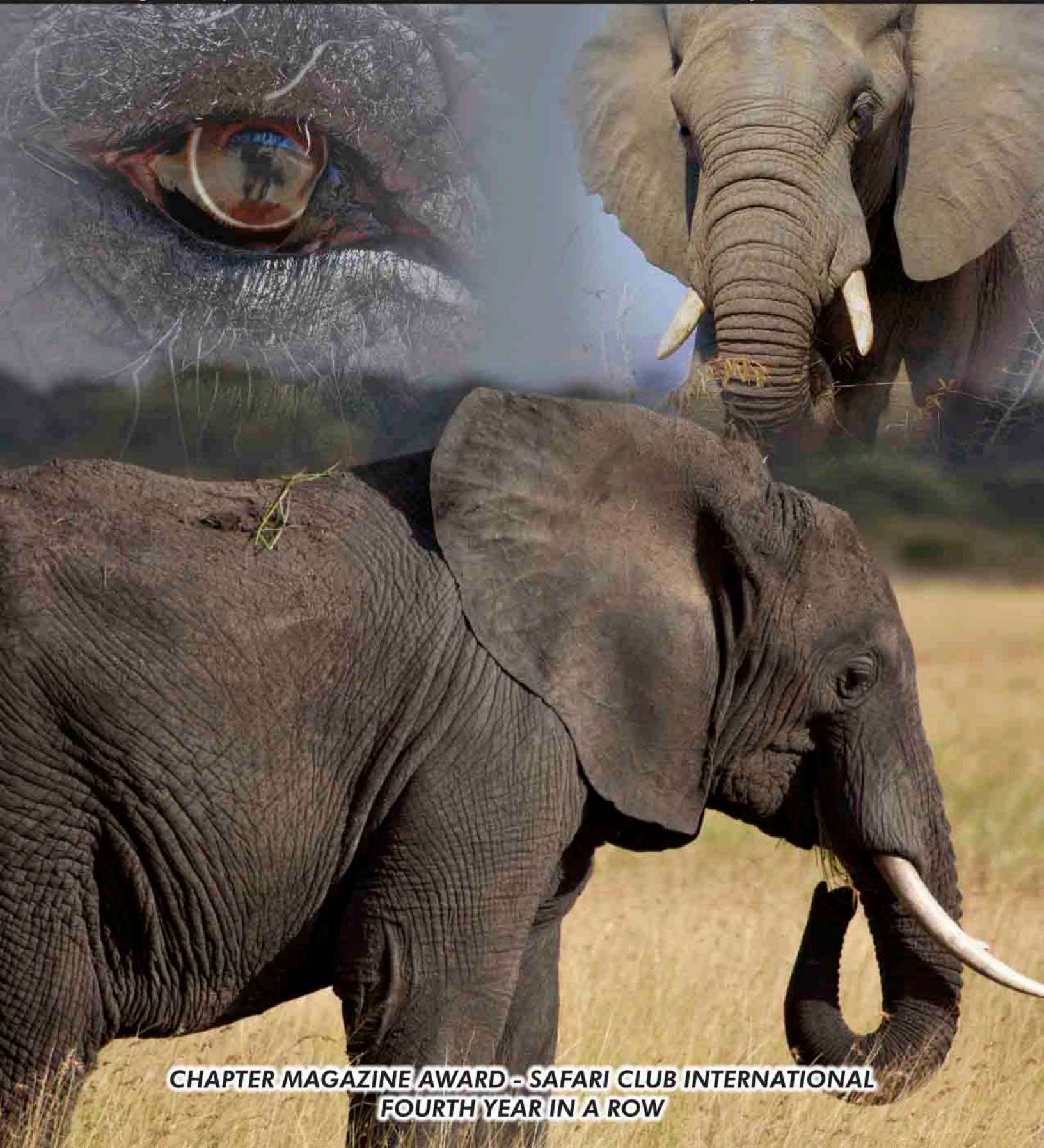


FRONT SIGHT



Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

April - June 2014, Issue 26



**CHAPTER MAGAZINE AWARD - SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL
FOURTH 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 4440 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, Brad Eldred, Roger Froling, Don Harter, Larry Higgins, Scott Holmes, Joe Mulders, Bill Shelt, Art Street.

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Humanitarian Services -

Handicapped Youth Hunt - Randy Raymond

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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Board members working on the fundraiser at Harter's.

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Meeting Type	Time	Location
April 7, 2014	Board Meeting	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
April 7, 2014	Membership Meeting	6:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn
May 5, 2014	Board Meeting	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
May 5, 2014	Membership Meeting	6:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn

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

Your President - Kevin Unger

We just finished our 2014 fundraiser at the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort. We had over 70 vendors there between outfitters and hunting exhibitors. We had companies such as PSE Archery, Browning Safes, and Zeiss Scopes exhibit for the first time, just to mention a few. We had outfitters from all over the world including Ireland, Russia, British Columbia, Alaska, Africa, New Zealand and many more.

The show was a big success despite the bad weather on Friday, the 21st. We normally have an average of 1,200 to 1,500 people come through the doors on Friday, but with the adverse conditions we had less than 300. We still had a great auction on Friday night and I personally would like to thank everyone who was able to attend.

When the weather cleared up on Saturday, we had many visitors and over 600 people for dinner and the auction. We had special guests, SCI's CEO Phil DeLong and National SCI President Elect Larry Higgins. What a great honor to have two of SCI's top officials attend our fundraiser.

I would personally like to thank our board of directors for all of their hard work to make our show such a success. Our show will be the last weekend in February next year at the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort. I hope everyone will be able to attend as it will be another great show.

Sincerely,



Kevin Unger
President, Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI



Editor's Message

We have all been experiencing a very cold and snowy winter and are ready for warmer weather. Hope our wild life have found places to be safe during the extremes. All of the moisture from the snow is supposed to be needed.

Recently reported to us by Mike Strobe, our chairman of "Sportsmen Against Hunger", 150 # of venison hamburger was donated to the Women's Shelter and 225 # was donated to the Isabella Soup Kitchen along with a check for \$150 each. Many more groups donate this natural meat and we need to acknowledge what they are doing for these needy groups.

We attended the SCI Convention in Las Vegas where our Chapter was recognized for the best magazine and best website. Both Kevin Unger and myself went on stage to accept our trophies. A big "thank you" to all our members for their contributions which make us great! Thanks for sending in so many wonderful stories and pictures.

Our chapter fundraiser was a huge success with many new displays and vendors. Pictures will be in the next issue. To watch Greg Traviss' clip, go to <http://youtu.be/bP-afdZIWHE>

If you have not already signed the petition for the Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act which will protect our hunting rights by making sure that game decisions are made with sound science, provide free hunting and fishing licenses to active military members, and fight Asian carp by establishing an aquatic invasive species emergency response fund, please contact Jim Walker or myself as we have some of the petitions. It is very important that we secure the needed number of signatures so this passes. To sign you must be a registered voter and can only sign once. If you like to hunt and fish and want to pass this activity on to future generations, we must act now.

Keep writing,



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

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

☐ BUSINESS

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

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)

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____

EXPIRATION DATE _____

NAME ON THE CARD _____

APPLICANTS SIGNATURE _____

SPONSORS NAME _____

DATE OF APPLICATION _____

SPONSORS ADDRESS _____



SCI
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

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

Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: JENNY WILLOW
Author: Mike Gaddis
Publisher: The Lyons Press

Copyright: 2004
List Price: \$14.95

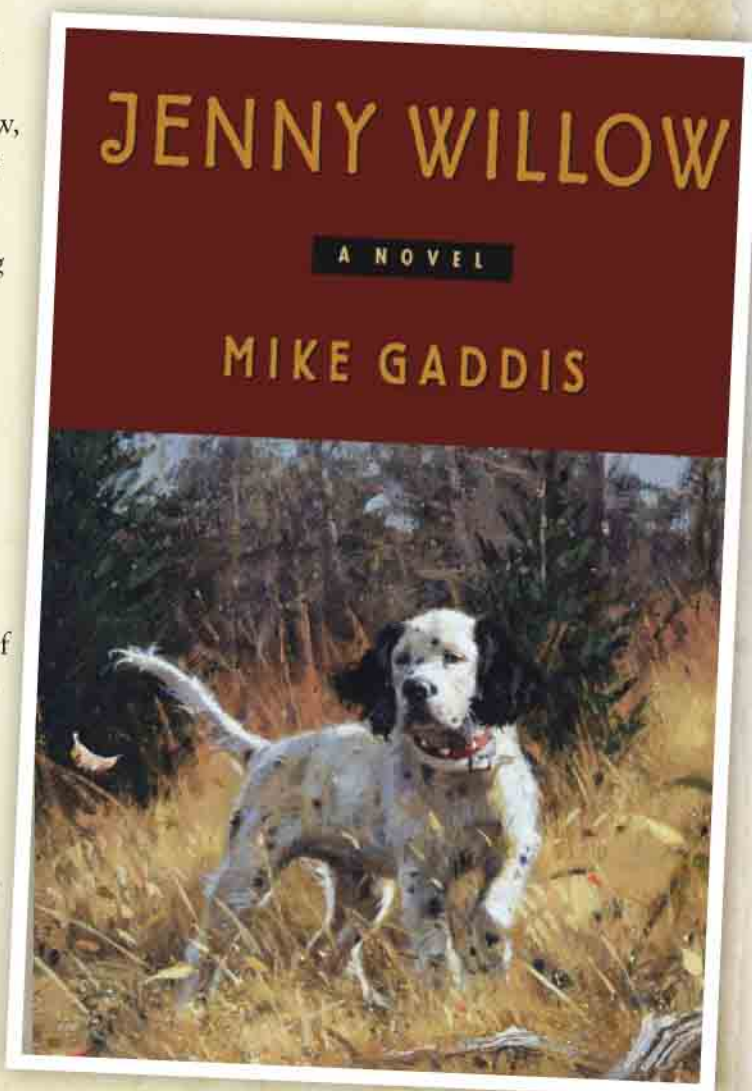


Jenny Willow is not a person as one might expect, but rather a bird dog at the center of this story. A story that starts with Ben Willow, an older gentleman, who enjoys bird hunting in the hills and mountains of his home state of West Virginia. Ben is conflicted because he loves hunting and hunting dogs, but being in his early 80's he decides he shouldn't get another bird dog to replace his last one because it wouldn't be fair to the new dog when he passes. But then he finds Jenny, a young dog whose owner recently died. The two take nicely to one another and their hunting adventures begin.

This is more than a hunting story though; it also contemplates the difficulties of life in ones later years. The book delves into topics such as loneliness, and coping with the loss of loved ones and dealing with all the questions that come with that. As well as dealing with getting older and passing on hunting traditions to young people.

Throughout this book Mike Gaddis goes into great detail explaining the situations and what is occurring. Overall Jenny Willow is a touching story of one older gentleman's love for hunting, the outdoors and his dogs.

This book gets 7 out of 10 bullseyes



Beal City's Big Buck Night



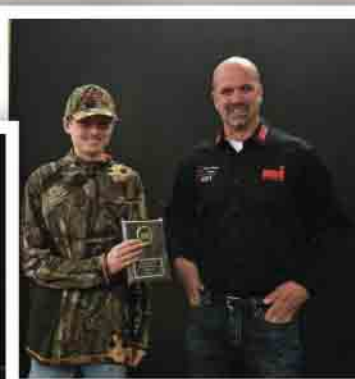
This was the second year for Big Buck Night in the Beal City area. It was sponsored by Mid-Michigan SCI, Tim's Barber Shop, and Dave Connors. To participate in the big buck contest, your buck had to be taken legally in the 2013 whitetail hunting season. It could have been harvested with a gun, bow, muzzleloader, handgun or crossbow.



As you can see from the many pictures, we had a good turnout and many successful hunters and a lot of youth participation.



We will be doing this again next year at Tim's Barber Shop in Beal City. With the upcoming youth season, if you shoot a buck, make sure you stop by Tim's and register it. And, for all hunters, please stop and register your buck. We would love to see all of the successful hunters and their rewards. We would personally like to congratulate everyone that participated and wish you good luck on the upcoming season.



Mid-Michigan SCI's

BIG BUCK NIGHT ★

YOUTH HUNTERS



Youth Hunters:

Silas Howard, Cody Hauck, Tyrell Hoover, Cole Harter, Jenna Koch, Kyler Koch, Michael Lator, and Cody Torpey with Dylan Harter winning for the biggest youth buck.



LASER SHOOT



Many attendees enjoyed our Laser Shoot as you can see from the pictures.

JANUARY 11, 2014

ADULT HUNTERS



Terry Woodbury - Biggest in state rifle

Mike Strobe - Biggest in state bow

Sheila MacEachron - Biggest whitetail taken by a woman

Larry Witte - Biggest out of state rifle

Thom Bott - Biggest out of state bow

Paul Spencer - Biggest estate buck

Tanner Chambers - Biggest Youth Estate

Marvin Ludwig - Biggest in state muzzleloader

Ransom Leppink - Out of state muzzleloader

Terry Woodbury - Biggest in state crossbow

Ranson Leppink - Biggest out of state mule deer

Mike Strobe - Overall biggest buck in the state

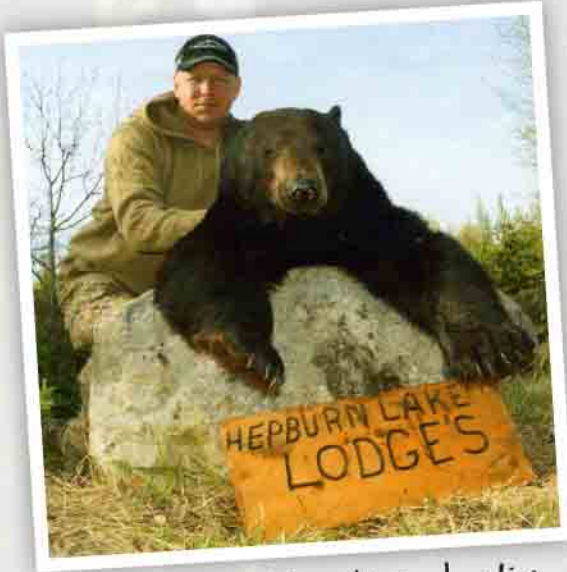
Thom Bott - Overall biggest buck out of state

Cody Hauck - Biggest non member deer (free membership)

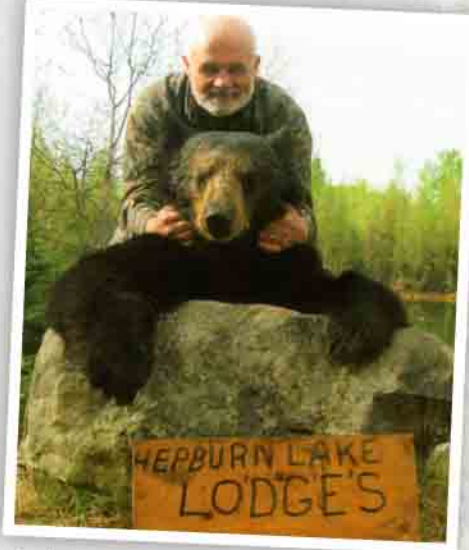
MidMichigan Chapter Takes a Veteran Bear Hunting

**Thanks to Arlee Thideman of Hepburn Lake Lodge
for Donating the Veterans Hunt!**

by Jon Zieman



Ryan's Bear at the skinning location.



Jon's Bear at the skinning location.

0255 Hours, Friday May 17th, I arrive at Ryan's house near Leslie, MI. We introduce ourselves and load up. We start a trip which began back in February at the MidMichigan Chapter's Annual Fund Raiser. Quickly we get acquainted while driving. It was not surprising as we share some similar as well as different Army backgrounds and of course an interest in hunting. He had also agreed to the 0300 am departure time without a blink. His wife had concerns about a 30 some hour drive with someone he did not know. My wife had similar feelings which she mentioned to me after returning from the trip.

How did we get to this point? Arlee Thideman of Hepburn Lake Lodges had generously donated a bear hunt for a veteran to support our Take a Veteran Hunting program at the chapter's annual convention. I suggested that the veteran should not be sent by air travel, but rather by truck and be accompanied by a club member. Hence, I was enlisted (i.e. volunteered) and talked to Arlee to book the hunt. I will admit that is was not

hard to pony up as I had wanted to hunt there for quite a while. Nick Giuliani of NAC Taxidermy donated the veteran's choice of taxidermy on their bear.

A veteran had been immediately identified for this hunt and was ready to go. However, at a relatively late date he received orders for pre-deployment training and would not be able to make the trip. Rick Briggs of BI-AMI (Brain Injury Association of Michigan) came to the rescue. We discussed the trip and he rapidly came up with a veteran and some backups. Rick is a local mythological figure famous for his connections to disabled veterans.

The veteran, CPT Ryan Senn, is currently the Assistant Operations Officer (S3) for the 1st Battalion of the 125th Infantry. His military background started an enlisted Soldiers in the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) assigned to a Long Range Surveillance Detachment. He finished his active duty enlistment and joined the Michigan Army National Guard, assigned to an Explosive Ordinance Disposal Company. Ryan then

returned to college, participated in ROTC and became an Infantry Officer. He served as a Platoon Leader in Iraq (2005 – 2006) and as a Company Commander in Iraq (2008). He then became a Military Intelligence Officer and deployed to Afghanistan as an Intelligence Officer (2011-2012). Ryan has since returned to the Infantry and is currently stationed in Saginaw, MI. In the meantime he was married and now has a young daughter who will likely love fishing as much as her father. Ryan was subjected to several IDE blasts while serving in Iraq. He is largely recovered but lingering effects of TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) are occasionally suffered.

We traveled towards Saskatchewan arriving in Minot, ND around 900 pm, where coincidentally I have family. We had a quick visit with my father and sisters before spending the night at the farm. We had Taco John's for breakfast with the family and head out to get some Canadian money. This turned out to be more difficult than anticipated. It needs to be ordered well ahead of time where I live, but thought it might be easier in Minot. Well, it was possible but it did take some time so we were not early birds leaving this day.

We hit Canada in a couple of hours and shortly thereafter Estavan, SK. The Province had just started up a new computerized licensing system to "improve service". I had printed a list of license vendors and we started hitting them up. One after another could not sell the required licenses and provide the tags. We found a place that could, but only on Monday through Friday. Eventually, we found the Shell station that everyone said would handle the licenses and in fact did! The changes to the Saskatchewan license system certainly did not have the bugs worked out.

Talking to Arlee after getting the licenses it was decided to go right to camp and we arrived at Napatak on the shore of Lac La Ronge around 1130 pm Saturday night. We met everyone and settled in. Darlene, Arlee's wife runs the camp house along with Niki, Ken's girlfriend. Ken, Arlee's son guides and runs the hunting while Arlee is at the fly in camp. Doug Hayes who owns



Top: Phil and Dan get a bucket of popcorn for the baits.



Bottom: Custom Quad trailer used by Hepburn Lake Lodge to carry bait and recover bears.

North of 49 Outfitters was helping out as another guide. The other hunters in camp were Phil and Dan, a pair of pharmacists from Missoula, MT.

Starting that evening and continuing the next morning Arlee took plenty of time to work with Ryan on bear size determination and shot placement. Ryan, while an experienced whitetail and bird hunter had never hunted bear. He and his father are eagerly anticipating getting Michigan bear licenses in the near future as they have acquired some points. They regularly see bear sign and an occasional bear on their Michigan hunting property.

We have breakfast at 1000 am Sunday and then get ready to go to the stands. The hunters were all using

archery equipment. We took a few minutes to check our gear and shoot a few arrows. Ryan and I shoot Matthews bows while Phil and Dan, the pharmacists, were shooting Hoyts. We share some good natured ribbing about equipment choices. Arlee prefers non-mechanical broadheads; Ryan and I were both using NAP Thunderheads.

Ken, Doug and Arlee get the hunters to our stands. Arlee and his crew use a secret baiting recipe and stand rotation to harvest big bears routinely. Ok, maybe the recipe is not secret, but it sure sounds like a better story when it is said that way. Chicken fryer grease and popcorn along with Meat scrapes are the staple ingredients in the bait.

Ryan goes to the Hole stand while I put in at Grandpa's stand. Dan and I see no bears. I was very close to a stream and that suckers were running may be the explanation. Phil sees several small ones. Ryan watches one medium size bear for about three and a half hours. Ryan sees another bear about three hours after the first one leaves. He is unsure of the size and takes multiple pictures and some video to help him discuss the size with Arlee and Ken later. Eventually, after watching the bear for almost 40 minutes, the bear does the "barrel comparison" and Ryan sees it is within a couple of inches of the top. He decides it is a shooter and takes a shot. The

bear travels about 10 yards before collapsing, a great shot! The bear is easily recovered in no small part due to good planning and equipment by the outfitter. It is stretched out to cool overnight. Pictures and skinning follow in the morning. The bear is estimated to weigh over 350 pounds and the skull green measures 19". The meat, skull and hide are allowed to properly finish cooling out and then frozen.

Monday morning Ryan has the whole camp cracked up when he, with great comic timing drops in the old duffer comment on me. I had told the story on how my kids had very carefully explained to me that I was most definitely an old duffer but certainly not an old geezer. He is assigned a quad and goes about helping with the baiting as the remaining hunters head to their stands.

I am put into Kegan's Stands on this Monday early afternoon. This did require some effort as a large beaver dam had broken and washed out the makeshift plank bridge on the trail in. After four hours on stand, I see one moderately large, but non-shooter bear. It stays around about 20 minutes before wandering back into the brush. It has an interesting white patch on its chest sublet with a black "T" inside. Prior to going to the stand, I had discussed with Ken about when to pick me up in the evening. He decides on the way back in to wait an extra five or ten minutes before coming to get me. This proves important as about four hours later, I see another bear. The split second I see it I know it is a shooter and I slowly get ready. This proves rather difficult as my left knee was completely asleep after eight hours hardly moving on the stand. I could not completely fully straighten it nor put weight on it. It takes a couple of minutes to settle down; perhaps the old duffer tag on me was germane. Eventually, I end up putting an arrow into the bear at 25 yards and feel a moment of near panic. It was not a pass through shot! I was 16 feet up and the bear was slightly quartering away. This was short lived



Jon's bear after mounting by NAC Taxidermy.



Ryan's bear after mounting by NAC Taxidermy.

as I heard the death moan seconds after the bear runs off. I estimated it at 60 to 70 yards from the stand. Ken and Ryan show up some number of minutes later. We start to track the bear through some dimpled muskeg dotted with small saplings. We can find basically no blood on the dark moss, but follow the direction the bear took off in and towards where the death moan originated. We find the bear after about 40 to 45 yards. Some excellent quad driving by Ken and a little chain saw work made the recovery! The bear was stretched out to cool overnight with pictures and skinning the next morning. The bear is estimated to weigh over 400 pounds and the skull green measures 19.5".

I find out that Ryan had a great time working the baits. Both of us planned to helping with the baiting on Tuesday. Not only fun, this gives the meat, hide and skull as chance to freeze hard before the trip home. Ryan asked if he could sit a stand with his camera to observe and ended up sitting on the Lidia stand. He collects some nice video of

three cubs playing around the location. Yes, there were a couple of tense moments when a cub looked like it was going to come up the tree. Ryan thought perhaps the mother might get excited if the cub was startled by noticing him and respond precipitously.

Wednesday morning all the take home parts are well frozen and ready to travel. Ryan and I take off for home. We take turns driving and sleeping and make good time. We drive straight through and Ryan arrives home around 9:00 pm Thursday and I make it home around 11:00 pm. We separately head out to NAC taxidermy in Mt. Pleasant on Friday. The bears are dropped off with Nick Giuliani of NAC Taxidermy. We both go for full body mounts. Bill Shelt of the Chapter made and donated the hard wood base for Ryan's mount.

Hepburn Lake Lodge is an excellent outfitting operation. Nick did an excellent job on The MidMichigan Chapter really appreciates their donations.

CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

By Larry Witte

Defend Your Right to Hunt, Fish, and Trap

Sign a petition to pass the Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act. Michigan outdoor organizations, including SCI chapters, have created the Citizens for Professional Wildlife Management (CPWM) to ensure game management decisions are made by sound science, not ballot-box biology. To be successful more than 258,000 signatures are needed to support legislation.

This legislation will:

- Protect your hunting rights by authorizing the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to designate game species by using sound scientific management.
- Protect fishing by authorizing the NRC to issue fisheries orders by using sound scientific management. It includes \$1 million for use in rapid response to Asian carp and other invasive species.
- Provide free licenses to all active members of the military.

With your help we can fight back against well-funded out-of-state anti-hunting groups who would take away your hunting, fishing, and trapping rights. Check out the CPWM website at www.citizenswildlife.com and look for CPWM booths at banquets and sporting goods stores where signatures are being collected. Please help by signing a petition and encouraging friends to do the same.



Funding Wildlife Management

The SCI-Michigan Involvement Committee's (SCI-MIC) annual budget for cooperative studies with DNR includes funding from your Mid-Michigan Chapter and other active Michigan SCI chapters along with SCI Foundation (SCIF) matching grants. SCI-MIC meets four times a year with DNR's Wildlife Division to discuss progress and direction of joint studies which presently include the:

- Predator-Prey Project
- Gray Wolf Population Project
- Southern Black Bear Project
- Snowshoe Hare Distribution Project
- Diving Duck Project

SCI-MIC joint project expenditures include payment for travel and various equipment needed by DNR for the studies such as:

- Capture equipment (traps, dart guns, etc)
- Radio and GPS collars
- Portable ultra sound (determine captive doe pregnancy)

- Deer vaginal implant transmitters
- Laptop computers
- Snowmobiles and trailers
- Snowshoes
- Specimen drying ovens
- Chest freezers
- etc.

DNR leverages SCI-MIC funding through the 1937 Federal Aid in Wildlife restoration Act known as The Pitman-Robertson Act (P-R). Pitman-Robertson continues to be an important source of financial aid for wildlife conservation and management in the U.S. The Act levies an 11% federal excise tax on sporting arms, handguns, ammunition and archery equipment earmarked to pay for wildlife management projects in all 50 states. P-R funds are allocated to each state wildlife agency based, in part, on license sales. Obtaining P-R funds requires a 3 to 1 federal to state dollars match.

For example in any given year an SCI-MIC contribution of \$60,000 for joint studies allows DNR to apply for \$180,000 in P-R funds, leveraging SCI-MIC contribution 3 times. Since 1937 the hunting and shooting community has contributed approximately \$8 billion to the P-R Trust Fund for wildlife conservation, restoration and hunter education nationwide. Matching funds 3 to 1 P-R to state dollars has helped to make wildlife agency programs what they are today.

2014 Michigan Hunting License Applications

Spring Turkey: If you didn't remember to apply for your spring turkey license in January, all is not lost. You are able to buy a license for Hunt 234, over the counter, throughout the entire spring turkey hunting season this year.

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

Black Bear: May 1 to June 1 is the application period. If you do not plan to hunt bear in 2014 consider applying for a preference point. You will have a better chance of drawing a tag in the future.

Antlerless Deer: July 15 to August 15 is the application period. See the 2014 Michigan Antlerless hunting digest.

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

Remember, a base license (small game license) is required for every person who hunts after March 1. Hunters must purchase a base license before they can purchase any hunting license in 2014.

TROPHY PHOTOS!

by Ivan Carter



The bull towered over us, his amber eye bright in the early morning light I pointed my laser at the position on his giant wrinkled forehead that would indicate a perfect brainshot. As he swung to leave I again shone the green beam at his ear-hole... it was a ten second moment in a two week hunt but an incredible ten seconds... Evan Douthit, great friend and an excellent hunter, turned to me with a gleam in his eye, shook his head and we walked back to Janine, his wife, and Simon Elton, our cameraman. "I don't think I could ever get tired of this," laughed Evan. "This is beyond my wildest dreams," turning to Janine who was standing there, her Leica camera in her hand smiling broadly.

Several years before we had talked long and hard about an elephant hunt in Botswana, Evan was an avid watcher of "Tracks Across Africa" and thought that this would be the perfect experience... while I am biased, I agree!!

So there we were, four years later... We were hunting the Okavango Delta, in one of Johan Calitz' great concessions and, based on the very, very small quotas in the areas in Botswana we had a tag for but one animal, a trophy elephant. We had 14 days to secure this animal... 14 days in a wilderness with sights and scenery that are a photographers dream. The evenings we spent gathered round the fire exclaiming at each others photos, deleting the bad ones, proudly exclaiming



over the good ones, I realized that both Evan and Janine were getting as much out of their safari photos as they were out of the hunt...the photos were after all, the hunt and this was surely a hunt that would not be symbolized with a single picture of a dead elephant, but rather a series of great pictures of trophy moments leading up to a trophy elephant!

I have for many years been an avid photographer, I have watched photography change dramatically from the old days of Kodachrome 64 film, to the Fujichrome emulsions that we all thought were so great, the digital cameras have taken the world by storm and while every photo still requires some "finishing" the results are spectacular, instant and easy to achieve. The main

camera that I carry these days is my Leica V-LUX 3... small, compact with an excellent zoom and incredible clarity...it's so fast and easy to use and the results are ... well, "brilliant"!

Very often when I have asked someone how their hunt went, be it for a marco polo sheep, an elephant bull or a Spanish ibex, out will come their iphone, ipad or computer, or I will be emailed a picture and I will get to see a trophy photo of the animal – that's always a bit disappointing to me however as, in my opinion that was when the hunt was over...I am far more interested in the shots taken along the way, the scenery, wildlife, terrain, camp and experience that are all so easy to capture in stunning detail are far more part of



the “trophy” than the trophy itself. After all if it wasn’t tough or beautiful we probably wouldn’t be out there! Of course it’s that trophy moment that drives us to the edges of the world in pursuit of our game but it’s the “trophy” moments along the way that keep us coming back for more.

As we continued our safari in the Okavango, though the focus was always on the perfect elephant, it was an amazing excuse to cover countless miles by vehicle and on foot, the variety and array of wildlife was incredible, the birdlife abundant and the photos many ..

Several days into the hunt having passed up well over 100 bulls we came across a bull we simply could not walk away from...feeding on the palm islands. We crept step by step behind him to a distance of just a few yards. Evan made the perfect shot and the transition began, the transition from hunt to kill, marking the end of the quest but also marking success. Ultimate success... a massive old bull killed cleanly in a perfect surrounding...its always a very emotional time, the exhilaration of success, the mourning of the passing of a great monarch... the kill marks the end of the hunt yet





it's the very moment that will drive a passionate hunter to the very brink to achieve that one moment....very difficult to put into words...

A few days later as we selected out our best photographs, relived those memories and together planned out a great photobook, a book that told the story, in pictures not words. To those that were there these were not just pictures, these were a long stream of amazing moments I realized that they were all trophy photos and truly the memories that they each represented is the meaning of the word "trophy".

Next time you get out into the field, irrespective of whether or not you kill something, photograph some trophy moments and when someone next asks about the success of your last hunting adventure irrespective of whether or not you made a kill, irrespective of the trophy size, you will have some great trophy moments.



Youth Hunt with 13 year old, Tanner Chambers

by Randy Raymond



I first met Tanner while I was teaching Hunter Safety at Jay's in Clare. I soon was talking hunting with Tanner, asking if he had hunted and what animals he had taken. Tanner had taken a squirrel and a Tom turkey while hunting with his mentor, Don Akans, a Marine Corps Vet that had hunted pheasants on one of our Veteran's Hunts at Tails a Waggin with Chuck Connell. After many questions I ask Tanner if he would be interested in hunting for a whitetail buck.

Tanner's reply was, "Yes, that's been a dream of mine!" More questions with Don about Tanner wondering if Tanner needed a rifle or any hunting gear. Don said, "He's all set." Don had one question. "I hope you're not promising anything you're not going to keep." My reply was, "He's going if I have to pay for the hunt myself. Our word is good. SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter will cover the cost. I'll set everything up for Tanner. No worries."

Later a few calls to different locations working on a limited budget through SCI and Dr. Alan Bugai, owner

of A J Wildlife near Clare, we came to an agreement on a hunt on his preserve. A J Wildlife has some very large whitetails. A better description would be "Huge Bucks". A date was set for October 12th at 11:00 a.m., rain or shine.

This would give Tanner plenty of time to get ready for this hunt. Tanner had practiced with a scoped .223 mini 14. Ready he was for this hunt. Don and Tanner arrived at my home at 10:30 a.m. and we headed for A J Wildlife.

Also on this hunt was Charlie Sensing, an eight year Marine Corps Veteran, now serving in the Army Reserves. Charlie was one of our Veteran deer hunters this year at Dave Petrella's Ranch near Lewiston.

The day was a sunny one, no rain. On arrival we were greeted by Dr. Bugai who asked Tanner if he was ready for this hunt. Tanner replied, "I've practiced my shooting. Yes, I'm ready" smiling from ear to ear. Charlie, Don, Dr. Bugai and Tanner went down the hill getting Tanner in position to hunt for his buck.



I stayed at the top of the hill sitting down against a large oak which was raining acorns. While waiting for a shot, I went over everything that had taken place to make this hunt happen. First finding a hunter deserving of this hunt, a place to hunt in our budget, a taxidermist willing to donate a mount, and a meat processing shop. All I wanted was for Tanner to have a hunt to remember with a great outcome at its end. With a little time invested this all came together:

1. Funding from Mid Michigan SCI
2. Dr. Bugai's estate, A J Wildlife
3. MM Meats doing the processing
4. The Wildlife Gallery donating the tanning
5. Randy's Recreation donating the shoulder mount
6. Two Veterans helping with Tanner.

They all said they would have Tanner's deer head mounted for Big Buck Night on January 11th at the Comfort Inn in Mt. Pleasant. Lots of phone calls setting up this hunt was worth it, absolutely!

Then a shot rang out. I soon saw a buck at the bottom of the hill. He was hit hard. Then shortly I saw Charlie with Tanner under one arm and the rifle in his other hand. It wasn't long and Tanner had his hands on his buck. Lots of hugs, smiles, handshakes, tears, and lots of pictures.

Tanner's dream had come true. Special thanks to everyone that made this happen for Tanner Chambers.



Second Anniversary African Hunt

Mike MacEachron

Stephan whispered "Mac, get ready. A group of Eland will be passing in front of us within 50 yards." I am thinking, "OK. How does he know this?" Stephan then says "See the cloud of dust coming our way? Only Eland will make that much dust." So I got the 300 mag ready. Sure enough, there they were. "Mac, shoot the third one from the left. It is a really good bull." I aimed for the bull's shoulder and squeezed. The big bull only goes 25 steps and drops.

This was my second hunt with Stephan Jacobs of SMJ Safaris in Namibia. The first trip my son, Michael, and my wife, Sheila, accompanied me on our first African safari. We made it a graduation gift for Michael and a one year anniversary gift to each other for Sheila and me. {Front Sights Oct-Dec 2013 issue} I can see this marriage lasting awhile plus we had a great time!

When we returned home from the first trip we showed pictures and videos to many of our friends including Dr. John Ludwig and a good friend from Grand Marais, Jerry Spencer. They were so excited they asked if we would consider going back. Hmmmm...it would be a great second year anniversary gift. Yup, we could consider it!

So here we were in Namibia with good friends sharing new memories. John and Jerry took the great plains game package Stephan offers for Kudu, Gemsbok, Warthog, Springbok and Impala with options to hunt other species for their trophy fees. Sheila and I would pay daily rates and trophy fees for animals harvested. There were a few we didn't shoot the first trip so a great excuse to come back. Also, we chose to book

a 10 day trip rather than a 7 day. Seven is way too short. Trust me, it flies by.

Stephan said, "Mac, the bull will go gold medal and score well into the record book." Heck, I was just happy to be back with friends and, of course, my wife.

When we pulled up to the skinning shed John was there with his PH, Ezak, standing over his Kudu. Jerry and his PH Lowe were with his Gemsbok. What a way to start our safari!

Back at camp after dinner we sat around the campfire talking about the day's hunt. It was really cool to hear John and Jerry and to see the excitement in their faces. I can recall that feeling from our first trip with Stephan.

The next morning after a wonderful breakfast we were off into the bush. Sheila really wanted a Springbok and Stephan has a healthy herd of them. He asked Sheila if she would help him take a management male. He had a particular male that had a weird horn configuration he would like taken out of the herd. Sheila smiled and said "I can do that". So we came to the large field where most of his Springbok hang out and began





glassing for that particular ram. "There he is", Stephan whispered. He was 250 yards to our left and asked if Sheila felt comfortable with that shot. One shot latter we were heading toward Sheila's trophy.

Throughout Stephan's property we saw loads of game – Kudu, Gemsbok, Zebra, Duiker, Hartebeest, and Wildebeest – to name a few. Stephan manages the herds for trophy quality.

I was looking for a good Red Hartebeest. We saw many but not what Stephan was looking for. So back to camp for lunch.

John and Jerry were already back and the smiles told the story. John had shot an odd horned Eland that he liked and Jerry a Kudu.

As the days flew by John and Jerry each collected their desired species. John ended up with Kudu, Gemsbok, Eland, Red Hartebeest Blue Wildebeest Springbok, Impala and Warthog. Jerry collected Kudu, Gemsbok, Blue Wildebeest Springbok, Impala and Warthog. The guys were absolutely captivated by Africa's charm and beauty.

Sheila, on the other hand, was determined to harvest a Black Wildebeest, the clown of the plains. In my eyes, not the smartest species but with the darker color than





the Blue Wildebeest (which Sheila had harvested on our first trip) plus the orangish coloring it makes a very striking animal. Plus it has a free for all attitude. So we drove to an area known to have the “clowns” and began our search. It didn’t take long for the bushmen to find tracks and Stephan and Sheila were on the trail. Stephan was able to get Sheila within 75 yards of a great bull hidden in the bush. “Old dead eye” had her bull!

With only two days left on the safari I was still looking for the Harley Davidson of the plains, the Red Hartebeest. Stephan compares the horns of a Hartebeest with the handle bars of a Harley Davidson motorcycle. I can see the similarity. I believe the Lord had humor and extra body parts when he created the Hartebeest.

We had seen plenty of Hartebeest but still not the one Stephan was hoping to harvest. During the previous days we always kept a lookout but had so far not crossed paths. We were checking one of the waterholes on the concession and there he was with some young bulls and cows. The distance was 175 yards and with a squeeze of the trigger. I had my gold medal trophy.

After dinner Stephan asked if we would like to go shine a couple of fields for critters on his brother’s place. Heck yeah! I’m all about experiences plus you never know what you might see. We saw lots of Steenbok, Duiker and plenty of other species.

I mentioned to Stephen I would like to try for a



Steenbok. So the next day we weren’t even out for ½ hour when the trackers spotted one. Since it was a large field there was no cover to try to get closer. It would be a 300 yard shot. I missed the first shot. The buck ran my way and “ol’ 2 shot” didn’t miss on the second one.

It was the last afternoon of our safari plus the day of our anniversary so Sheila and I wanted to sit in the blind where I had shot my Warthog a year ago. We wanted to take pictures and videos and just enjoy the last day.

I cannot put into words the beauty of seeing Giraffe, Zebra, Kudu, Gemsbok, hilarious Warthogs, and song birds. It really is priceless.

We did bring a gun just in case. When a Jackal interrupted our special moment, a varmint harvest was in order.

For those who have never been to Africa, I cannot express how inexpensive it is especially for a plains game hunt. Stephan’s package hunt is less expensive than a guided western Mule Deer and Antelope hunt.

Some folks talk about how long it takes to get there. When leaving from a major point of departure to Johannesburg, it takes less time to fly than driving to South Florida from Michigan plus you don’t have to do the driving.

So for the hunt of a lifetime give Stephan of SMS Safaris a call or an email. You will be surprised!

Third anniversary.....hmmmm.

CHAPTER MEASURERS

BY
JOANNE WITTE

Many thanks to Jon Zieman, Board Member, for arranging a seminar to train measurers for our chapter. The training was held on December 12, 2013 at the Comfort Inn in Mount Pleasant. Chris Emery, a staff member from the head office of Safari Club International in Tucson, AZ, led the instruction by video. After the training the participants completed a test and received their credentials.

In the past few years our supply of measurers has dwindled for many reasons. Measurers are most needed at our annual Big Buck Night. At that event we need 8 to 10 people so that all the deer can be measured before dinner is served. The more people we have the faster it goes.

The following chapter members completed the training:

- Jon Zieman
- Joe Mulders
- Bill Shelt
- Mike MacEachron
- Randy Raymond
- Scott Holmes
- Nick Giuliani
- Mike Johnson
- Other active chapter member measurers are:
- Joanne Witte
- Don Harter
- Larry Higgins-- Master Measurer
- Tim Torpey—Master Measurer
- Paul Spencer
- Gary Tilmann
- Terry Braden—Master Measurer
- Owen Eldred
- R.J. Meyer

Several other people who were not members of our chapter attended also.

I always urge members to complete the training to become measurers. One of the biggest advantages is that you can measure your own trophies. If you are hunting out of the country this is especially convenient. A member can measure his/her own trophies unless they fall in the top 20 in which case there is a waiting period and a Master Measurer must complete the score sheet. You will be notified by International if your trophy needs to be measured by a Master Measurer.

One easy way to become a measurer is to contact International and arrange to take the course over the internet.

Please consider becoming a measurer and having your name added to our list.

The Last Opportunity to Hunt Botswana Elephants



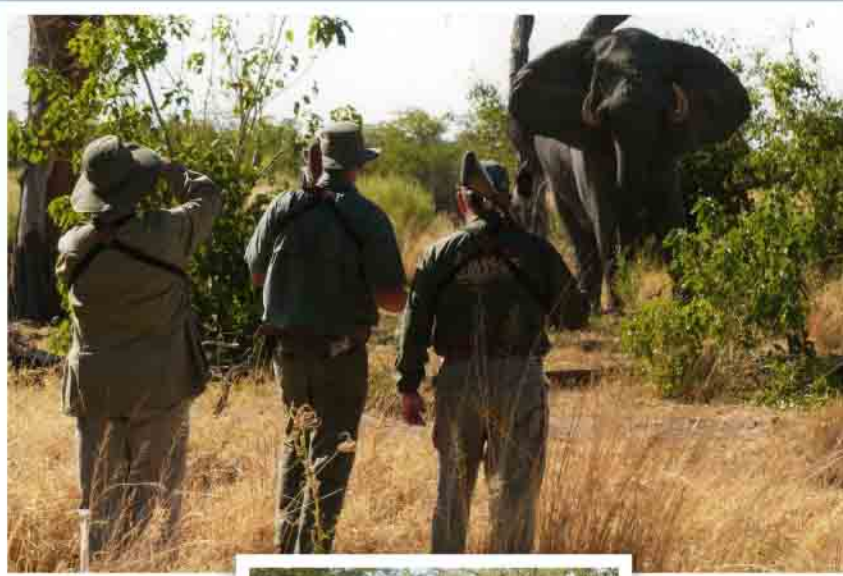
by Don Harter

On May 1, 2013, we flew from Johannesburg to Maun, Botswana. We had just finished a 10 day hunt in South Africa where Mary got a huge male lion to complete her "Big Five".

I had bought a Heym Double 450 NE a couple years ago. While I have shot many animals with it, I have not shot an elephant with this rifle. This was my reason to book another elephant hunt in Botswana. 2013 would be the last year to hunt an elephant in the wild in Botswana as it will be closed to hunting in 2014. What a shame since Botswana has the largest bulls and the country is overrun with elephants.

We met Ivan Carter (my PH and good friend) and others from Johan Calitz camp at the office in Maun, then headed out to Quorokwe Camp, which comprises about one million acres. On the way into camp we saw sixteen bull elephants. What a beautiful camp! We stayed in a huge tent with a living room, middle section for storage, bedroom with a king sized bed, and bathroom with a flush toilet and shower. This first night we were served steak and prawns for dinner.

The camp manager is Brent Dodd and his fiance, Michelle. Our cameraman is Andy McDonald and Michelle is his sister. Brent taught art for 10 years and is now doing some wonderful painting as well as managing this camp. He had several of his oil paintings on display in the dining area. It was very interesting listening to him explain how he saw colors. When he saw an el-



ephant he saw a lot of purple. His paintings have a lot of color and he paints using many different techniques.

The next day, Thursday, we got up at 5:30 a.m. to be out hunting by 7:00 a.m. We saw lots of game including cape buffalo, zebra, giraffe, impala, guinea fowl, wart hogs, kudu, tsessebe, water bucks, ostrich, honey badger, jackal, lion, wildebeest, lots of birds, and 99 bull elephants! We saw cows and calves, also, but most don't stay in this area. What a day!!

The camp is next to the Okavango Delta. It has lots of water everywhere so the area is very green, undoubtedly the lushest area we have hunted in Africa, a "Garden of Eden" for all the animals with all they want to eat and drink. We saw Mopani trees, palms, grasses, and lots of pans with water and hippos.

On Friday, we were up at 5:00 a.m. again, ate breakfast, and were hunting at daybreak. We went to a new area to look for a bigger bull. By 8:00 a.m. we had seen seven bulls. Ivan said, "We need to get a closer look at that elephant off in the distance." After tracking for a couple of miles, we found a lone bull with what looked like nice thick tusks. As we got closer, moving so we had the wind in our face, we finally saw both tusks and Ivan said, "Don, I think we should take this one." As we were watching him, he was broad side at maybe 50 to 60 yards, so I planned a side brain shot. Ivan whispered, "We'll get a little closer." Then the elephant turned to face us and started walking right at us. These bulls are huge standing 14 feet high. He was almost to us when Ivan said, "I think

you better shoot now, Don." The elephant was 14 feet tall and 15 feet away from us when I fired the first barrel. He went down but got back up. The second shot got him in the spine. I had just got my second Botswana Bull with 74" tusks that were 18 1/2" in circumference and weighed 70 pounds each. What a bull!

Afterwards Ivan called the camp to let them know we were successful and to go get the local villagers to come and harvest the meat. With eleven camp staff working, we had the hide and ivory taken care of before the villagers arrived.

Meat is given to one of three villages nearby where about 700 people live. As required by the government, all of the twenty-two camp staff are hired from these villages (Ditsiping, Morutha, and Daunara) and each supports seven people back in their village. When someone is hired the villagers have a kgotla, which takes about three days, in which they decide which person is to be hired. It is based on need, not qualifications. The camp manager is re-



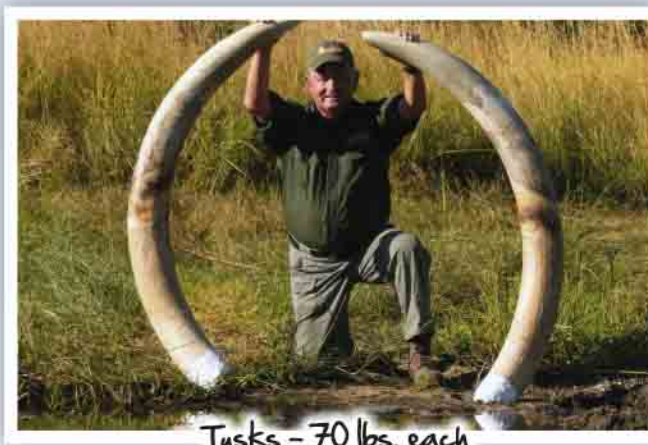
quired to train the new hire for the necessary job.

The people arrived with a whole wagon load to cut up the meat. They spent the day and came back to camp to spend the night before being taken back home the next morning. Nothing goes to waste. They can harvest about

1,500 kilos of meat from one elephant. With hunting ending in this area, many people will be unemployed and go without the much need protein from meat in their diet.

The hunt was over but the next day we drove around just to see what we could find. As we got near the area where my elephant carcass was, the vultures were sitting in the

trees. That only meant one thing! As we got closer, laying next to the carcass was an old, huge, lion with a very large mane. He had taken over and the carcass was now his. He was laying in the shade beside the elephant. His belly was so full he just lay there looking at us. What a sight! We took many photos and then left to let him have his new found treasure.



Tusks - 70 lbs. each





The villagers cutting meat



Elephant meat drying



TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING THE WAY WE HUNT THE WHITE-TAIL DEER

"Not the Old-Fashioned Hunting Camp of our Grandfathers"

by Robert C. Mills, owner of the Pine Hill Club



In my 61 years of hunting the white-tail deer, I have seen many, many changes in the way we hunt. Having grown up in a hunting family, we all looked forward to November and the chance to tag a large Michigan buck. Preparation for the hunt began shortly after the previous hunt was completed as adjustments were made in equipment, rifles, and any improvements that resulted from past year time in the woods. Deer season was like a National Holiday in our family.

Rifles in deer camp in the 1950's were mostly lever action. Winchester M-94 or the Marlin M-336 were the foundation gun for most deer camps in Michigan. Few if any hunter used a scope as this was considered "wimpy" by many in the camp. Five buckle boots were worn over a lace-up leather boot or used with felt insoles to keep feet warm. Most hunters wore red-black

checkered, Soo-Wool hunting suits and the wood stove or oil-burner was the source of heat for most tents. Some hunters used trailers while others chose to stay in local hotels.

Our family used Army Tents that were 16 x 16 with a stove pipe running through the center of the pyramid. Straw was placed on the ground for warmth and hunters sat on stools or chairs around make-shift tables. With such a camp you were either too hot or too cold depending on the intensity of the fire. We had no running water, showers, toilets, etc. The "outhouse" was a crude, make-shift structure in a grove of trees with

usually a tarp to provide privacy. Light was from kerosene lanterns hung in the tent. No cell phones, TV or radio - just laughter from card games and camp jokes from veteran hunters. Killing a buck, under those conditions, was a special event that was celebrated by all in camp. Our group of ten hunters usually harvested 2 or 3 bucks total. On opening evening we would always cook liver and onions should a hunter find success.

Hunting was by leaning up against a stump or tree, braving the snow or rain, or slowly stalking through the woods. We never saw many deer but the laughter and jokes in camp were very special. Snoring abounded, in the evening, and cigar smoke filled the tent during the long and multiple card games. We had no hunting blinds with windows, heaters, or other conveniences afforded the hunter of today.

Now, fast forward fifty years to the 2013 hunting season we experienced in Isabella County. Our family

owns the Pine Hill Club. This is a private hunting camp with 720 acres of prime habitat for hunting the white-tail. We have running water, seven cabins for our hunters, three showers and a stone fireplace near the TV. Members enjoy home cooking and every member has a heated hunting blind with windows, carpeting, and a swivel chair. A far-cry from the days of smoke-filled tents and sleeping on a bed of straw. In retrospect, I don't miss the cold nights, wet clothes, smoke filled tents and the cold outhouse. We have made hunting progress in the past 50 plus years, and I don't want to go back to the "good old days".

Technology also has changed our lives and has invaded the modern white-tail hunting camp. Today every person in our camp of 25 hunters carry cell phones. They text each other, take pictures and e-mail them to one another and frequently do business from their hunting blind with their I-Pad, I-Phone or cell phone. Life is different in the modern hunting camp. Today if someone asked about the weather - they Google the weather and instantly know what to expect. During card games players text friends or spouses and cell phones ring at all times during the game.

Today we have face-book, twitter, e-mail, hot-mail, text messages, internet and a multiple of other social media. Technology has really changed the "old-fashioned" hunting camp. The younger members in the camp are the experts on using the new technology. I always ask my grandsons for help with my cell phone.

In addition to the cell phone and I-Pad technology we also have trail cameras that capture the deer on

the property. It is sort of a contest for our members to photograph big bucks and share their locations. Cabin walls sport pictures of recent bucks "caught on camera", great change to past years of hunting. High speed video cameras that mount of rifles and bows also allow the hunter to film their harvest of the white-tail buck.

Technology has truly changed the tone of the modern hunting camp. We receive instant text messages from one another about bucks shot and pictures of the same before the deer is gutted out. In addition, cell phones have GPS systems that allow the hunter to move freely about the woods without fear of getting lost. Many members watch the news on their I-Pad and others play video games with their cell phones, while waiting for the mighty buck.

It is hard for me to imagine what the next 50 years will hold for the white-tail hunter. I suspect that we will continue to celebrate the use of technology and the way we daily do business. Before "lights are out" in the cabin the hunters rush to "plug cell phones and computers" into their charger. this provides them with another day of high-speed technology and connects them with world-wide events. Truly technology has changed the "old-fashioned" hunting camp. Progress due to satellite and towers are here to stay...Get with it - upgrade your technology as it becomes obsolete quickly as new products become available. Life in the swamp is truly different from that of the fifties - what else is new? I can't wait until 2064 to see all the changes at the Pine Hill Club Hunting Camp. I hope I am there!



"ATTENTION BEAR HUNTERS"

Bear hunters, this property is located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan near Grand Marais in the Newberry Bear Management District. By the time bear season comes around an average of 10 to 14 bear will be coming to this property. We normally harvest 3 to 4 a

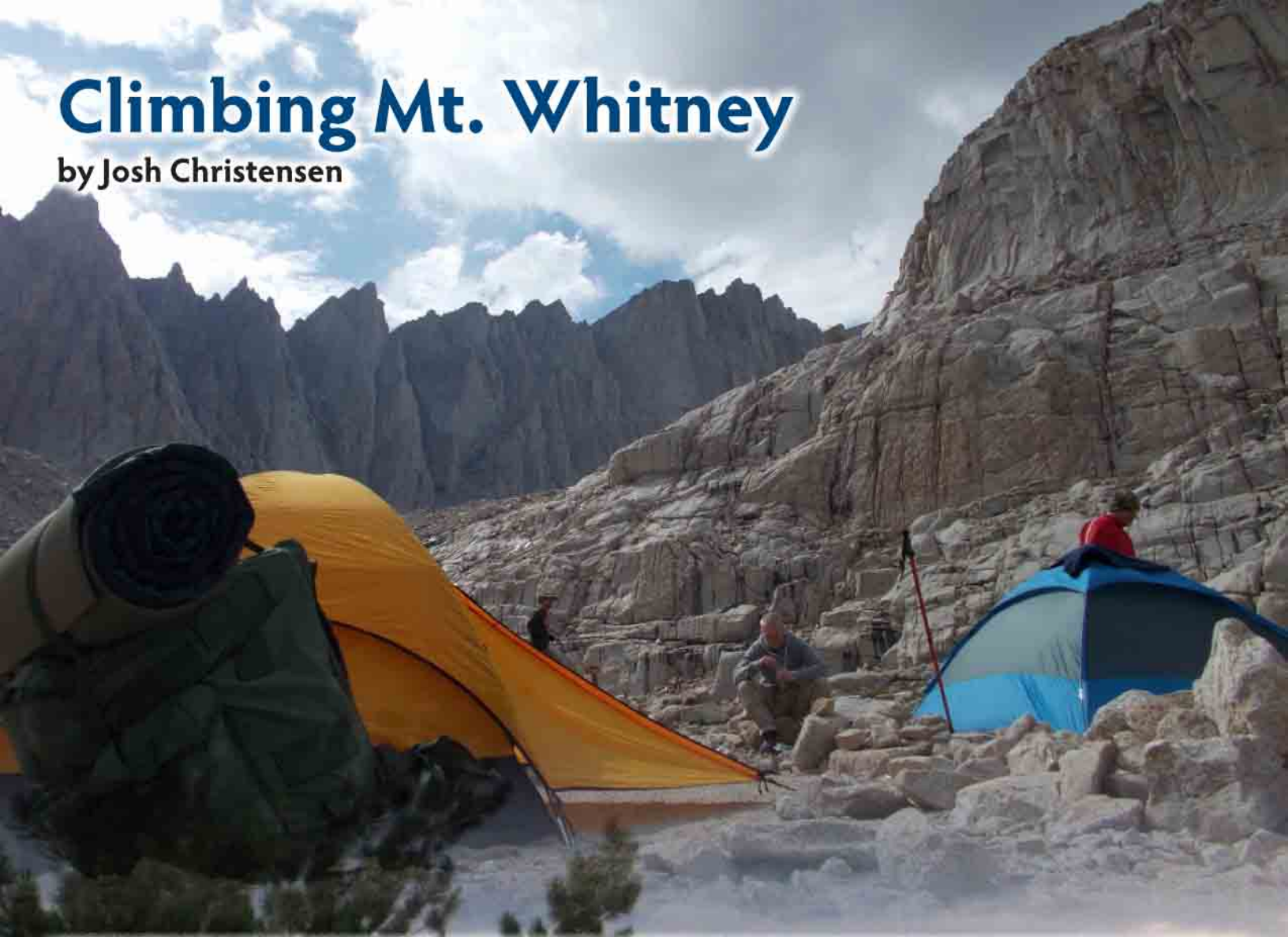
year. Big Bears! This 40 acre camp is surrounded by thousands of acres of commercial forest property. Cedar trees ready to timber on property. Plus it's located on migration path for deer yarding near town. Snowmobilers and ORV riders - Grand Marais is known for its miles and miles of riding trails. \$63,000.

Please contact Mike MacEacheron at 231 349-4167.



Climbing Mt. Whitney

by Josh Christensen



Do you know what the tallest peak in all of the continental United States is? Could you guess what state or mountain range it's in? Until my first experience with this mountain I couldn't. I, like many others, thought it was in Colorado, or Montana in the Rocky Mountains but that's not correct. The tallest peak in the continental United States is Mount Whitney, located in the Sierra Nevada mountain range of central California. I have been blessed enough to summit this mountain twice in my life and after this last trip I can honestly say I don't believe there will be a third attempt.

It was late in the summer of 1997 when my Army roommate, Rick, came home from work one day and casually asked, "You want to climb the tallest mountain in the continental U.S. on our next four day?" At this point in my life I was a 20 year old in the United States Army, stationed in the Mojave Desert of California. I was in pretty good shape, as we did physical

training every day, and I was always up for a challenge, so without missing a beat I said I was in. That was in August and one short month later we were heading out for Mount Whitney with the elevation of 14,494 feet above sea level.

That climb in 97' was an interesting one, we experienced rain on the first day as we made our way to our camp at around 10,300 feet. That rain storm at 10,300 feet was a snow storm at 12,000 feet and dumped about two feet of snow on and near the peak of the mountain. Neither one of us had ever tried something like climbing a mountain before, me being from the flat lands of Michigan and Rick from the hilly parts of Pennsylvania. In fact, we didn't have any type of gear of our own for the trip, but we did have all of our Army issued gear which was designed for this type of outdoor adventure and worked perfectly.

When climbing Mount Whitney one doesn't actually climb up sheer cliffs, rather they climb the trail that





was opened to the public in 1904. But the trail is anything but easy. Often times there are rocks and boulders in the way and it has a very steep pitch in areas. Some of the trail is along the steep backside of other 14,000 foot mountains, where three windows will be encountered, a window on Mount Whitney is where the path is about four feet wide where two mountains come together and on either side of the path are steep drop offs, with no rails to protect you from the steep thousand plus foot drop. The total distance of the trail from the parking area to the peak is eleven miles of steep ascent.

Our first night was at a camp about 3.8 miles up the mountain. Our second day we made it to the summit and back down to camp. It was a tiring 14 mile climb that took us all day, and caused me to get the worst sunburn in my life (my face blistered from the intensity of the sun at the higher elevation), but we were too young to truly take in the magnitude of the accomplishment. Don't get me wrong, we were both excited and proud that we were able to make it to the top, but we didn't really take it all in and fully appreciate the experience.

Which brings us to the summer of 2013. Rick and I have stayed in contact since we were discharged from the Army and have always talked about going back

and climbing the mountain again. As luck would have it my brother, Donald, who is in the Navy has been stationed in California for two years and is only about a four hour drive from Mt. Whitney. So a plan was hatched that my brother, his friend Dan, Rick and I would climb the mountain.

Unlike when we climbed the first time, permits have to be reserved online in a lottery with remaining permits released on May first. I was able to reserve our permits for July 10th through the 13th. Rick and I purchased plan tickets and made other preparations to make our ascent.

My journey west would start at MBS airport. From there I would catch a connecting flight in Minneapolis to San Francisco, where my brother would pick Rick and me up. Once in Minneapolis I experienced the first, but not the last, hiccup of the trip, my flight was running behind because it departed late from San Francisco. So instead of arriving to San Fran at 11:30 I would be getting in at 1:30, not a big deal. I texted my brother and Rick to let them know I would be running a bit behind. This is where the second hiccup came in, Rick's flight from Houston was also delayed and he wouldn't be getting in until around 2:30.

Now we were running two hours off schedule, but

we could adjust to this. I arrived around 1:45 and met up with Donald and Dan. We talked about our upcoming adventure until around 2:30 when I got a text from Rick stating he was on the ground. We found his baggage claim carousel and waited for him and his luggage to arrive. Once Rick made it to the carousel introductions were made and we waited for Rick's bag.

The baggage claim area was extremely crowded, but not with people, with bags. All around the carousel were rows upon rows of luggage. People were walking up and down the rows looking for their bags as workers for the airline were continuously adding to each row. Then add the fact that new planes were arriving at a regular interval and you can imagine the craziness we were dealing with.

The carousel that Rick's luggage was supposed to come in on started and stopped at least three times before it turned off for good and his bag was nowhere to be seen. Rick went to the long baggage claim line to see what he could find out. He came back with the news that his luggage was on a different flight heading to San Francisco and should arrive around 4:45. Hiccup number three and we weren't even past the airport yet.

We were all getting hungry and decided we might as well go out for dinner and hope that Rick's bags would be at the airport when we returned. After an interesting encounter with San Francisco culture at the restaurant, we made our way back to the airport and got the luggage. Only five hours behind schedule, and we still had a three hour drive back to the Navy base.

That night on the way back we stopped by Walmart to pick up a few last minute provision. By the time we got back to my brothers and had everything packed and ready to go it was 1:00 a.m. Our wake-up time for departing was 5:00 a.m., but we were running high on



excitement and adrenalin.

The next morning we arose with a bit of excitement in the air. It's not every day one wakes up to start the ascent up a mountain. We stopped for breakfast and then hit the road for our four hour drive. The funny thing is the drive would have been maybe 45 minutes if we were able to drive as the crow flies, but with the towering Sierra Nevada mountains in the way

we had to drive all the way around the southern part of the mountains to drive back north to Lone Pine, the town where we'd pick up our permits.

This is where we ran into our fourth and possibly worst hiccup. When we arrived at the ranger station and went up to the counter to get our reserved permits we were told they had been released because we didn't call and confirm we were coming before ten that morning, it was currently eleven. This through me for a loop, my heart sank and I felt like I could throw up. I guess in the fine print of the confirmation note says you have to reconfirm you are coming. This was not the case sixteen years ago, and on top of that we already paid for the permits and flew all the way across the country!

I knew that expressing my true feelings about the situation would get me nowhere so I simply asked to see if our permits were still available since they just went up an hour ago. Luckily they were still available along with two others, so we requested our own permits for a second time and were granted the documentation to climb.



Now with permits in hand we drove into town to get lunch and then headed to the Mt. Whitney "portal" parking lot at about 8,400 feet in elevation. From here we geared up and started our way up. Our packs ranged in weight from 40 to 50 pounds each. We found quickly that the altitude would not allow us to travel as quickly as we wanted. After about a quarter of a mile we decided to rest and hatched a plan to take it easy and rest whenever anyone got tired. We ended up resting many times along the way. With all of us living at an elevation of between zero and eight hundred feet it took our bodies a while to acclimatize.

In all we traveled 3.8 miles to the first camp. We left the vehicle around 1:30 in the afternoon and didn't arrive at camp until 6:45. Over five hours to go less than four miles! And we all had been training quite a bit for this climb. Part of my training included training for and running a half marathon. At any rate we made it to our first destination. We set up camp and warmed up our military style MRE's (meal ready to eat) and discussed our day's adventure and what was to come the next morning.

This first day almost made a casualty out of my brother. Not too far into our climb he began to complain of pain in his feet from his boots rubbing on his

heel. Rick and I, both ground pounders in the Infantry in our younger years, knew we needed to stop and try to assess problem. We brought mole skin, a product made to help prevent boots from rubbing your feet raw, for this very situation and had Donald place some in the area he had problems. Luckily it worked and Donald had no more issues with his feet on our trip, he just continued to place the mole skin over the area.

That night it rained most of the night, very hard at times. The temperature also dropped quite a bit. When we started our ascent the day before it was pushing 80 degrees, the next morning it was damp and much colder.

The tent Rick and I shared kept us dry, but that wasn't the case for Donald and Dan. They had some water in theirs, enough to make them a bit colder.

We took down our tents in a drizzle and started to prepare our breakfast. Throughout the night I noticed flashlights going by as people were passing through our camp trying to make it to the summit and back in one day, which many people attempt. As we sat down for breakfast many of these people were on their way back, looking like drowned rats. The looks on their faces were not encouraging, and based on the conversations we had with some of them we learned that up the trail at higher elevations it was snowing and sleeting.

After breakfast we discussed our options; we could start moving on now into the weather, we could wait it out a few hours and then go, or we could head back down and try to come back up the next day. This final option would force us to climb the mountain in a much shorter time frame than we originally planned. After a heated conversation, at least the conversation was heated because we were a bit chilled, we decided to wait the weather out a bit. We watched as group after group headed back down the trail.

Around nine the weather started to look a bit more promising so we loaded up and headed out. We were once again behind schedule as far as when we wanted to depart camp, but at least we were heading in the right





direction. Over the next few hours we had to contend with light rain, but nothing too bad. Then the weather cleared up and was quite pleasant.

Along the way to trail camp we ascended above the tree line and I was able to identify areas from sixteen years earlier. Including a meadow with a river Rick and I stopped at to get water. This time around we stopped again and refilled our water bottles and just relaxed for a while. This was one thing Rick and I discussed many times before our trip. We felt we didn't stop to truly enjoy the experience and we wanted to be sure we did this time.

After about a half hour at this location we pushed on to trail camp, at an elevation of 12,000 feet, arriving around four in the afternoon. When we arrived at this camp I barely recognized it. Sixteen years earlier when we were at this location there were only two tents set up. This time around it was a mini town with at least fifteen to twenty. We found a spot to make camp and set up. Trail camp consisted of rocks of all shapes and sizes and many yellow-bellied marmot, which look a lot like woodchucks. These little guys had very little fear of humans and have been known to chew holes in people's tents to get at anything in it.

To our west we could see the next portion of our climb, over ninety switch backs up the face of a mountain that makes the climber increase over 1,600 feet in

elevation. To the north we could see our final destination, Mt. Whitney, standing at 14,508 feet. (You may have noticed this elevation is different than the previously stated one of 14,494 feet. With better measuring techniques a more accurate elevation has been determined.) It was quite a sight to see, the towering mountain with several other 14,000 plus feet mountains in a line. It also made us realized that we had to climb the back side of the other mountains to get to Mt. Whitney. Our next day would indeed be a challenge.

We awoke at five the next morning and packed light. I took a back pack with three liters of water, and some snacks. We were on our way up the switch backs by 5:20. It was a very crisp morning in which moisture on the outside of the tent crystalized into frost. The first part

of the days climb was fairly flat but that soon changed when we reached the base of the switchbacks.

As we started up the switchbacks we broke off into two groups of two, Rick and Dan in one group and Donald and me in the other. Donald and I seemed to have some extra energy this morning and took right off, not stopping very often for breaks along the switch backs, but it still took us a few hours to make it to the top of this winding trail. During our ascent of the switch backs we shed many layers of clothing. As the sun came up it warmed the face of the mountain where the switch backs are located, the higher the sun rose the hotter we got and off went the stocking hats and coats and on went the sunscreen. I was sure this time I wasn't going to get sun burned, from the very intense rays of the sun at such a high elevation.

Once at the top of the switchbacks we were at an elevation of 13,600 feet, and there was a sign that said we had 1.9 miles to go to the summit. We thought it was going to be an easy climb, because that's what I remember from my last time climbing this peak. I must have been on autopilot last time with my body moving without much thought, because this was probably the toughest part of the entire trip.

As we crossed over to the backside of the mountain we found a bone chilling breeze and no direct sunlight as the peaks prevented the sun from reaching us. So on

went the coats and stocking caps. At this point the rocks in the trail seemed to get much larger, and the trail itself got much smaller. There were more ups and downs along this part of the climb than anywhere else. It also didn't help that the majority of this part of the climb had a sheer cliff on one side and the mountain side on the other, that is, except where the windows came up. I only remember one window the last time we made this climb, but this time there were three. At all three of them I couldn't walk and look left or right without getting vertigo so I simply looked forward and walked. I did take some pictures from these areas, but I walked out, stopped, got a wide base and then snapped a few shots.

On this part of the climb I saw one of the strangest and insane things ever. While ascending the mountain I was pass by a man descending. He had on his back a radio blaring music and he was jogging down the path without slowing down to pass people. It wouldn't have taken much for this workout enthusiast to make a wrong step and end up falling thousands of feet to his death. I moved out of his way when I saw him coming and watched him run on down the path, asking myself if I actually saw that.

At some point along the 1.9 miles from the top of the switchbacks to the summit Donald and I separated. I went on ahead trying to put one foot in front of the other, keeping my goal in mind and pushing myself to stop and rest as little as possible. My legs ached and my lungs burned as I willed myself on. The trail seemed to go on forever until finally I could see my final destination. I still had about a half mile to go, but success was within my grasps so I pushed on.

Once at the top the first thing I did was sign in the sign-in book at a building constructed by the National Parks Services who knows how long ago. I wanted to be sure to sign in this time because Rick and I made it all the way to the top and never knew about the book until we were back down at the bottom and someone asked us if we signed. After signing I had a seat on a large rock and just took it all in. I had accomplished my goal and this time I felt that I truly understood the enormity of the achievement.

As time started to pass, one by one the others began to appear at the summit, each smiling at their achieve-



ment. We took many pictures and made phone calls home to let our wives know we made it alright. This really perplexed me. I don't get service at my house, but here, on top of Mt. Whitney, with no civilization within ten to fifteen miles it was no problem. We stayed on top for over an hour realizing that this would probably be our last time making the climb, Rick and I joked "Don't call me in sixteen more years and ask to do this again."

As we made our way back to trail camp we stayed as a group and took our time. We were extremely tired and didn't have anywhere to go once we got to our tents. Once at the tents we ate dinner and rested.

The next morning we got up at 4:30 to take down our tents and start back down the trail. It was much easier with gravity on our side and us somewhat acclimatized. We were able to make the descent in just under four hours. As we were smiling and talking on the way down the faces of the people heading up were not happy. They were experiencing what we had a few days prior, with gravity and elevation pulling them down and crushing their lungs.

The ride back to the Navy base was great. There's nothing like having four military/former-military guys doing a road trip. A lot of fun was had reminiscing about the climb and busting each other's chops about different things.

Dick Cabela (1936 - 2014)

by Mary Harter



Dick & Mary Cabela

God had decided his time on earth was done. Now we can only celebrate the wonderful life he lead while here on earth. His family has comfort with their trust in God and the promise of the Resurrection.

What a wonderful life he lived! He started as a furniture salesman, sold fishing lures beginning in 1961 from their kitchen table with Mary keeping track of the customers with recipe cards, and grew to a company with \$3.1 billion in sales in 2012. They raised nine children in the process.

The email we received from the family stated that Dick was a man who believed. He believed faith would guide him. He believed in hope. He believed in the abilities of those around him and trusted they would believe in themselves. Most of his decisions were rarely, if ever, about him. They were about his family, his friends, his colleagues, and his employees. And he made a dedicated effort to base those decisions on core Christian principles.

We first met the Cabelas at the SCI Convention in Reno in 2007 and were among the many friends invited to the "Foremost Evening" at their home in Sidney, Nebraska on January 25, 2014. We feel so fortunate to have gone to this event as Dick died peacefully on Monday, February 17, only a few days later.

Their home (future museum) includes four mountains, authentic trees, more than 500 animals and 300 birds, waterfalls, a swimming pool, a changing sky from a morning sunrise and the sounds of birds, to billowing white clouds during the day, and sunset and a full sky of stars at night. There are thunderstorms during the day and you feel like you might really need an umbrella.

A walk through of this wonderful home of 42,000 square feet can be repeated many times and every time you will see something new. The animals and birds seem very comfortable in their habitat in which they appear to wander as they wish. Nothing is trapped in a cage.

A full mounted lion licks up a spilled glass of wine on the bar near the entry way and a lion head is carved in the granite floor. Carved elephant bones line the bar on the second floor. 100 pound ivory decorate the steps up to that bar. Full mounted animals including an elephant, hippo, and rhino are everywhere.

The elevator can take you down stairs to the wall lined with Cabela trophies and a chapel or up to the second floor balcony with several bedrooms and library while you look through the glass at huge crocodiles and numerous fish.

The ceilings are works of art. Numerous nativity scenes are displayed throughout the house. Mary's elephant collection numbering over 500, that I could count, fill a whole wall. A full mounted gorilla is playing billiards in the library. A liger (lion/tiger) stands guard near the Gatling guns, and flintlock rifles and pistols are showcased on the walls behind. The artwork is spectacular.



Also in the entryway is the Cabela Hymn inscribed on granite the shape of Africa:

"When anticipation saturates the woods like a chill air,

When remembered encounters drift like whispered secrets,

The delicate edge between predator and prey

Flood the hunter's soul.

These moments satisfy the heart.

These moments define the hunter.

These moments defy time.

It is the shared toast beside a slow fire.

The hard-won satisfaction of a long day on the mountain.

The rediscovered joy of friendship too long denied.

It is a reflective inscription in a journal opened only for a special moment.

These places sketched by God's gentle hand, reveal the hunter's instinct.

It is here where cherished relationships live forever.

For in these sacred lands true freedom exists."

The hospitality displayed by the Cabalas' and their staff was beyond imagination. We were picked up at our hotel by the Michigan Dundee store designer in Mary's personal vehicle and their CFO hung up our coats when we arrived. We were very comfortable in their home and made many friends during our visit.

The world will certainly miss Dick Cabela but Heaven has gained a wonderful friend. May he rest in peace.



Hunting with Dad

by Michael Ritchie D.C.

From the first time hunting holding his hand
Dad showed me the creation and how to live off the land
We walked in the fence rows for rabbits and pheasants
Each sunrise and sunset a witnessing to the Masters presence
He taught me conservation, to be safe and be legal
Learned responsibility by caring for "Puppy" the beagle
Life lessons too as we walked in the trees
With each step deciding what kind of man I would be
Fidgety, noisy, why I couldn't sit with him
I learned patience and stealth waiting for a deer to come in
I remember my first deer hunt with my back to a tree
Hunting till dark knowing he was not far from me
Not only me but my friends that we took to the woods
A mentor unafraid to say just where he stood
There was Albert, Tommy, Todd and Dave Mach
Blessings require us to always give back
The importance of family, time shared with his brother
All the stories around the table, laughing with each other
I've hunted in Canada, Texas, the east and out west
The hunts with my father are the ones I liked best
When I can't see in the woods because my eyes have grown dim
I give praise to the Creator because of the times hunting with him
Michael L. Ritchie D.C. 1/8/2013



Proverbs 22:6

6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

KJV

Looking Ahead - to our Next Issues -

Buster's Creek - Kansas Hospitality
by Michael Ritchie D.C.

**Whitewater Rafting through the
Grand Canyon**
by Mary Harter

A Lion, Buffalo, and Dik-Dik
by Mary Harter

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



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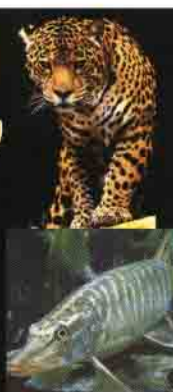


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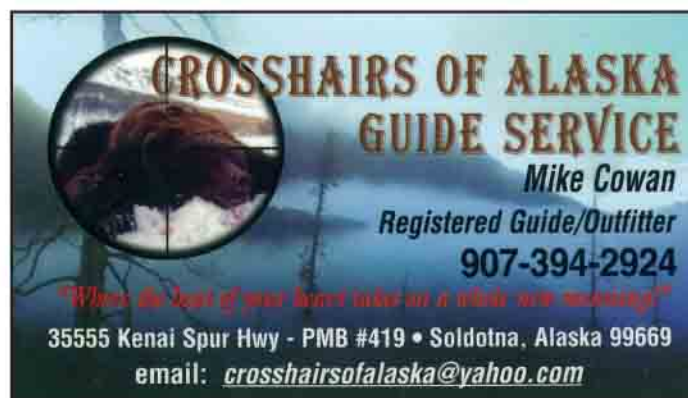
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A close-up, high-quality photograph of a lion's face, looking slightly to the right. The lion has a thick, golden-brown mane and intense orange eyes. The background is dark and out of focus.

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