has hit at 4:00 a.m. as we catch a cab to take us to the airport and flew to Brisbane where we now have an 8 1/2 hour layover. Our fun has faded, but what a story we have to tell!

I would highly recommend using either one of these outfitters, Leithen Valley Trophy Hunts or Mt. Cook Trophy Hunting. They had top notch equipment, guides, accommodations, and food. 🐾

Return To Oz

by Cindy Cotter

Earlier this year, in July which is middle of Winter there, I had the wonderful opportunity to return to Australia for another hunt at Havago, Australia. This came about as a result of attending the Safari Club dinner and fund raising auction in Mt. Pleasant in February. Prior to the auction, my husband picked out three hunts that he thought might be interesting, one in Ireland, one in New Zealand, and the third in Australia. He felt I would do better where they at least spoke a variation of English!

The night of the auction, the first hunt up for bids was the Australian hunt. As I had been there the previous year, I was well aware of the excellent accommodations and service provided by Jim and Debbie Dieckmann. The bidding on this hunt was rather slow, so I joined in and ended up with another trip there at what I considered a very good bargain.

That also took care of any more bidding on hunts!

This year my travels took me from Grand Rapids to Dallas-Ft. Worth, and then direct to Brisbane, this was much better than connecting in Los Angeles.

The Dieckmanns travel over 3 hours to meet you at the airport in Brisbane, provide excellent accommodations, meals and good company for the duration of the hunt, and return transportation to Brisbane at the conclusion of the hunt.

This year Jim was guiding a party at another location in Darwin, so my guide was Des a very nice gentleman who is a retired forester, and proved to be a fount of knowledge regarding the area. He showed me examples of cancer in trees, termite nests, and orchids and mistletoe growing in the trees. Des took me under his wing and truly did a wonderful job of locating game for me, even allowing me the opportunity to help cape out the animals for the taxidermist.

The first day was spent with Debbie grocery shopping in Millmeran and visiting in the area while waiting for the arrival of Des, who lives in the area of Toowoomba. I also had a chance to get familiar with and sight in the rifle I was using this year.

The second day was spent scouting game on the property, which consists of 12,000 acres in the "outback".



Cindy with her feral ram and red stag

Jim had offered to let me take my choice of game as I was a returning guest, and I chose a very nice "red deer". Which is their smallest member of the elk family. We also spent part of the second day rounding up their camels who had found an open gate and decided to go for a walk.

The third day we returned to where we had seen the red deer, and about midday we saw the red deer coming out, saw three nice bucks through the binoculars, and I shot a very nice specimen. We returned to the ranch and hung the deer. We spent the afternoon watching many kangaroos while driving around the ranch. We returned for supper, and I decided while I was there I would like to take a feral ram as well. The feral rams are like our Dall sheep.

The fourth day we found a small group of feral rams, and shot a very nice looking one. We returned to the ranch and caped out the ram and the red deer for the taxidermist to mount. We boned out the meat and froze it for later use. The bones were fed to wild pigs that also reside in the area.

The fifth day was time to return, Debbie drove me to the airport in Brisbane where I caught a flight to Sydney and connected with a flight to Dallas-Ft. Worth, and then back to Grand Rapids.

Once again, I had a great time, and truly enjoyed my adventure, and would do it again in a heartbeat! 🐾

Tanzanian Cape Buffalo

by Mary Harter

On our last hunt to Tanzania in October of 2011, we both wanted a chance at a cape buffalo. We had both shot them before when we hunted with Johan Pieterse in Tanzania but given the chance we would harvest one on every safari if we are in an area where they are plentiful and we have time to pursue them. We needed bait for our cat hunting with Tanzania Big Game Safaris so on the fourth day of our 21 day safari when we saw fresh buffalo tracks, off we went.

We drove the truck as far as we could through the jungle following the tracks until we crossed a second road and the bush got thicker. We got out and began the walking, stalking, crawling, hiding behind termite mounds and tall grasses until we could see a herd of about 80 cape buffalo with some laying down resting. We did a semi circle around them keeping the wind in our favor until we were close enough for a shot. Many times with the wind in our face, we could smell the buffalo. A few began to mingle around and Ivan set me up on the sticks to shoot. Before we could settle on the one to shoot, they began to move. Off we went again and again.

After about two hours and two miles we set up to shoot again. Ivan said he would describe where the animal was that he wanted me to shoot and then he wanted me to counter with additional information like if he was twitching his ears or one on the left was swinging his tail, etc., to make sure I was on the one he intended me to shoot. Several of 80 might be facing me with all of the same descriptions he would give me.

Well, we were both on the same buffalo and I shot striking him through the shoulders, lungs, and right in his heart. Thump! He ran but slowed from the rest of the herd. I shot again and hit about two inches from the first shot. You could see the impact of my .375 Christensen Arms with a 300 grain bullet. Again I shot hitting him about eight inches from the second shot. He was still moving and turned to face us and took a few steps in our direction. If he still had the power, he would have charged us. You could see that "Black Death" in his red eyes. As I was reloading, Don asked if I wanted him to shoot him. I said "no" as he began to



Showing off
our trophies

wobble and fall. Ivan had me shoot him a fourth time in the spine just for insurance. He quivered and was done. What a trophy with big, hard bosses and a nice curl to the back! He was an old guy and even better looking than we thought.

Now pictures and the cutting up process. We saved the tail for oxtail soup and stew. The ribs were interesting as they are wide and overlap to protect them from each other's horns. They have body armor.

On the 10th day of our hunt we cut many buffalo tracks made as they went down to the river to drink. We finally found three fresh ones, possibly from dugga boys, and Don and the gang were off after them. I stayed with the truck to write. They track faster without me. They finally caught up to the buffalo but the wind changed and the buffalo smelled danger and were off.

The group talked to some woodcutters they came upon and the woodcutters had heard lions in the area. This gave us more hope for finding one. The woodcutters dig a pit to stand in as one of them has an end of a saw. They transport the hand sawn logs to use or sell by bicycle.

Also in the area are beekeepers. We kept sighting the hanging mazingas which are containers for bees to fill with honey. They might be hollow logs, barrels, or bark stripped from trees and lashed with leather to make a log shaped container. There are hundreds of these various containers hanging through the trees. When the beekeepers harvest the honey it is placed in 20 liter containers and pushed on bikes about 50 miles

to the nearest market to receive about \$1 per liter. The beekeepers usually live by themselves out in the bush without their families. We purchased some honey from them to eat in camp and it was delicious.

Liam, our camp manager, was sick with malaria and was on medication for a few days. If treated early, malaria is easy to cure but if you wait, treatment can take weeks. We were glad we were on a malaria preventative as an infected mosquito (one that had bitten Liam) could bite us and infect us. Usually a mosquito can only fly about 1 1/2 miles so it is not a problem. Our game scout, Alex, is raising his sister's children because she died from malaria.

The next day we were out hunting early, as usual. The sun comes up quickly here as we are near the equator. We found fresh buffalo tracks so Ivan, John, Don, and the trackers were off. We were so close to camp that I just had our driver take me back. They tracked the buffalo about eight miles before they finally caught up to them. Then the wind shifted and the buffalo ran. Foiled again. They came back and got me and we stalked a Bohrer Reedbuck a long time until we lost him. After lunch Don and the gang went after more buffalo with no luck.

The next day after checking out a lion, we went to find a fisherman that had told some of our workers about an old dugga boy that lived in the reeds down by the river. We picked him up and he rode with us to show us. We sure found sign of the buffalo but he stayed well hidden in the tall grasses and we couldn't spot him. Ivan even did a stalk to try to chase him out but it didn't work. We each could have shot three cape buffalo so an old dugga boy would have made excellent bait and helped eliminate a danger for the villagers.

Out on the 13th day and after checking a few lion baits, we have buffalo in mind. We had a nice rain during the night so all tracks were fresh. They finally found some tracks and were off. The group of buffalo split in two and the group they followed soon winded them and began to run. They called for the truck to pick them up and we traveled some very unused trails we had not been down before. We were hoping to spot more buffalo, roan, or eland but did not. It was fun exploring some new territory and I did get a duiker.

The next day, off for more buffalo after checking for lion, of course. They were off after two bulls and a cow for 6 1/2 hours before the

wind turned and the buffalo ran.

On the 16th day after checking baits and shooting an impala, they cut some fresh buffalo tracks and were off again. Same story - wind changed - buffalo ran.

On the 18th day after seeing waterbuck, reedbuck, a warthog, and guinea fowl, we spotted some fresh buffalo tracks. Off we went through a field until we found fresh dung. Don and Ivan loaded their rifles and the gang was off after them. After about five hours and eight miles they caught up with the buffalo. The wind had been in their favor all along until they stopped. They crawled on hands and knees through hot sand, so hot Don thought his palms would burn. The herd stood and the big male separated a little from the herd and Don shot. Three shots later all in the shoulder and the bull was down. Don had shot a huge cape buffalo with his IMC Heym with the 450 Nitro Express barrels using 480 grain Hornady, DX.

They couldn't call for the truck because they were so far from camp so the trackers and John walked back to camp. They guided the truck to the buffalo arriving 4 1/2 hours later. Don and Ivan had covered the buffalo with palm leaves to keep the sun off. All had really worked hard for this trophy.

What a wonderful hunt with great friend, Ivan Carter, and new friend, John Greef. In all we harvested 31 animals in 21 days and look forward to our next time in Africa. 🌍

Don Harter and
Pvt Ivan Carter
with Don's Cape
Buffalo



Don's new Heym with the
450 Nitro Express barrels
did the job

Red Stags of the North Isle

by Mike "Mac" MacEachron

"Remember, don't shoot the first one." What a strange thought to have as we were descending into Auckland International Airport in New Zealand.

Dr. John Ludwig (JL); his daughter, Jessie; my wife, Sheila; and I were ready to begin our 2 week hunting safari starting on the North Isle.

In the weeks leading up to the hunt, JL and I kept reminding each other, while sighting in our rifles, to look over the wildlife on the property and not shoot the first animals we saw.

We are both avid whitetail hunters and have taken many nice bucks over the years but nothing in comparison to the antler size we would encounter on the giant red stags of New Zealand.

We would be hunting with Glenn Martin and John Hamm of Aotearoa Safaris. Glenn had bragged about the stags on John's property. I had actually caught a couple of TV shows on the Sportsman Channel featuring Aotearoa Safaris – "Hunting University" and "Northwest Hunter". I contacted Glenn a couple of times and booked a combo Stag, Tahr and Chamois hunt for the spring of 2011.

As with any trip there's always a sense of apprehension after clearing customs. You hope to see a familiar face or someone holding a card with your party's name on it, especially in a foreign country. All anxiety was cast aside as Glenn's friendly face and his wonderful wife, Rayanne, were there waiting for us.

To say we were excited would be an understatement. Glenn was glad to answer all our questions. We stopped for a snack and then the two hour drive to camp seemed like a hop, skip and jump. The scenery into camp was stunning. A few things we learned quickly were that sheep are king and there's more sheep than people on these island as well as that the landscape is all "up and down".

Arriving at camp it reminded me of a typical deer hunting camp back home. It made me feel right at home except they had hot showers, comfortable beds and generators for electricity. All the comforts of home.

We were greeted by Steve Johnson, one of Aotearoa's guides, a very pleasant Kiwi. In the course of five days Steve showed us the property, lots of wildlife and his favorite eel feeding pond.

It didn't take long to unpack our gear and settle into our appropriate quarters. We grabbed our rifles



and headed to the range to make sure they were still dialed in. You never want to take a chance that the airlines accidentally mishandled your gear. I can't stress how important this is. For those that have flown a lot you understand what I am writing about.



The camp had many photos of previous hunters and their successes as well as a few European mounts of the resident stag population. This gave us a better understanding of what to expect from an average stag and from a great stag. JL and I would be hunting medal stags and the ladies would hunt for management stags on this part of the hunt.

The method of hunting at Aotearoa would consist of using ATVs to traverse the mountains' many steep roads that were cut into the landscape when clearing parts of the property. Thank goodness for the ATVs!

When one came to an area to hunt the idea would be to get as close as possible with the ATVs, park, sneak as quietly as possible, and then glass the many parks (open areas). The red deer have excellent hearing and a keen sense of smell.

Unfortunately, we arrived after the roar (rut in our country) so the stags were not as vocal as in the prior months. One has to hear the roar of a stag. It is a loud grunting sound, unlike elk which sound more like a loud shrilling whistle.

John Hamm and his son, Jimmy, arrived as we were finishing sighting our rifles. We all introduced ourselves and, of course, asked the same questions that Glenn and Steve had already answered.



John mentioned we still had a couple of hours before sunset and said, "Whatcha say we take a ride and see if we can locate a couple stags". I asked if we should bring along our rifles. John just winked and said "I reckon so". I just smiled.

Following John and Jimmy on the ATVs we approached the first park. We parked a ways back, grabbed our gear, and quietly approached the top of the mountain. Words cannot describe the beauty we would soon witness. We could see for miles. There was a snow covered volcano, still active, numerous mountains, parks and woodlots. It was like something you only dream about.

Glenn woke us out of our daze and pointed out a bunch of red deer in the nearby valley but no big stags. John pointed out our first nice stag approximately a mile away and said "We should take a closer look at that one".

"Don't shoot the first one" I whispered to JL.

We had Steve stay back with the ATVs in case we needed them. So off we went following John and Jimmy through the various woodlots and parks. I think they are mountain goats! One had to watch their footing as to not slip and slide going down the steep hills. It didn't help that it had been raining for days.

I was proud to watch young Jimmy, 13 years old, lead us through the terrain. It reminded me of how my father taught me the art of hunting and learning the woods. Jimmy lead us right the spot we had last seen the stag over an hour ago.

John took over from there. He peeked over the crest of the hill and slowly backed off. He said the stag was feeding on the opposite hillside approximately 350 yards away. "He's a dandy", John whispered to JL who was up first. JL glassed the stag and true to his word said respectfully "I'm gonna pass and would like to see a few more. Mac, you go ahead if you are interested." John Hamm again whispered "Mac, that really is a nice stag."

So I said "Let's get a closer look". We crawled to a mound that was the perfect height for a rest. Hmm, an omen. John ranged him and whispered "285 yards". I put the scope on him to see if I would be comfortable with a possible shot.

Bam! Yup, I shot! The first shot buckled him. He went 15 yards. The second shot in the shoulder sent him tumbling down the mountainside.

So much for not shooting the first one!! We were all whooping it up when Jimmy yelled that there was another big stag 150 yards off to our left. JL took a look and saw the ivory tips and symmetrical antlers and couldn't resist. We both had our stags the first hour and a half of the first day. JL and I just looked at each other and chuckled.

I learned long ago if you're hunting with a reputable guide or PH and he says it's a good one, it's a good one. I always listen to my guide.

John, Sheila and I went off to find my stag while Glenn, Jimmy, Jessie and JL went to find JL's stag.

Disappointed we were done already, "Heck, no!" Ecstatic, "Heck, yeah!"

John said, "Mac, you just shot Bullwinkle." By the looks of it I could understand why. His dark chocolate antlers carried the mass from his bases to his crown. The crowns were very deep, almost like medieval time's goblets and sticker points like a moose. Both antlers also carried extra brow tines over 15 inches. He had 28 scorable points and a SCI score of 370. I'm glad I shot the first one!

JL's stag scored over 350 SCI points.

So what does one do at Aotearoa Safaris when the stag hunting is done? You go hunting. Sheila and Jessie each shot management stags that in many countries would be trophies. There is no shortage of feral goats and John was glad to have us cull a few. Needless to say we were happy to oblige. I had mentioned to Glenn if they had any arapawa rams we would love to try and hunt them also. They did so Sheila, Jessie and I each harvested beautiful rams.

So in five days of hunting we harvested 2 medal stags, 2 management stags, 6 feral goats and 3 rams. But we weren't done. I am an avid turkey hunter and John had a large population of Merriam turkeys. John said "We don't hunt buzzards, Mac, so if ya want have at it". Well, OK! JL and Jessie each shot a tom and I took two trophy toms.

It was time to leave our new found friends, John and Jimmy Hamm and Steve Johnson to begin the next stop of our hunt. We chose to drive down to Wellington with Glenn to take in the beauty of New Zealand. There we would take a ferry across Cooks inlet that divides the North from the South island and then continue to drive down to Queenstown to hunt Tahr and Chamois. But that's another story. 🐾





Moose Hunting In Newfoundland

View from the camp dock. Across the pond is where the plane lands.

by Joanne Witte

Our hunt was the realization of a lifelong dream for my husband, Larry! He had always wanted to hunt Moose but thought his disability, a form of muscular dystrophy that has severely crippled his legs, feet, and hands would prevent him from engaging in the extreme physical activity required for Moose hunting. This is how it came to be:

In January 2010 when we were at the outdoor show at the Delta Plex in Grand Rapids Larry ran into an older fellow who was handicapped but had been Moose hunting several times. After Larry told him about his disability he said, "Go talk to Leonard Payne from Portland Creek Outfitters in Newfoundland. He can accommodate you."

So Larry did and Leonard told him he has a camp with a tracked vehicle that can get Larry to the hunting area. After some discussion and thought we signed up for September 15-21, 2012, right then. At Leonard's suggestion we drove to Windsor Ontario and on September 14 flew on Air Canada from there to Deer Lake Newfoundland with stops in Toronto and Halifax.

We arrived at Deer Lake about 8:30PM, local time which is one and one half hours ahead of us, where we were met by Peggy and driven to Bennett Lodge in Daniel's Harbor, about a two hour drive. From there

we were only a few miles from where Leonard's float-planes left for camp. Leonard has eleven camps and two planes—a 3 seater Cessna and a 5 seater Beaver. His son Doug pilots the Cessna and his other son, Guy, pilots the Beaver.

We were ready and anxious to leave for camp on Saturday morning September 15 at 7:00AM. However the weather did not cooperate. The mountain we were to fly over was fogged in. We learned that the weather dictates the schedule. Shelly (Leonard's daughter) brought us our paperwork and told us she would keep checking in so we could fly to camp when and if the weather cleared.

About 4:30PM she rushed into our room and said, "Get ready; let's go!" We had been ready since 7:00AM! We had to fly from Parson's Pond because of the wind direction instead of from Leonard's usual pond. When we referred to a lake, Shelly told us they call all inland bodies of water "ponds".

Our pilot, Doug, had already made one trip to our camp, called Cat Arm, with supplies. When we got to the pond, Doug efficiently loaded the plane with our two big duffle bags, two rifles in soft cases, two shooting sticks, and two back packs. There were also more supplies going with us.

I must admit I was apprehensive about the flight.

The mountains were close by on both sides of us. As the plane threaded between two mountains Larry asked Doug if we were too heavy, Doug said, "No the air is too warm for us to get enough lift" so he had to circle back and try another route. The scenery was beautiful once I had the courage to open my eyes. It was a short flight—about 20 minutes. From the air we saw the Lodge but we landed at a dock across from it where we were met by a boat driven by Grant, one of the guides. There were too many rocks to land at the lodge.

The Cat Arm camp is named after a big reservoir on the Cat Arm River.

Once at the camp dock we were met by Alvin and Sheila House. Sheila cooked and took care of the camp; Alvin was a guide. A third guide, Bruce, was also there.

We had one of the two bedrooms for hunters. On the other side of the structure, separated by the kitchen and sitting area, there were three bedrooms for the staff. Next to our room there was a bathroom including a shower. Water was piped into the lodge by gravity from a well. However the water was red-brown due to iron deposits. Luckily they had lots of bottled water for drinking and brushing your teeth.

There was a freezer but no refrigerator so supplies were kept on the porch. The stove and hot water heater were fueled by propane. There was a generator to run the electric lights and the freezer. A small portable washing machine that hooked up to the sink resided in the bathroom. About twice a week Sheila washed the towels that we all used and clothing for the staff. They turned the generator off in the afternoon to save fuel. On the kitchen window sill there was a line of empty rifle casings. Sheila wrote the name of the hunter, date,

Doug the Pilot and Larry



The Lodge

and size of the Moose taken on the casing with a permanent marker. We hoped to get our casings up there.

The food was delicious. We even had home baked bread every day! That first night about 8:30 when we were getting ready for bed the guides knocked on our door and said there was a Moose in the yard. We rushed out to the porch in our pajamas, but it was so dark we couldn't see anything. We got back in bed and listened to our two young guides outside calling moose.

There is no hunting on Sunday in Canada, not for religious reasons but so berry pickers will be able to pick berries without fear of hunters, we were told.

So Sunday Larry and I read while Alvin and Bruce worked on the tracked vehicle called a Skidozer. It was a 1973 Bombardier with a Ford engine. The open motor was inside the cab between the bucket seats in the front. There was a bench seat in the back and an open box about 4' by 5' behind the cab. The motor was very temperamental and the steering was awful. Hence it was named, "The Beast". However, it was a life saver for us.

Two more hunters and another guide were expected in camp but they could not fly on Sunday due to the weather.

On Monday we were up early, had a good breakfast, and were ready to go by 6:45AM. Alvin told us it would be hot inside The Beast which it was. There was a metal cover over the engine but they had to leave it open to keep the engine from overheating. Once we got to the hunting area, he said it would be cold. It rained and drizzled for most of the day but occasionally the sun would pop out and we'd see a beautiful rainbow. It was also very windy. Luckily we had good rain suits. Sheila

had packed lunches for us with sandwiches made from some of that good homemade bread. We planned to stay out all day.

The terrain consisted of bogs, some huge, with forested hillsides here and there, and big ponds. It was wet! I had knee high rubber boots and Larry had some knee high waterproof overshoes that fit over his boots and braces. We were told to put our rain pants on the outside of our boots and cinch them with big fisherman's rubber bands. It worked great. Later one of the other hunters tucked his rain pants into his boots, stepped in a knee high puddle, and had wet boots for the rest of the hunt.

It was fairly warm during our hunt. We never wore our wool hunting pants. During the night it cooled off and was good sleeping and porch refrigeration weather.

Alvin and Bruce stopped along the way and did cow Moose calls—just with their mouths—no device. How handy. Your call is always with you and you can never lose it. We spotted several female caribou that did not seem to be at all afraid of us.

Alvin and Bruce saw eight Moose. Of course we didn't see any. They would stop and call, glass, and compare notes. Often they would try to point out to us where they saw the Moose in the spruce and on the mountain but we never succeeded in spotting them.

We finally stopped almost three miles from camp where Alvin and Bruce saw Moose on the hillside. Larry, Alvin and I stayed in the vehicle and out of the rain while Bruce walked over to a huge rock where he sat and glassed and called for several hours. At noon we all sat inside The Beast and ate lunch. After that Alvin moved The Beast closer to the woods and Bruce went back to his rock.

Bruce and Alvin had radios and about 1:30PM while we were looking at the hillside Bruce radioed, "Get up here. There's a big Moose coming toward me." I piled out of The Beast with my rifle. When I got to Bruce I could see the Moose's antlers and head but I didn't have my shooting sticks and when I sat down I was too low to shoot.

Alvin came running to us with the sticks. As I was trying to get set up, the Moose turned to the left and started to walk in the direction of The Beast. Suddenly the three of us heard, BOOM! We saw the Moose lurch, then we heard another Boom, and a third one after which we saw the Moose tip over and disappear.

Larry was sitting in the open door of The Beast. When Alvin left to bring me the sticks he told Larry to get ready just in case. The three of us whooped with joy as we ran back to congratulate Larry. He shot off hand at about 150 yards. What a thrill! There was his Moose! He was afraid he shot my Moose but we were all very happy for him. I could not get in position to shoot anyway. Larry's Moose surprised us all when it appeared from a totally unexpected direction.

Now the hard work began. After picture taking, Alvin started to work on the front shoulders and Bruce on the hind quarters. We wanted the antlers but not the cape. We do not have room for two Moose in our trophy room. They skinned and boned the shoulders, hind quarters, and the ribs and took the back straps and tenderloins. They were very careful to keep the meat clean.

As they boned it they put it in meat bags—four to a moose. The meat and head went in the back of The Beast. It only took a little over an hour to dispatch the

View of the Hunting Area



whole thing. Larry recovered one of his bullets on the offside of the Moose.

We got back to camp about 5:00PM. The Beast only stopped twice on the way back. Once back in camp we met the other two hunters, Paul and Jack, who were from Michigan and the fourth guide, David. They told us they were able to get into camp before noon. Actually we saw the plane delivering them fly over us mid-morning. They had been out that afternoon but hadn't seen anything. There are racks hanging over the wood stove that heats the cabin and they were full of wet clothes. Sheila added Larry's shell casing to her collection.

Using their measurement convention Larry's Moose has 14 points and a 38" spread. He used his Browning A-Bolt .300 WSM and our favorite 180 grain Winchester Fail Safe bullet which is no longer made. He had the rifle restocked with a custom thumbhole stock so he can hold on to the rifle. We were all impressed that he shot off hand. Jack and his guide Grant stayed out until dark but didn't see anything.

The next morning before we went hunting Alvin and Bruce took Larry's meat by boat over to the dock so Doug could pick it up with the plane. Overnight it had been stored in a little building down by the dock on our side. They never know for sure when the plane is coming. Later that morning Doug got the meat and took it to a processor in Portland Creek. The staff is always very careful to get the meat out as soon as possible. With the unpredictable weather the meat goes first—before the hunters.

Running eleven camps keeps Leonard, Peggy, Shelly, Terri and the two pilots, Doug and Guy very busy. Just imagine the planning it takes and the number of trips in the two planes. The camps have satellite phones but they can only be used at certain times of the day. The staff knows the plane is coming when they hear it. Bruce would say, "Here comes the plane". I hadn't heard a thing. The weather can change in the blink of any eye. Alvin said they can have four seasons in one day.

Tuesday, September 18 was my day to hunt so I sat in the front seat and Lucky Larry didn't even have to take his rifle. It was a beautiful sunny day with very little wind. We took Jack and Grant with us in The Beast part of the way to the hunting area to save them some walking. Today The Beast was very cantankerous. We got up the terrible muddy track beside the Lodge O.K.



Joanne and her moose



Larry and his moose



The Beast

but then she stopped. After a few minutes of rest she restarted and we were again headed for the hillside where we were yesterday.

About half way there Bruce saw a big bull Moose a long way off. He took off running across the bog to keep track of the Moose and radioed back to Alvin. We crossed the bog in The Beast but the Moose was still too far away and was moving away from us. Alvin thought maybe the Moose heard The Beast. She is not exactly

quiet. He radioed Paul and David to be on the lookout because the Moose was moving toward them. During the whole episode we were serenaded by coyotes who were responding to the cow Moose calls.

We proceeded toward yesterday's mountain and Bruce's rock. Just after we arrived, about 9:30AM, Bruce and Alvin saw a big bull Moose on the hillside in the trees. They decided I should walk toward it so we would not risk having it spooked by The Beast. Bruce carried my tripod shooting sticks that I had set up at the right height for a standing shot the night before. I had a walking stick and my rifle that I soon gave to Bruce to carry while I concentrated on not falling or sinking into the bog.

The walking was difficult. We traversed a huge bog which looked deceptively flat from the vehicle. In fact it was full of water holes. At several places as I walked behind Bruce I saw the bog bounce up and down under his feet with each step. I wasn't sure my bounces would match his. We were walking on a floating mat of roots and vegetation.

Bruce turned to me and asked how far I could shoot comfortably. I said 200 yards and he said he did not think we would get that close. So I said, "O.K. 300 yards." He could see the Moose in his binoculars and finally I spotted it. Several times while crossing the bog he stopped and grunted like a bull Moose.

We stopped beside a huge rock and Bruce set up the sticks. The Moose was moving from left to right in the trees. Occasionally I would get a clear view. After moving the sticks three times Bruce told me it would come into the next opening and to shoot when I was ready. I shot—and missed.

Luckily it stayed there and I got another shot. This one put him down. I was using my Browning A-Bolt .300 WSM and the same ammunition Larry had used. Later Bruce said it was a 254 yard shot. Alvin said my first shot had probably gone over it. He said if you shoot beside the Moose it will run away from the bullet but if you shoot over its head it usually stays there.

Alvin and Bruce were communicating by radio the

whole time. As we crossed the bog we lost sight of the Moose but Larry and Alvin had a good view from The Beast. The Moose had cows with him but when Bruce grunted called it thrashed its antlers in the trees and headed toward us to drive off the offending interloper. Later Larry said he saw the Moose flinch and move downhill after my second shot. He said to Alvin, "She missed again." Alvin said, "No she got it". Then they heard the report of the rifle. They had a great view of the whole thing from about 900 yards away.

After my shot Bruce and I walked across some wicked terrain and headed up the hill to see what I had shot. It was a beauty—14 points and a 41" spread. Bruce went back to the rock and got the shooting sticks and my walking stick and found a path for Alvin to get The Beast close to the Moose. Once again they made short work of the butchering. We found my bullet under the hide in the off side. By noon we were having lunch and preparing to return to camp. We were 2.87 miles from camp.

Now The Beast really acted up! Alvin and I decided it is a "she". She was very perverse. She would not start. Alvin tried, then waited, then fiddled with the gas, took the top off the air filter, replaced it, waited, tried again. Finally she started. But not for very long!

We did not get back to camp until about 3:45. Alvin wanted to call her the other "B" word. He said she is independent, stubborn, and uncooperative. The weather was quite warm and she doesn't like that. She much prefers cold weather. We frequently had to stop to let her cool off. It was so hot inside the cab with the engine cover open that we were glad to stop so we could cool off too. She would not steer either—es-

pecially to the left. Alvin had to back up and jockey her around. She could go over pretty much any obstacle with her tracks but the metal pieces sometimes fell off the seven foot wide tracks. Still she was a lifesaver. Larry could never have hunted Moose without her and I must admit I'm not sure I could have either.

The hunting season is six weeks long and Alvin said they need The Beast for two or three weeks every year.



Luckily he and Bruce understand her and can baby her along. After we left they were going to work on her and try of adjust the steering. They were also going to replace some "growlers", the metal treads that help the tracks grip the ground.

When we got back to camp my casing went up on the windowsill. Paul and David arrived soon and had not seen a Moose all day. Shortly after that (about 6:00PM) we heard a shot. It was Jack and Grant. Jack had shot a bull at about 75 yards in the path on the way back to camp. Bruce took off on the quad to help Grant with the butchering. Jack wanted a shoulder mount so they caped it, even the head, in the field in the dark. Bruce made three trips back to camp with the meat, cape, backhide, and antlers. They didn't eat until 9:30PM. Luckily we had eaten earlier.

Larry and I decided we wanted to leave camp on Wednesday, the next day. After breakfast that morning Bruce took my meat and Jack's meat and cape across to the dock to wait for the plane which arrived about 8:30 AM. Jack took a lunch and went to sit and glass for bear. We were told that after two or three days black bear would find the Moose carcasses.

Doug had a very heavy load with two Moose (mine and Jack's) and the cape. The camp staff watched with bated breath to make sure he got up over the mountain. He came back for us about 10:30AM. This trip wasn't as scary for me. I kept my eyes open the whole time. We landed at Southern Pond—their usual home base. Leonard met us whereupon we went to the meat processor and completed the necessary paperwork. Our frozen meat will be driven to Detroit where we can pick it and the antlers up, probably in early December.

Once back in Daniel's Harbor we had lunch at Bennett Lodge after which Terri drove us to the Deer Lake Motel in Deer Lake. There we stayed for the next five nights. We tried to change our tickets and get a flight out earlier but for an additional cost of about \$1000.00 we could get to Windsor at midnight only one day early. Luckily the motel was very nice and the food in their restaurant was excellent. Usually we ate things we were familiar with but we also tried several new things. Touton was a kind of fried bread that was very tasty. The partridge berries were another story altogether. We each had 1/4 of a cup and they were so sour we put three sugar packets on them and still couldn't eat them. Our waitress said they make good pies and



Sheila the cook

The empty casings
(I think Edna
was the
previous cook)



Our Casings

jam. We saw poutine but didn't try it. It is gravy with cheese in it eaten over French fries.

Larry said to consider our five days in the motel practice for when we enter the old folks' home. After breakfast we sat in the lobby and watched people while the maids cleaned the room, ate in the dining room three times a day, watched TV, napped, read books and went to bed early.

It was a wonderful trip. We both shot great Moose and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. We are very grateful to Leonard for The Beast. Without her the trip would not have been possible. 🐾

Veteran's Hunt at the PK Ranch

by Randy Raymond

This estate is located near Lewiston, Michigan. The ranch is owned by Dr. Dave and Danae Petrella. What a place it is. Dave Petrella is a SCI member and the Mid-Michigan Chapter's past president. The Petrella's opened their ranch and lodging up for us to come for the Disabled Veteran's Hunt. It was my honor to be able to spend time hunting with two very amazing veterans, Al Wilson, a fourteen and a half year Army Veteran and Martin Bergey, a thirteen and a half year Army Veteran. Dave Knarr is a guide for the PK Ranch. He is a man who really knows his stuff. He was the guide for Al Wilson. It was my pleasure to be the guide for Martin Bergey. This ranch is such a beautiful place. To me describing it would be like saying one minute you are in Ontario and the next you are in New Mexico in the pines and oaks and then you are back in Northern Michigan. The estate is filled with large pines and poplar meadows and almost right in the center of the estate is a large lake with a cranberry marsh surrounding the shorelines. The main house is where we all gathered to visit and enjoy the most wonderful meals. Danae Petrella is one of the best cooks.

The first day of our hunt, Martin and I were driving to our blind with Dave Petrella. Martin was told to shoot a four and a half year old eight point buck. That afternoon started to fly by with Martin telling jokes and stories about our lives. Then to our left came in a few does that started to make their way across to the food plot. Then we saw through the pines, a very large bodied buck with a wide white rack. He stopped and was looking around watching the does. I thought to myself that luck was on our side and the wind was in our favor. Martin was on his game. He took off his jacket earlier, rolled it up, and stuck it in his window. Martin knew this would make a good, steady rest for his shot. As the buck stood there, I looked him over and he was indeed a mature eight point. I told Martin that he was a nice buck and he replied, "I like him." Before I knew it, off went the safety and a loud bang filled the air. What a great shot! What a great buck!! Martin was so ex-

cited about his big buck and I was excited that I got to experience this moment with him. Shortly after, Dave Petrella and Bill Shelt arrived to help recover Martin's big buck. Lots of pictures were taken of Martin with his prize. There were no shots that night from Al but his guide told him to be patient. His time would come.

That night, Bill Shelt drove Martin and me home. The next morning, Martin took his deer to M M's packing near Loomis, Michigan for caping and processing. A shoulder mount of Martin's buck was donated from the Trophy Room at Jay's Sporting Goods. A huge "Thanks" goes out to the master taxidermist, R. J. Meyers.

Unfortunately I was unable to be there when Al Wilson shot his big buck. But I was honored when I was called and asked if I could give Al and his buck a ride back home. Shortly after getting off the phone with him, I was on the road again. I headed north with my wife, Janet, by my side. When we arrived, we were welcomed with lots of smiles and introductions. Al's buck was a very large eight point. I enjoyed looking at his buck along with hearing the stories from his hunt. After all the excitement, Dave Knarr gave my wife and me a sightseeing tour of the estate. It was nice to look at all of the amazingly large bucks and elk that were on the estate. After the great tour we headed back to load up Al and his buck. As we were about to leave, Cindy and Rodger showed up for Cindy's hunt. Dave Knarr was her guide and he shared with her his famous advice, "Just be patient".

Janet and I drove Al home. When we arrived we transferred the buck from my truck to his. Al was so excited he wanted to drive around and show off his big buck to his family and friends. The next day I caped out Al's buck and delivered it to the Woodland Taxidermist, Jeff Tyson. This was another donation of a shoulder mount for a Veteran. It was an honor to hunt with these two great men and to be in the great company of everyone at the PK Ranch. 🍖



Our successful hunter, Martin Bergey.
What a buck!!



Al Wilson with his mount.



Dave and Danae Petrella

Leadership Training in Jackson Hole, Wyoming

by Mike Strobe



Kevin Unger, Tim Schafer,
Mike Strobe, Stony Bing

At the end of August I had the opportunity to join our chapter president, Kevin Unger and fellow board member, Tim Schafer on a trip to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. The purpose of this trip was to visit our AWLS ranch for board member training. The AWLS ranch is our American Wilderness Leadership School where we send five teachers a year for wilderness training. This is an effort to help pass on everything SCI stands for and believes in to our youth through those who teach them on a daily basis.

As head chairperson of our AWLS program, I have received some amazing letters telling me what a life altering experience these teachers had at the AWLS ranch. So imagine my excitement when I was told that I had the opportunity to go to Jackson Hole and experience this for myself. The AWLS ranch is located in the Teton Mountains of Wyoming and is one of the most beautiful Places I have visited.

The two days of board member training was very educational and definitely worth it. There are many new and innovative ideas you learn to make you a better board member and to help your chapter be the best it can be. I would encourage every chapter to make an effort to send their board members to Jackson Hole for training. Another advantage was getting more comfortable with the way things work on the national level. Tim and I had the opportunity to stay in Jackson Hole and join our president at the national board meeting. This meeting is held at the Snow King Ski Resort each year.

During this time we were able to meet and talk to most of the board members on the national board, including the newly appointed president John Whipple. I learned very quickly that things on the national level are not as intimidating as one might think. I found out everyone on the national level can be contacted very easily and are willing to help you in any way possible. No matter what chapter you belong to or what board you sit on, we are all supporters of the same organization. The greatest organization in the world for hunters rights.

In talking to our national board members, it was agreed upon that one misconception is that SCI is an organization of rich hunters that hunt in Africa all the time. That could not be further from the truth. SCI is an organization that fights for the rights of every hunter. From those who travel the world, to those who hunt in their own back yards. SCI on the national level is working on redirecting peoples thoughts on this subject.

Another benefit to this trip was the opportunity to meet and talk to presidents from other chapters around the country. Sharing hunting stories and talking about our chapters was a lot of fun. It was also encouraging to find out about the chapters SCI has in Canada and overseas. I was amazed to hear how the numbers of these chapters are rapidly growing. I met many great people within the SCI organization, with whom we exchanged contact information and also got some invites to hunt in their home states. After talking about our annual fundraiser, some of the chapter presidents we met, agreed they wanted to attend our fundraiser in February. We were presented with some very good ideas to add to our fundraiser and I am looking forward to it myself. After this enlightening experience I hope to return to Jackson Hole someday. 🐾



Tails-A-Waggin' Pheasant Hunt

by Jim Gray

I purchased a pheasant hunt at the Expo last winter with the Tails-A-Waggin' Hunting Preserve operated by Chuck and Joan Connell in Marion, Michigan. I called Chuck and arranged to upgrade the purchased hunt to accommodate my kids and grandkids! We arranged the date of November 10, 2012 hoping the weather would be cool and comfortable. My four granddaughters and grandson all attended hunters safety classes and got their certificates. We then had a practice clay shoot in September shooting over 200 clays and approximately 500 rounds of ammo!

We all met on November 10, 2012, at 8:00 a.m. on a cool morning with scattered snow and mist falling. We had 22 in all counting young walkers and hunters. The young walkers were allowed to help net the pheasants in the pens to put out in the field. We had arranged to have a second dog handler (Mike Miller) in addition to Chuck and divided the hunters into two groups. The young walkers would walk behind the shooters so they could also enjoy the fun in the field. We had a full morning of flushing birds and shooting excitement and retired at about 1:00 p.m. to moose burgers on the grill and some moose chili!

We then drove to Big Rapids and took everyone to the Card Wildlife Museum. We had a fabulous day of outdoor fun and exercise. We recently attended Big Buck Night in Mt. Pleasant and I won the raffle for a pheasant hunt at Tails-A-Waggin' and have already upgraded the hunt for the second annual Gray family hunt! Hope you enjoy my photos. 📷





SCI Mid Michigan Veteran Hunter of the Year 2012

Sgt. Jeremy Ramirez (wounded Iraq)

11 pt. whitetail first ever deer

SCI Mid-Michigan's Veteran Hunter of the year 2012

by Bill Shelt

At our local SCI board meeting, Roger Froling told me he met a disabled vet. Roger asked him if he may be interested in hunting? The vet said yes, but hasn't had a chance. Now think about this....a disabled vet meets a stranger in a gun store. They talk for a short while ...the vet gives the stranger his phone number with the chance of going hunting someday. I received the vet's number and called Jeremy Ramirez. We talked and Jeremy said he had never been deer hunting but was looking forward to going some day.

You see, Jeremy was in the Army and felt he would retire from the Army. After several duty's of conflict he, as a Sergeant, was sent to Iraq in 2008. Within one hour of landing he was sent on his first mission. Every day he saw conflict. Jeremy had then and has now the attitude to fight for his country and to take the cards he was dealt. Jeremy is a fighter not a quitter. He is one of many fine soldiers fighting for our freedom. With three months of Hell, Jeremy and his squadron of 10 took fire and he was hit three times with leg and back injuries. Jeremy was transported to a hospital in Germany. The doctors didn't want to do surgery in Germany because after surgery he would have to recoup in Germany far away from his wife and family. So for sixteen days Jeremy was lying in a bed with morphine drip to help with the pain. As Jeremy recalls, he would literally count the seconds before he could have more morphine. Jeremy was sent back to the states for the long and painful months and years of healing. Jeremy was not ever supposed to walk again. The doctors fused bones to put Jeremy back together. His strength and determination has proven the doctors wrong.

Jeremy first started walking with a quad cane. After a short period of time he changed to a single cane. Although Jeremy is in a wheelchair most of the time, he does well getting around short distances with his cane. We arranged to take Jeremy hunting white tail yet this year, in fact within 1 ½ weeks from our first



Jeremy Ramirez
and Bill Shelt



Jeremy,
guide Dave Knarr and Dave Petrella

contact. We hunted on an enclosure, PK Ranch in Lewiston, MI., Owned and operated by David Petrella. We started at meeting Jeremy for the first time in Bay City at my house along with my friend and right hand man for Vet hunts Randy Raymond. 9 a.m. was our meeting time and the start of our exciting hunt.

Driving up to Lewiston, Randy and I realized very soon we had a real soldier and gentleman with us. Jeremy was very humble and so excited to go hunting for the first time. Before meeting Jeremy I bet we talked ten times and every time with more excitement. Reaching Lewiston at about 11:30 Wednesday, 12/12/12. We were met by Dave Petrella; Denae, his wife; and Dave Knarr, Jeremy's guide. We had five people to make sure Jeremy's hunt was fun and successful.

Jeremy looking for deer



Entering the blind



After we unloaded our gear at the bunk house, we went back to the lodge for lunch... wild game chili. Just as you might guess, Danae is a wonderful hostess and cook. With a full belly and lots of anticipation we went back to the bunk house to re-dress for the cold. As it was a typical Michigan December day in the upper 20's and 30's, with about 3" of white stuff on the ground, calm winds out of the southwest. When we were dressed and ready we took Jeremy to a ground blind where he sat with Dave, his guide and Randy Raymond. Jeremy was shooting a Winchester model 77, 25 cal. WSSM with a Zeiss scope. What Jeremy was after was an older buck at least 4 1/2 years old with 8 points, approx. 125 to 130 inch class deer.

That afternoon they saw lots of deer...6 points, young 8 points, and 10 points plus and several elk. Big elk! Every time Randy or Dave said there's an 8 point Jeremy would perk up and say "Can I shoot it?" "No, It's too small, we can do better". That afternoon put lots of smiles on Jeremy's face with deer after deer. But not the right one. Back to the lodge for dinner and some adult beverages. Dinner was superb. Moose roast and a pork loin with all the trimmings. We all hit the sack early about 9:30 to get ready for the next day's hunt.

The next morning, back to the same blind with Randy, David and Jeremy. Again nice 8 point. "Can I shoot it?" Jeremy would ask. Just as you would think ...no we can do better. We all thought Jeremy would have his deer that morning. But it was not to be. Lunch was on and a bit of rest until mid- afternoon. Mixing things up in the afternoon, Jeremy and Randy went to another ground blind while David and Dave Petrella walked a bit to see what was happening and move the deer around. Late afternoon Randy and Jeremy saw a buck come within 140 yards and bed down. They could not get a good look at it but thought it was an 8 point. At about 5:15 p.m. it becomes too dark to shoot. Approx. 4:35 p.m. there was a shot in the woods. It startled the buck lying down near Jeremy. The buck stood up. Jeremy had the gun up and scope on that direction, however there were lots of trees

between them. Randy looked at the deer, once it was in the clearing, and said to shoot it. But it was moving and too many trees. With a grunt call the deer stopped, but no shot. The deer moved again, another grunt call. When the deer stopped this time it presented an ever so small of a shot though the V of a tree. Shoot Jeremy! He didn't have to be told twice. The bullet seemed to have eyes as it found the mark and Jeremy's well placed shot earned him his first deer. This deer was at least 4 1/2 years old and had 11 points.

After the deer was down, Everybody, Dave, Dave, Randy, Jeremy and myself were smiling with plenty of "high fives", "Jeremy, well done", "great shot" and a hug or two. The pictures began and well deserving. This was not only Jeremy's first hunt, first deer, but a great day at that. We loaded the deer and everyone in the Ranger and off to the lodge to celebrate with a light dinner.

A great time, a great hunt for a deserving soldier that represented our country boldly and proudly. Thanks Jeremy! In thinking about this hunt, preparing for it and also writing this article how proud I am for Jeremy and all of our service people. No man is an island and I want to thank Mid -Michigan Chapter SCI for sponsoring the hunt; Dave and Danae Petrella of PK Ranch for the hunt; and Wildlife Gallery Taxidermy for donating a full shoulder mount for Jeremy.

We will look forward to honoring Jeremy at Big Buck Night as SCI Mid -Michigan Veteran Hunter of the Year 2012. Jeremy's family includes his wife, Ana; daughter, Zoey 1 1/2 and son, 6 year old Cruz, who will be attending Big Buck Night with his Dad. 🍀

Bailey's Buck

by Randy D. Raymond

Every year the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International sponsors a hunt for a handicapped youth. This year I had the opportunity to choose one youth I thought would best benefit from this hunt. Right away I knew the best candidate. About four years ago I met a young five year old at an outdoor event. His name was Bailey Dole. Even at the young age of five I could tell Bailey had the passion for hunting. Ever since then he has just grown with more passion and excitement for the outdoors. This article is about the wonderful opportunity I was able to experience with an extraordinary young man.

Bailey's dream came true when he was told he was the one that was chosen for the Safari Club handicapped youth hunt. His excitement just filled the room. Bailey and his family were told that he would have the opportunity to hunt at Dr. Alan Bugai's deer ranch in Clare, Michigan. The hunt would be on October 13, 2012.

Weeks before the hunt, Bailey practiced shooting his .243 to prepare for the big hunt. He wanted to make sure he made the perfect shot at his big buck. Excitement filled the air up to the big day. Bailey was all ready and couldn't wait for the day to arrive.

The morning of October 13 was a cold and rainy one. Even with the bad weather, Bailey was prepared. He was all ready with rain gear and warm clothing. When Bailey arrived at the ranch, Dr. Bugai asked him if he was ready for his big hunt. With a big smile ear to ear, Bailey answered, "Yes", he was ready. Everyone seemed to be ready that morning except for the buck. He was nowhere to be seen. Finally after walking around awhile, I spotted the large buck bedded under a cedar tree. All of a sudden the buck jumped up and ran for more cover. Bailey patiently waited for the perfect shot on his first buck. Bailey and his dad, Jason, along with Bailey's stepfather, Brian Ames, snuck in the edge of a ridge. Now that Bailey was perfectly hidden he waited for his perfect shot. From a distance I watched as the buck past once again in front of the ridge. Trying not to make any fast movements Bailey prepared himself for the shot of his life. Time stood still as Bailey took down the very alert buck in the tall grass.

Filled with excitement, Bailey was off on his adventure of tracking his big buck. Bailey was the first to find



October 13, 2012
Dr. Alan Bugai, Bailey and Jason Dole

blood leading everyone to his buck. Upon finding the large deer, there was lots of excitement from everyone. There were lots of hugs, knuckle bumps, and some tears of joy, yet Bailey was still in the zone, ready for pictures with his buck of a lifetime. Then he was right there ready to dress his deer with help from his dad. That is a true hunter for you. Dragging the large buck up the hill was tough, yet with help from all the men there, the task was completed. Bailey and I followed behind with his gun. Bailey watched his dad and stepfather as they put his trophy buck in the back of the truck.

Thanks to Jeff Simon, Bailey was able to keep his buck in a walk-in cooler, as he waited to take it to the Wildlife Gallery. The Wildlife Gallery generously donated a shoulder mount to Bailey. Dole is very grateful to everyone who helped him achieve his dream of getting his big buck. Now he will have a large reminder every time he looks up at the mount on his wall. Dreams do come true. 🐾

Africa (A little different)

by Dr. Peter Bucklin

I'm not yet at the point of not buying green bananas, but at 77, it might be wise to decide if "enough is enough" or figure out what might be a cap on the African trophy collection.

I called fellow SCI member and bow hunter extraordinaire, Mike Spence, and asked where to go for a black wildebeest, zebra, and bush pig.

The answer was "Boy, have I got the place for you!"

A call to the outfitter in the Eastern Cape, a study of the mailed brochure, and a deposit was on its way.

I intended to do it with archery equipment, and both Mike and the outfitter recommended a later than earlier hunt due to too much natural food being available to bait effectively.

The openings were April or September. Well, referring back to green bananas and health issues, I decided on sooner than later, trying with the bow first and going gun if necessary. I was okay with that.

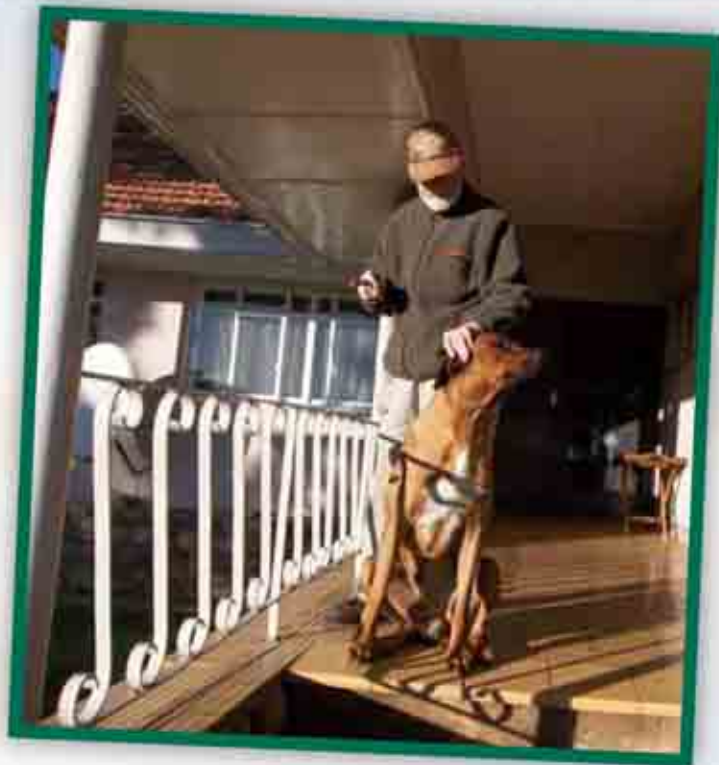
Arriving Port Elizabeth April 12 and met by Arthur, a lovely lunch on the terrace of a hotel overlooking the Indian Ocean, a short drive to Blaaukrantz, and I was dealing with dialing in the bow at the sighting-in venue with mixed results.

"Boy," I thought, "The shot opportunities better be really close, or its gunsville."

The next day I was hooked up with my PH, Paul Smith, and his head tracker, Obi. Paul, besides PH-ing, is owner and operator with eight full-time employees of a full-service taxidermy studio in Port Elizabeth. On the way home I got a tour of his operation. It's big, busy, and the work looks first-rate.

We headed out for a wildebeest, and in no time a really impressive blind was set up in some thick brush. We weren't there for long before I heard from our left loud shouting accompanied by the occasional vehicular horn blast.

I whispered to Paul, "What in the world" -- only I did not say "world" -- "is going on over there? Don't they know we're hunting here?"



Paul answered, "They're our drivers."

Oh really? So this is a drive?

It wasn't long before the thundering herd, 20-some in number, flashed by at 60 yards, tails thrashing and heads swivelling in classic black wildebeest style.

Not long after they passed, the show repeated itself. The drivers had made a very wide circle, and the whole scene repeated itself from right to left. After another time or two around with some animals bailing out in smaller groups, I asked Paul why they just kept running back and forth over the same ground.

His answer: "They like it here."

That sure sounded "different" to me. In hunting whitetails in Michigan for 50 years, I have never participated in or partaken in a drive. But I get the impression that when they exit that wood lot or whatever, it's usually helter-skelter, and they're not particularly motivated to return to that exact area anytime soon, especially en masse, nose to tail.

But it was encouraging and fun. They were just a little too far away and moving. Not a good archery set-up that time around.

The next day we changed the blind to just the opposite side of their "slot." Basically, the same thing happened until a lone bull wandered in and Paul whispered, "Pick up your bow." At 65 yards, he stopped.





Dr. Peter Bucklin with his zebra and black wildebeest



I was, "Come on, come on" to myself.

No go.

He did a slow turn and started walking away. Without a word said, we swapped bow for gun. The thunk of the bullet was loud and clear, but the bull "recovered" (it was a lousy shot) quickly and trotted back the way he came.

As soon as he was out of sight we piled out of the blind and followed on foot. If he makes it back to the herd, we've lost him. After a long trek and two more shots, he was finally down.

I wish I could shoot like I used to. It was ugly. But he was down, and he was mine.

The next day was a short drive to the zebra venue. When we arrived Paul conferred for a long time with a tall young man who was working with a crew on a project close to his house. I didn't know it at the time, but they weren't just passing the time. They were setting up the hunt.

Paul, Obi, and I motored back into the hills on miserably rough and rocky two-tracks. The country was very hilly, very rocky, and very scenic.

The plan, I was to figure out, was for the crew from back at the house to go up high, locate the zebras, and keep Paul in touch by radio phone.

For the next couple of hours or so, we did a lot of

moving in that very rocky and hilly terrain by both vehicle and on foot.

Finally we reached a spot where Paul set up the sticks. I am amazed that the tall young man in the hills could direct us to just the right spot in that country.

Paul pointed and said, "They'll be coming out right there."

I was just a little skeptical. Even with "guidance from above," how could he know the exact spot? But at the same time, I knew he knew. And he did.

A mare, her foal, and the stallion entered on-cue, stage left, at 185 yards. Paul said, "The stallion's the last one."

Bang! Thunk! Down!

A friend once told me to never brag about a spine or heart shot. It means you almost missed too high or too low. But he was "in the salt." Those zebras were neither driven nor chased; only followed. They were just grazing along clueless. Pretty slick.

Next we hooked up with "Harry," a rough-and-tumble Afrikaner with first-rate hounds and a salty tongue. Paul wasn't concerned about my being offended, as it would all be in Afrikaans and directed exclusively at his dogs. Harry was a great guy; big smile, and a heart to match.

Our two vehicles, Harry's filled with 21 dogs and





Hound hunting for bush pigs

two young men with switches to keep everything in order, drove stock fence lines to check holes mostly dug by warthogs that bushpigs also frequented.

Wherever a dig looked semi-fresh, a couple dogs were let loose to check it out. After a few dry holes, a hot one got the dogs out of the truck and on the scent. The howling got closer, then farther away, closer again. Then it was mad dashes over the rocks by vehicle and on foot to intercept.

The dogs gave up, exhausted. Pigs, one; hunters, zero.

That evening we set up 50 yards from a partially-buried bait. Shortly after dark, a boar and sow bushpig were on the bait. They overlapped each other for what seemed like an eternity. No shot. When they finally separated, it was just too dark for me to see well enough to attempt the shot.

A full moon was rising, and I thought I could pull it off. As if on

cue, rain clouds moved in, complete with rain, and that ended it.

Paul could see the pig just fine. Unfortunately, my night vision is practically nil. Looking through Arthur's night-vision binoculars, the pigs stood out like they were in a flood-lighted police lineup. But that didn't transfer to the rifle scope.

It was a downer, especially with Harry's dogs needing a day to recuperate. Pigs, two; hunters, zero.

A second attempt with Harry and his dogs started off with the dogs in full howl. It was hectic and exciting, constantly anticipating a cut-off point while running over those ubiquitous rocks.

While I was hobbling along in my old-but-still-pretty-spiffy Daners, Paul and Obi were usually almost out of sight in front of me. And, oh, yeah, I noticed one of Obi's tennis shoe laces was untied. I couldn't believe it.

Finally, from Paul, "The pig's bayed. We've got to get in there now."

This was it. No more of those plush rocky trails and



two tracks, it was into the thorn brush. Thank the lord Paul reminded me later it was only 50 yards. It could have been a half mile.

Before I reached the scene, Paul had opened a hole to shoot through that you could maybe force a softball through. It was semi-controlled chaos: The deafening din of the dogs; Paul, Obi, Harry, the dog-boys, the dogs, and the pig all in a space you could cover with a tarp.

When the pig presented right, Paul yelled over the dogs, "Shoot!" I put a round through the hole in the thorn brush, and it was all over. The range was in the neighborhood of 5 feet. I've chased cats behind hounds, but never got that close. Certainly, for me anyway, a different and unique experience.

What a gas.
Back at the skinning shed, I smoked a celebratory cigar while watching Obi do the skinning, which he did expertly, sleeving the pig's cape. No incisions for the taxidermist to have to sew.

And, oh, yeah. He stopped long enough to tie his tennie while still holding his knife. Honest! Kids, do not try this at home! I couldn't believe it.

The Rudmans, Arthur, Trinette, and their sons



(also PHs) Eardley and Francois and staff were warm, welcoming, and gracious hosts. Mike was right on: Blaaukrantz was indeed "the place for me." 🐾

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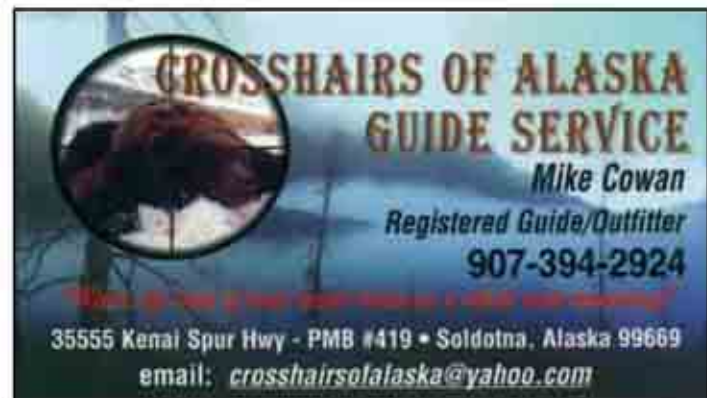


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