

# FRONT SIGHT

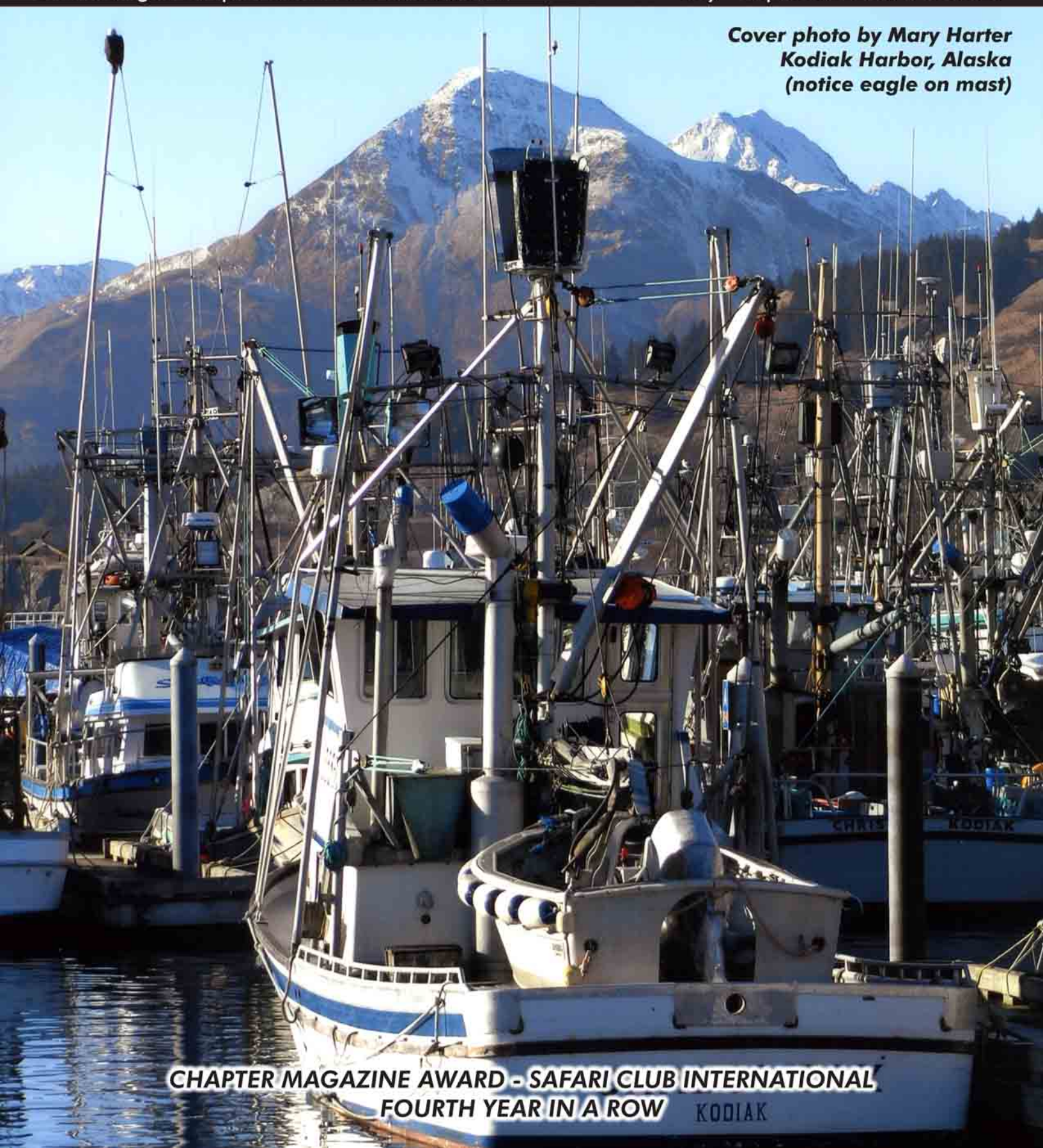


**SCI**  
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

July - September 2014, Issue 27

*Cover photo by Mary Harter  
Kodiak Harbor, Alaska  
(notice eagle on mast)*



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

KODIAK





# JOHAN PIETERSE SAFARIS



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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.



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**The Front Sight** is the official publication of the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International, keeping club members informed about local club activities, and encouraging and defining good sportsmanship. The Front Sight Magazine is published quarterly: January, April, July and October. Distribution 400+.

Check our own [www.midmichigansci.org](http://www.midmichigansci.org) website for copies of the Front Sight, listing of events, and fundraiser auction items.

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*Rep. Kevin Cotter  
signing our petition for the  
Scientific Fish and Wildlife  
Conservation Act*



## SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

\* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Type</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Aug. 4, 2014	Board/Budget	4:30 p.m.	Harter's
Sept. 6, 2014	Membership Trap Shoot	1:00 p.m.	Camp Misery
Oct. 6, 2014	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Oct. 6, 2014	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Dec. 1, 2014	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Dec. 1, 2014	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Jan. 10, 2015	Board	3:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Jan. 10, 2015	Big Buck Night	5:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Feb. 4 - 7, 2015	International Convention		Las Vegas
Feb. 27 - 28, 2015	Chapter Convention		Soaring Eagle

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



## Your President - Kevin Unger

I have recently returned from Washington DC. All the chapters meet once a year in Washington to go to Capitol Hill and meet with their lawmakers and talk about our hunting rights and any concerns we might have. As you know there are 11 chapters in Michigan which gives us a lot of votes and we bring multiple hunters to the hill. We broke up into many groups to talk with as many lawmakers as possible which consists of senators and representatives and their staff. All the meetings had positive feedback.

This is also our election meeting when the Board of Directors votes for our officers. I am very proud to inform our chapter that Don Harter has been voted in as Vice President of SCI. Don has worked very hard at all levels of SCI which started right here at our own chapter. Don served first as a board member, three years as Vice President, and three years as President. We as a chapter and SCI are very fortunate to have such a dedicated member as Don Harter working to protect our hunting rights.

I was elected as a Director at Large position for SCI which I will work very hard for what I believe in and what SCI stands for. SCI is the largest hunting advocate and conservation organization in the world.

This will be my final President's letter to our Mid-Michigan Chapter. It has been my pleasure to serve you as President for the past three years. I would like to thank my Board of Directors, Joe Mulders, Scott Holmes, Larry and Joanne Witte, Don and Mary Harter, Roger Froling, Tim Schafer, Mike Strobe, Bill Shelt, Randy Raymond, Jim Walker, Jon Ziemann, Mike Johnston, Mike MacEachron, Tim Hauck, and Chad Stearns for all your countless hours of effort towards making the Mid-Michigan Chapter so successful.

In the fourteen years I have been involved with the Mid-Michigan Chapter I have never missed a board meeting. The reason for that is I enjoy spending time with each and every one of you and that is what makes our Chapter so successful. If we continue to work as a team together, we will be able to reach goals that we only dreamed of. Do not think I am going anywhere soon. I will continue to work with the board at any level they would like.

I would like to introduce our next Mid-Michigan Chapter President, Joe Mulders. He has been serving as Vice President for the past three years and I look forward to Joe doing an excellent job.

Sincerely,  
Kevin Unger  
President, Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI




## Editor's Message

We recently attended the SCI Board Meeting in Washington D.C. I have always enjoyed this meeting because we spend Lobby Day visiting our congressional representatives in their offices. We visited the offices of Bill Huizenga, Second District - MI and Candice Miller, 10th District - MI and were very warmly received. We discussed the Citizens for Professional Wildlife Management petitions being circulated in Michigan. We distributed information about the proposed elimination of the importation of elephant trophies to the United States from Zimbabwe and Tanzania and other hunting issues being brought to the house and senate.

Steve Guertin, Deputy Director of Policy from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, spoke to us in a meeting and tried to explain to us why the U. S. wants the elephant importation to stop from Zimbabwe and Tanzania but he had never been to either country, didn't know the impact on the people in these countries or ours, and had no facts to support this proposal. Several people from Tanzania were in the audience and were visiting to try and have this effort stopped. They visited several congressional offices to express their side of the issue and tell how devastating that decision would be.

Later in the week, we attended a meeting titled, "Imposters Among Us? Big Green Radicals Posing as Hunters" featuring Jack Hubbard of Berman and Company. This company has launched several offense-oriented campaigns that aggressively target the reputations, funding, and legislative capabilities of anti-hunting activists. This meeting really hit home because it is the Humane Society that is fighting to try to limit hunting here in Michigan. Jack explained that HSUS uses most of its donated money to fight against hunting. Only 1% is donated to animal shelters. His company "follows the money" and has found that the Izaak Walton League of America, Trout Unlimited, Bull Moose Sportsmen's Alliance, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, and many others are using their funds against hunters. They use hunting terminology as cover to push their pet causes. These groups serve as camouflage for radical environmental interests. We need to inoculate the public from the activist's messages and put these groups on defense. Visit [www.HumaneWatch.org](http://www.HumaneWatch.org), [www.GreenDecoys.com](http://www.GreenDecoys.com) and [www.PETA.Kills.Animals.com](http://www.PETA.Kills.Animals.com) to learn more.



Top Photo: Jim Hammill, Don and Mary Harter, Candice Miller,  
Clark Lincoln, Kevin Unger, Lee Murray

Bottom Photo: Don and Mary Harter, Bill Huizenga, Kevin Unger

## Mid - Michigan Chapter Safari Club International • [www.midmichigansci.org](http://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. ☐

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### 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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# Book Review

by Josh Christensen

**Title:** DRIVEN: FROM HOMELESS TO HERO, MY JOURNEYS ON AND OFF LAMBEAU FIELD  
**Author:** Donald Driver

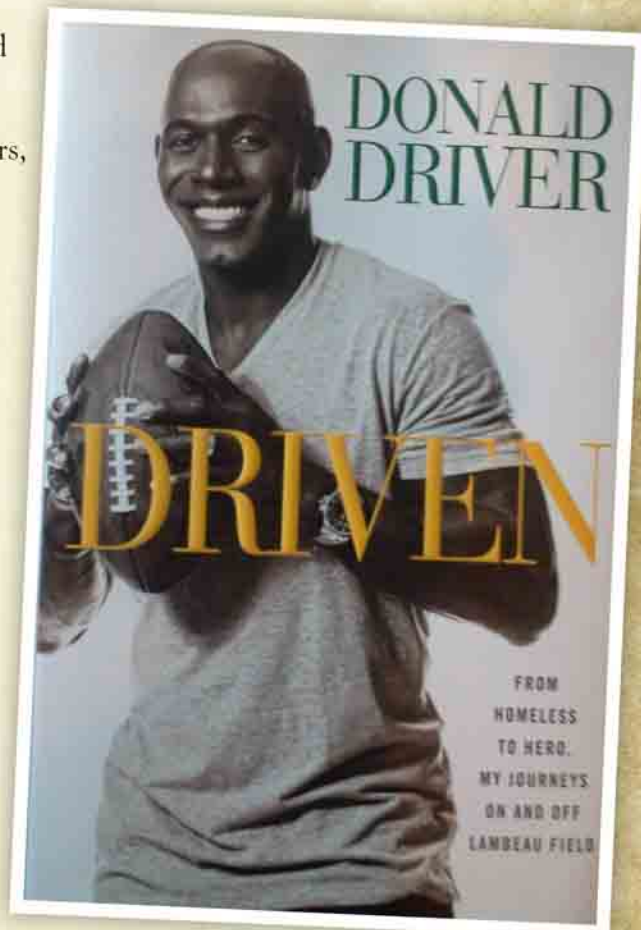
**Publisher:** Crown Publishing Group  
**Copyright:** 2013  
**List Price:** \$25.00

Many people might say that Major League Baseball is still “American’s pastime”, but I would argue, along with millions of others, that the National Football League has surpassed MLB. This book was written by one of these NFL players, arguably one of this era’s best receivers, about his life before and after his career in the NFL.

Driven is an excellent story of one man’s journey from intercity Houston to the realms of professional football. Donald Driver takes the reader through many of his experiences as a child, including making poor decisions to get by, becoming homeless, and being forced to live with his grandparents because of a family issue. He also explains his drive to be great at whatever he does including being a receiver for the Green Bay Packers and competing on Dancing with the Stars.

This book is more than a story of football. It is a story of perseverance and the will to be better than others expected for someone from the “wrong side of the tracks”. As I was reading I was constantly looking at the story from two perspectives. One was from the angle of the American Dream, where it doesn’t matter where you are born or how poor you might be because if you work hard you can work your way out of poverty. The other aspect was just how truly blessed we are for having everything we do (some of which we take for granted).

Regardless if you are a fan of the NFL or the Packers, this book is a good read from a man who started with nothing and now is very well off, and passes his good fortune on to the community through his foundation and Goodwill.



This book gets 8 out of 10 bullseyes



# Requirements For Trophy Record Score Sheets

JOANNE WITTE  
TROPHY RECORDS CHAIR

*To refresh your memory here are the requirements for entries into our Record Book.*

## Time Period

Animals taken between December 1, 2012 and December 1, 2014 are eligible for the 2015 Awards Competition. Remember, I need to have the completed score sheets by December 1, 2014.

## Minimums

The only animals for which we have minimum requirements for listing in the Chapter Record Book are Whitetail and Mule Deer. The minimum score is 100.

## Chapter Membership

You must be a member of the Mid-Michigan Chapter when the animal is shot to enter it in the Competition. Once you become a member any animals you have taken in the past may be entered in the Cumulative Record Book.

## Spouses

You cannot enter an animal under your spouse's membership. You must be a member of the Mid-Michigan Chapter to enter an animal in the Chapter Record Book. Because you cannot be a member of the local chapter without belonging to International SCI, that means you must belong to both International SCI and our Mid-Michigan chapter to enter an animal in our Record Book.

## Photographs

Please send me a photograph with each score sheet. For the past several years we have not needed photos but we want to begin projecting the photos on the screens at our Hunters Expo in February as we have done in past years.

## Young Hunters

Parents (and Grandparents) who are members of the Mid-Michigan chapter, if you have a young hunter who has harvested an animal, please send me a score sheet. Please write "Youth Hunter" on the score sheet. Our chapter wants to encourage young hunters and we want to recognize them during our Awards Program whether or not the child is a member of SCI. With approximately 300 members in the chapter, I will not know the young hunters unless someone tells me.

Now that it is legal for children age 10 and above to hunt in Michigan we want to do all we can to encourage our young hunters.

If you have questions about requirements for trophy entries, please call me at 231-796-4927 or e-mail me at [witte1939@charter.net](mailto:witte1939@charter.net)

Keep those score sheets coming!



# Safari Club International

## February 5-8, 2014



Ashleigh and Ivan Carter



Mr. and Mrs. Kaan Karakaya



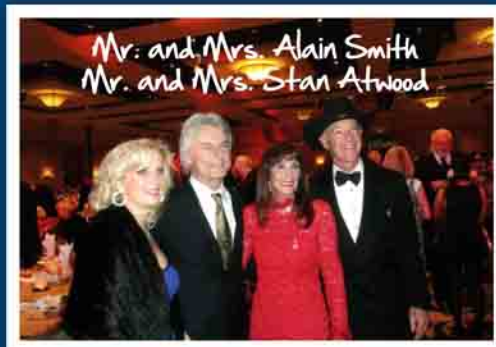
Opening Ceremonies with the Las Vegas Mayor



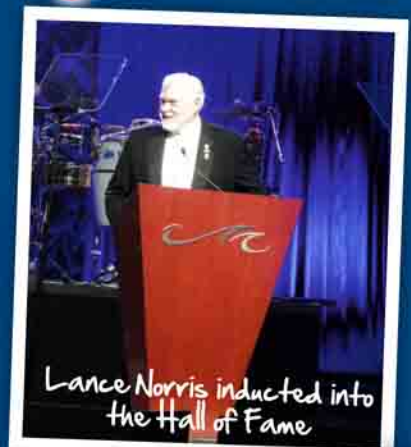
# Convention in Las Vegas



Jeff Foxworthy



Mr. and Mrs. Alain Smith  
Mr. and Mrs. Stan Atwood



Lance Norris inducted into  
the Hall of Fame



Chicago



Sam Fejes



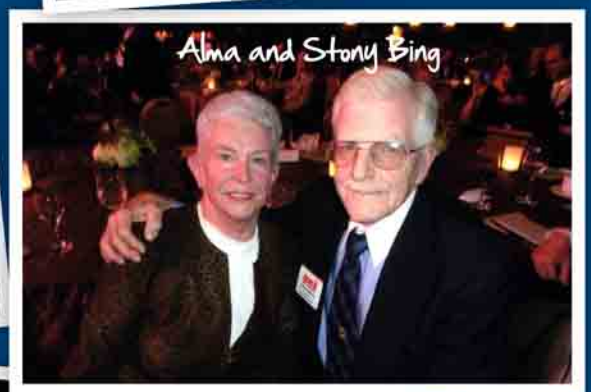
Big and Rich



Larry Potterfield,  
Midway USA



The Chadds



Alma and Stony Bing



Barbara and Mary with  
Thank You Bags



Larry and Cindy Higgins



# Mid-Michigan

**Awards Night!**  
**Friday, February 21, 2014**





# Hunter's Expo

Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort  
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

## Other Happenings! February 21-22, 2014



Phil DeLone and  
Kevin Unger



Melissa Lackie



Bag Piper -  
Graham Morrison

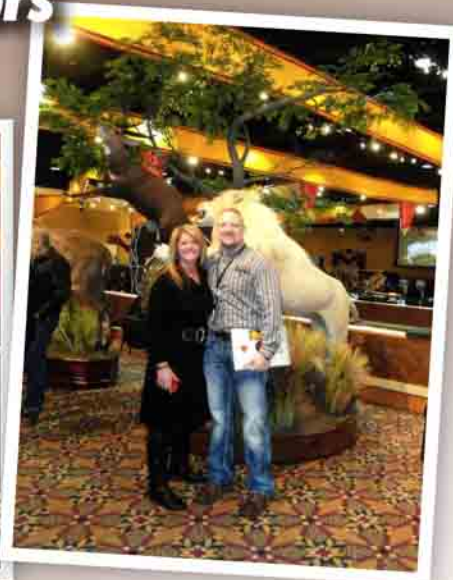


Color Guard: Bob Lacky, Bill Payne  
Slide Show - Peter Jennings



# Hunter's Expo Outfitters

Some of our many outfitters and vendors in attendance









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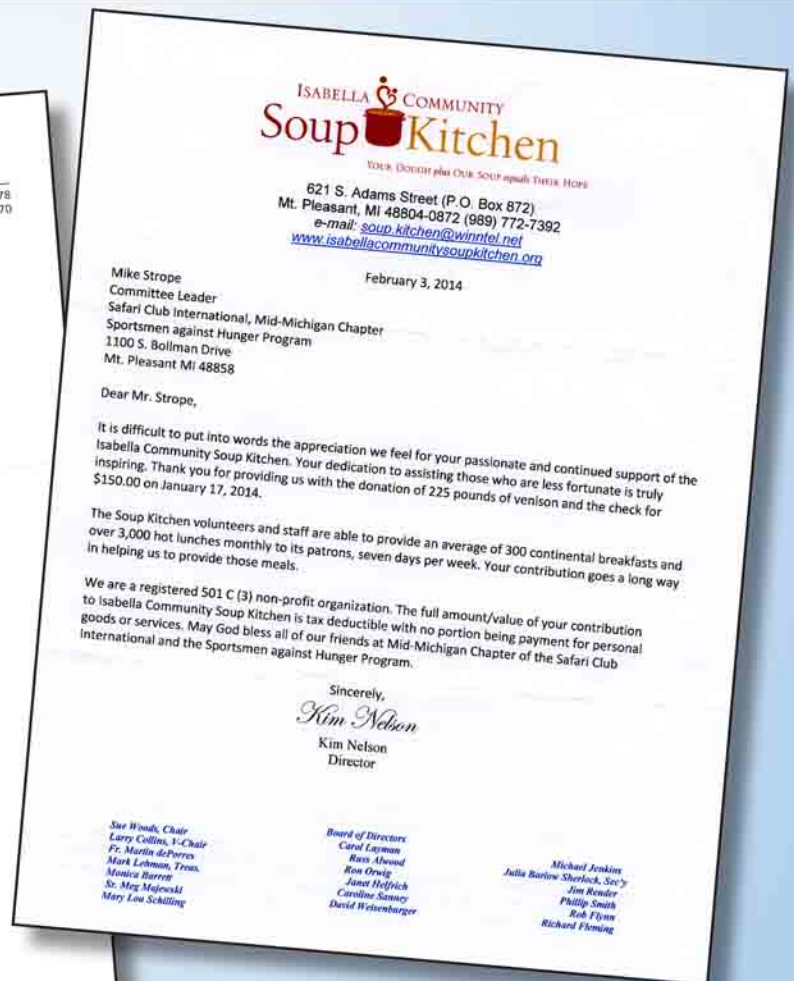
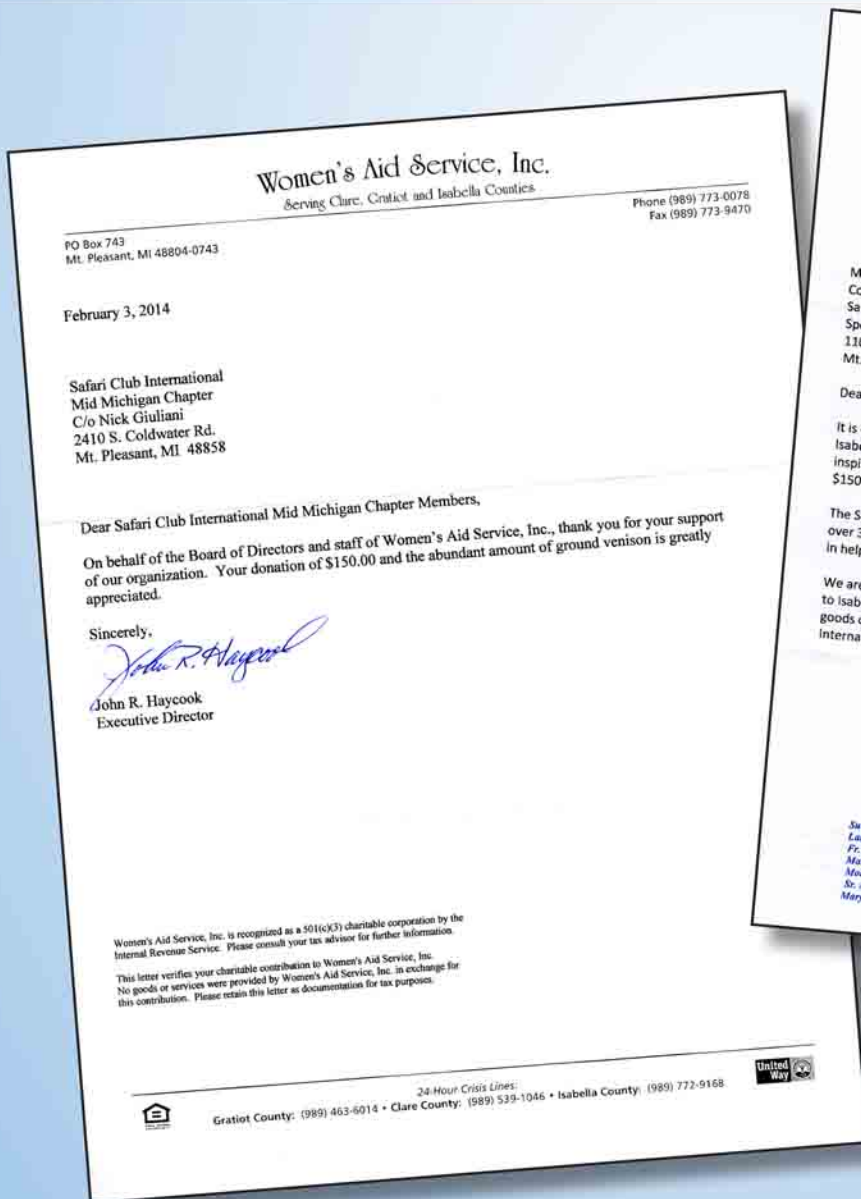
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*Many thanks to the members/businesses who  
donated funds that went directly to help defray the  
costs of this event.*





# A special thanks to NAC Taxidermy, Isabella County DNR, and Burch Tank and Truck for helping support our “Sportsmen Against Hunger Program”.





# National Archery in the Schools Program

by Dr. Mike Ritchie D.C.

The National Archery in the Schools Program's State Championship took place in Mt. Pleasant on March 8th. The SCI Mid-Michigan board witnessed what is being done to get young people involved in the shooting sports. Roscommon Archery Club and SCI member Dr. Mike Ritchie and Tim Schafer of the Mid Michigan SCI board brought together the board to witness this event. "I belong to Safari Club International to promote hunting in Michigan, and working with kids like this is the best way to do it," said Mid-Michigan Chapter board member, Tim Schafer.

Kathy Garland, the Michigan NASP coordinator, Mark Copeland, the Northern Michigan trainer for NASP, and Brian Piccolo have been working together with SCI Mid Michigan to get NASP started in the Roscommon School District. Two teachers have been trained, equipment ordered, Club founded, and after school program started with 51 elementary students signing up to learn to shoot archery. "We've had great interest by both boys and girls," said DNR wildlife biologist Brian Piccolo. "Learning archery isn't about just hitting the target - students are also learning about mental concentration, focus and self-improvement. Instructors are teaching the use of both compound bows and crossbows. We needed to have a lot of equipment to make this event work, and donors are stepping up to help." Over 25 bows and crossbows were needed, as well as 12 archery targets, 10 dozen arrows, Kevlar arrow curtains and racks to hang bows - all funded by partners who found value in starting this program.

Thanks to all who make this possible and especially the Mid Michigan Chapter of SCI for the equipment grant.

*(Brian Piccolo was one of our April 7 speakers.)*





# Reaching A Generation

by Michael L. Ritchie D.C.

On April 7, the three of us were heading down to Mt. Pleasant for a SCI Mid-Michigan membership meeting and none of us knew exactly where the Comfort Inn was located. I asked SIRI (the automated search function on my smart phone), "SIRI, where is the Comfort Inn in Mt. Pleasant?" The address and directions were given by voice and a map displayed on the phone. This type of technology can become addictive!

This is precisely what we are up against with the next generation as we try to pass the hunting lifestyle on to them. Brian Piccolo (Michigan DNR Biologist), Gary Harms (Houghton Lake Sportsman's Club Junior Archery Director) and myself (SCI member and Centershot Ministries board of directors) were scheduled to give a report of our activities to SCI regarding our efforts to get kids to set down the technology and pick up archery gear. Thanks to SCI Mid-Michigan and other groups, we have been able to purchase equipment, train teachers from the public schools and club members to change lives one arrow at a time. The newly formed Roscommon Archery Club (RAC) is just finishing an eight week after school program for grades 3 - 5 in the Roscommon Elementary School. RAC President Brian Piccolo says, "I think we are missing the boat when it comes to reaching kids for the hunting sports. We need to get them started younger now than ever, beginning with 3rd graders. Due to the overwhelming response (51 students signing up), the class was limited to 3rd - 5th graders so that we could give individual attention to each child." Crossbows as well as recurves and Genesis compound bows were taught with a tournament being held at the end to test the archer's progress.

Gary Harms took over the Junior Archery program at the Houghton Lake Sportsman's Club two years ago. This highly successful program has been going



for several years now with the help of SCI donations to buy equipment. The dedicated certified instructors spend over 30 weeks during the school year on Mondays teaching over 30 students ranging from 2nd to 9th grade the lifelong sport of archery. The archers have had the opportunity to go to tournaments in Gaylord, Alpena, and Lansing to show off their skills.

Being involved with Centershot Ministries since 2006, the Roscommon Baptist Church has been teaching the lifelong sport of archery and the Gospel of Jesus Christ to hundreds of children. We have attended and hosted tournaments, traveling to do one day events in Ludington, Marion, Hubbard Lake and Gaylord. At The Big Ticket Festival in Gaylord, Mark Copeland of Jay's Sporting Goods, with the cooperation of Gaylord Family Fellowship, a range was set up and approximately 1,000 shooters per day shot at our range during the three day event. Centershot Ministries, the church based archery program has grown from two churches in 2006 to more than 3,000 in 18 counties, to date. Two years ago I was asked to join the board of Centershot to help guide the unparalleled growth of this ministry. Although SCI has not donated funds to our church program directly, as a member of SCI, I am doing my best to promote the hunting lifestyle through our Centershot program.

So what does target archery have to do with hunt-



ing? The Roscommon Archery Club has plans to take students from our eight week class on crossbow hunts this fall. The goal of teaching an "Explore Bowhunting" class is in the works and instructors are talking about doing a hunter safety class in coming years. Just as SCI is working hard to be "First For Hunters", we are working hard to pass on the tradition to future generations of Michigan youth. We couldn't do it without the help we have received from Mid-Michigan SCI! Thank you for your trust in us as we do not take that trust for granted.

By the way, after hearing what SCI is doing to promote hunting, Gary Harms became the newest member of Mid-Michigan SCI. Gary stated, "If I would have known what SCI stood for I would have joined years ago!" Maybe others out there would feel the same way, so remember to invite friends to the membership meetings to keep SCI "First for Hunters!"



Brian Piccolo and Tim Schafer



Kevin Unger and Brian Piccolo





# Buster's Creek - Kansas Hospitality

by Michael L. Ritchie D.C.

Kansas sunset

The wind was cutting through my face mask as I slipped through the cut Kansas cornfield heading to stand location. Trying not to spook any deer from Buster's Creek I was taking my time and not using a flashlight. The moon and stars were my guide as I crossed the 4 strand barb wire fence and pulled my unloaded rifle, chair, and shooting sticks to the other side. The wind was just right for my predetermined stand location and I set up in a downed tree. The large branches looked like they had been there for a decade, barkless and bleached as a result of many hot dry summers. Making as little noise as possible I set up my folding chair, shooting sticks, and settled in to wait until daybreak.

This hunting opportunity began in the summer of 2011 when one of my friends and patients asked if I knew of any good fishing charters for salmon on Lake Michigan. His mother and father-in-law were coming from Kansas to visit the grand kids. Ben wanted to

help his father-in-law check off an item from his bucket list. "They are from Kansas and he grew up on a farm out there hunting and fishing", Ben said. I proposed to him that I would handle the salmon charter if he would swap a deer hunt in Kansas. Ben's father-in-law, Mark, agreed and the plans were made.

Fishing in August of 2011 off Ludington, Michigan with Pole Cat Charters was magic. We boated 18 fish in 6 hours and were greeted to an amazing sunrise. Mark and Ben had a great time and we had a chance to get to know each other.

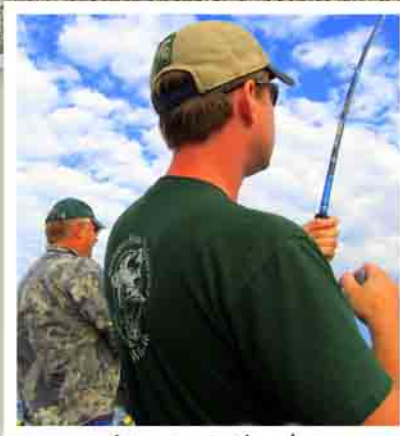
Fast forward to 2013 and our Kansas deer hunt began with applying for tags. Ben, another friend, Dennis, and I made applications over the internet hoping to get drawn in an area of mostly private land. Kansas does have a walk in program where hunters are allowed to hunt private land and in exchange the farmers get property tax relief. So even if someone doesn't have the money to hire an outfitter or know a property owner



they can still hunt the Jay Hawk State. The mail carrier was good to us and a few months later we received our Kansas deer tags in the mail which entitled us to take one whitetail buck or doe and one antlerless only deer.

Ben and his young family were planning on spending Thanksgiving in town with the family two hours west of the farm and then Ben would hunt with Dennis and me for a couple of days for deer. Rifle season would begin on December 4th which was a Wednesday so Dennis and I would arrive on Saturday the 30th and do a little pheasant, quail, prairie dog hunting, and scout for deer. We were greeted by Mark at the farm on the 30th as planned but Ben's plans had changed as he had to go back to work early and wouldn't be hunting with us. Mark showed us around the farm and it was what we expected but a bit more hilly. "I'm not a deer hunter but I believe if you stay out of the "creek" the deer will hold there until deer season. I have not had anyone go in there all fall because I knew you guys were coming and I wanted to give you a good chance at a nice buck", Mark shared as he drove us around to see the place.

The farm was Mark's home growing up and they say, "You can take the boy out of the farm but not the farm out of the boy", is spot on in relation to Mark. The farm is his happy place and where he spends 2 - 3 days a week and the rest at his wife, Sue's, place in town. As Dennis and I rode around we realized that Mark knows every patch of earth, tree, hill, and valley on this corner of deer hunting heaven. Not just his acreage but most



Ben and Mark

of the neighbors, too! So every day before the hunt, Dennis and I would sit on the hill overlooking the "creek" and watch as the sun rose over the horizon. Each morning and evening we would see the same six does come and go being tailed by

a different buck. Most of the bucks had half or part of their antlers busted off. In fact just for fun we dumped some corn in the back yard just behind the shelter belt and set up my trail camera. Every day I would see different bucks coming in to nibble on the corn and most of them had busted antlers. I decided to call whoever these guys were fighting, "Buster", and the creek where he lived

....you guessed it, "Buster's Creek!" After breakfast each day we went bird hunting, riding four wheelers, taking the dogs for a run, clay bird shooting, sighting in our rifles, or ridding a farmer's fields of a few prairie dogs. I was beginning to like this place!

Finally opening day had arrived and during breakfast, Mark told us, "You know the neighbors have seen a buck running around here that they say will go nearly 200 inches, so be selective."

With this in my mind I'm sitting in my impromptu blind wedged between the branches of the aforementioned tree. Dennis set up on the east of the creek about 200 yards and overlooking a pond that Mark put in to help hold deer when the creek is low in the summer. Suddenly I see a glint of antlers, big antlers, moving my direction and stopping 25 yards away. I put the glasses on him and the bases of his antlers are the girth of baseball bats, with the knurly beams extending high above



and way outside his ears. The scope on my rifle centers over Buster's chest and I know I can make the shot. There is one problem, it was a half hour before daylight. As quietly as Buster arrived, he left and never to return the rest of the hunt. If this buck was not the 200 incher the neighbors were talking about it was his slightly smaller brother. This buck had to be the one that had been busting the racks off all the bucks we had been seeing before season.

Later that day, I shot a very nice 4 x 4 whitetail (my personal best) and the second afternoon, Dennis shot his best to date whitetail which was also a 4 x 4. Shortly after Dennis shot his buck, I filled an antlerless deer tag. The neighbors who don't eat deer meat but like to hunt gave us their bucks to take home. We quartered all five of the deer and because of the sub zero

wind chill factor temps didn't really need a freezer to transport our truckload of venison.

It was a bitter sweet feeling thinking I had seen Buster and was leaving without him riding with us back to Michigan. Just to have had a chance to hunt such an undisturbed piece of deer habitat with such good genetics was amazing. The hospitality of the host was even better and I just wonder if Mark would like to fish any of Michigan's other Great Lakes? I would definitely take him fishing again to have a chance to hunt Buster's Creek one more time!

If you are interested in hunting Kansas the information can be found online at: <http://www.kdwpt.state.ks.us/news/Hunting/>

DEER Application Deadlines:

Nonresident Deer Permit Draw: April 25, 2014



Mike, Dennis and Jolo



Pheasant and two quail





# Our Many Outfitters and Donors

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ANELHOMFSESDKOJOEFINDTRMIER  
LKDTOTONLOVPNKIIENLSVFYREI  
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Joubert Pro Hunt  
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Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris  
Woodland Taxidermy  
Wycon Safari  
Wanaka Hunting Safaris  
Majestic Mountain Outfitters  
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# HOT BARREL WING SHOOTING AT ITS BEST

Sinalopato Duck and Dove Club

by Roger Card



“Never, ever, be the first hunters of the year or, even more important, never, ever, be the last hunters into a camp!”

In my sixty-plus years of hunting that saying has served me extremely well, but I am happy to report there are exceptions to this rule. Being the first hunters in Bobby Balderrama’s Sinalopato Duck and Dove Club, 2013 – 2014 water fowl season, was truly unbelievable.

This hunt had an unusual start. In the summer of 2013 I sold my deer ranch in Mecosta, Michigan and one of the leftover pieces of equipment was a beautiful little, ten-year-old jeep that had just 9,000 miles on the odometer. I really wanted that jeep at my home in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. With a little arm-twisting, I

convinced my hunting partner, Rod Merchant, to make the 3100 mile (one way) journey with me.

Actually, when Rod found out we would be driving right through Los Mochis I did not have to twist his arm too hard. Over the years we have hunted ducks in many places around Mexico, but we have always felt Sinalopato is by far the best.

I have to admit we were a little apprehensive about showing up the first week in November to be the virgin hunters of the new season. Not to worry!! We blasted forty-eight ducks the first morning and followed up with another sixty-eight in the afternoon. We totaled two hundred, sixty-three ducks in the bag, for our three-day excursion.

It was enough shooting, even for me. The guns





Bobby provided were excellent, but when you have ducks flying helter-skelter, every which way imaginable, eventually you let the stock slide ever so slightly from your shoulder and – MAN, THAT BEGINS TO HURT!! By the end of the hunt Rod and I had huge, embarrassing bruises on our right shoulders but, more important, there were huge smiles on our faces. This was the best Mexican duck hunt we have ever experienced.

**The Hunt:** While hunting with Mr. Balderama you stay in his five-star Plaza Inn Hotel. Awakened at 4:30 a.m. you are driven to the hunting area in an air-conditioned van and turned over to an airboat operator to

scoot you out to well-camouflaged blinds that are strategically placed. Nothing is left to chance, no details overlooked.

Each hunter has a knowledgeable guide to stay with him who does all of the calling and retrieving of dead ducks. The guides have been with Sinalopato for many years and, in our instance, were as anxious to get back to duck hunting as we were.

Snacks and drinks are as plentiful as the waterfowl and the entire staff did everything possible to make our trip enjoyable. We'd return to our hotel for lunch and a siesta, then grab our gear and be off for the afternoon hunt. Evening meals were not





only spectacular but very convenient as Owens Restaurant is located right in the hotel

If anyone reading this has an interest in Hot Barrel Mexican Wing Shooting, please feel free to contact me or simply take my recommendation and contact Sinalopato directly. Anabel Suarez is in charge of all hunting, at 1-800-862-9026, or [bookings@plazainnhotel.com.mx](mailto:bookings@plazainnhotel.com.mx).

The Journey: As I stated in the beginning of my story, Rod and I drove the little Jeep over three thousand miles, from Canadian Lakes, Michigan to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. It took a little more than two weeks, a trip of a lifetime. We traveled a great distance of Old Route

66, stopping at every opportunity to visit the relics of cross-country travel in days gone by. Time was spent at the Arch in St. Louis, detours through the desert were embraced, the international border was painstakingly navigated, local cuisine was devoured at every opportunity and, best of all, the landscapes that continually changed, were breath taking beautiful.

We ended up with a whole new repertoire of funny stories. The fantastic waterfowl hunt along the way was just one more chapter in a wonderful journey. The older I get, the more I find the "journey" is as important as the actual hunt.

Roger





# CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

By Larry Witte

## FUNDING WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

The SCI-Michigan Involvement Committee and the DNR's Wildlife Division have agreed to add a new cooperative study of feral swine for 2014 along with the five ongoing studies.

### Feral Swine Research Project:

This project will assist Michigan in developing effective control strategies for free-ranging feral swine. The ultimate goal is to eradicate this invasive species to protect Michigan's natural resources for future generations. Feral swine (Russian boar) were known to occur in 76 of 83 Michigan counties in 2012. These animals are prolific breeders, maturing at a young age and able to have large litters several times a year with high survival rates. Natural predators have little impact of feral swine.

Feral swine are opportunistic omnivores consuming plants and animals and modifying and degrading habitat. Ground nesting birds and young game animals are susceptible to swine predation.

Feral swine are potential carriers of more than 30 viral and bacterial diseases and at least 37 known parasites that can affect humans, livestock and wildlife.

Feral swine in Michigan are projected to negatively impact billion dollar wildlife values and the \$300 million domestic swine industry. Little is known about the effectiveness of trapping efforts to reduce or eradicate local swine populations. And there is an absence of information about feeding behavior, proximity to domestic swine and daily and seasonal movements needed for management strategies, including lethal removal.

Partners: SCI-MIC committee, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, USDA-Wildlife Services, MSU and U of M-Flint.

## LAWS AND RESTRICTIONS

### Public Education for Sound Wildlife Management:

Public Act 246, authored by State Representative Bumstead, and signed into law by Governor Snyder creates the Michigan Wildlife Council charged with developing plans to educate the public about the benefits of scientific wildlife management. Funds from hunting and fishing licenses will be used to raise public awareness of the benefits of sustainable wildlife management through hunting, fishing, and trapping. The Michigan Wildlife Council will consist of 9 members serving two four-year terms. Michigan-based marketing companies will be hired to assist in creating and implementing plans.

### Stiffer Fines for Poaching Deer:

New laws, designed to discourage poaching of deer provide for very high dollar progressive penalties, especially for trophy bucks. Restitution for any poached deer starts at \$1000.00 plus another \$1000.00 for an antlered deer. With an 8 to 10 point trophy \$500.00 is added for each 1 inch point for a total of \$6000.00 for an 8-point buck and \$7000.00 for a 10-point buck. A poached deer with 11 or more points costs \$750.00 per point instead of \$500.00 for each point.

A wall-hanger 12 point buck would require restitution of \$11,000.00. Court fines and costs are added to each violation.

Poachers also face stronger penalties related to hunting privileges. First offenses will result in the loss of subsequent hunting privileges for the remainder of the year of conviction plus an additional five years. Second offences add ten years to the year of conviction.

### Antler Point Restrictions:

For 2014 there will be no change in what constitutes a legal buck in the Lower Peninsula. Across most of the Lower Peninsula a legal buck is any buck with at least one antler 3 inches or more in length. Efforts by the Lower Peninsula Deer Management Initiative last year to change deer regulations to protect year and a half old bucks through antler point restrictions failed to achieve the required 66 percent approval by survey responders.

## HUNTING SAFETY IN 2013

Hunting continues to be one of the safest outdoor recreational activities in Michigan. Nine hunting incidents, including one fatality, were reported in 2013 for more than 6000,000 hunters afield over the 12 month period. Compare this to 23 fatalities for 200,000 registered snowmobiles operating over three to four months. Last year boating activities claimed 21 lives.

DNR credits the volunteer hunter education program and the 2000 plus volunteers who donate their time to teach others about safe hunting practices. The one hunting fatality was recorded as self-inflicted due to careless handling of a firearm. Of the other eight incidents, five involved careless handling of firearms and crossbows, two involved victims not visible to the shooter and the remaining one involved a ricochet. Four of the five incidents of careless handling of firearms and crossbows resulted in self-inflicted wounds.

Worthy of note is that the only youth hunter involved in an accident was a 12-year old that missed a deer resulting in a ricochet which struck another 12-year old in the arm.

## BLACK BEAR EDUCATION PROGRAM

(FROM DNR PRESS RELEASE)

DNR's Wildlife Division is offering educators for grades 6 to 8 a program which integrates Michigan fauna and flora into a curriculum which meets required educational standards. A Year in the Life of a Black Bear is a free program for grades 6, 7, and 8 teachers which allows classes to track a bear using data points from a radio-collared bear through seasonal movements for a year.

Classes will need access to a computer lab and the internet in order to use the mapping application to follow the bear. Educators also will need access to the internet (YouTube) in their classrooms as well as a projector to make it easier for all students to see the video lessons.

Classrooms that participate in the program will be eligible to enter the Year in the Life of a Bear contest, where students can use what they learned to tell the story of a year in the life of a Michigan black bear. Students can choose to retell the actual journey of the bear they followed or get creative and use the information to interpret a typical bear's yearly activities. Contest winners will be awarded prizes, provided by the Michigan bear Hunters Association and the DNR for their classrooms. Prizes are limited to one per school.

For more information and to sign up visit [www.michigan.gov/wildlife](http://www.michigan.gov/wildlife) and click on the "Education" button. Applications are due by Aug. 1 in order to receive the materials for the upcoming school year.





# Hunting England

## November 2013

by Ron and Mary Browning



This was the third time Ron and

I have traveled across the pond to the British Isles to hunt and tour. We were looking forward to seeing our friends and guides Mike McCrave and Mitch Cumming. The first hunt with them was in Scotland and the second was in Ireland. While we were in Ireland I was unsuccessful in harvesting a Fallow deer.

That winter 2013, we saw Mike at the Safari Club International Show and Convention in Las Vegas. I told Mike that I still wanted a Fallow deer and he suggested a trip to England. I knew I could go to Texas for one but it didn't sound like as much fun. So Ron and I booked a hunt and tour with Mike and Mitch.

Mike wanted us to fly into Gatwick Airport so we made our reservations with Aer Lingus. Our flight over was flawless and the airline staff was very friendly

and helpful with our transfers. This was great because I was

beginning to hate flying.

We were met at Gatwick Airport by Mitch. The road trip to our hunting base took several hours but it went fast. We had a great time catching up on what Mitch had been up to. Mike met us at the Middlehouse Hotel in Mayfield. We got settled in our room then met Mike and Mitch in the pub for dinner and a few drinks.

After dinner we worked on our hunting itinerary. I was going to be first (after all this trip was all about the Fallow deer). Then after my hunt it was to be Ron's turn. Ron was going to hunt for a Pere David deer but Mike discouraged him from doing so. He said the racks were not looking good this year. He suggested that Ron hunt for a Manchurian Sika and a Red Stag. While one of us was hunting the other would be touring with Mitch.



When the plans were firmed up we went to our rooms for a good nights sleep.

Monday morning we met for breakfast at 8:00 A.M. After breakfast Mike and I headed out to Wadhurst Park to hunt while Ron and Mitch went off to Canterbury Cathedral and the White Cliffs of Dover. We were met at Wadhurst by Peter Leach. I was going to use Mike's rifle but there was one small hitch - he forgot to bring the ammo. So Peter offered me his - a SAKO 243 Win Mag. After going to the range we were off. The story concludes further on in this article. Let's just say I was successful. At the end of the day we all met up for a wonderful meal at the pub.

Tuesday after breakfast it was Ron's time to hunt and my time to tour with Mitch. Ron went off to Wadhurst Park to hunt a Manchurian Sika and I was off to Canterbury Cathedral and the Cliffs of Dover. Both Ron and I could not see inside Dover Castle because it was only open on the weekends. Ron was successful in his hunt and harvested a beautiful Manchurian Sika. Again we met at the pub for dinner and drinks and discussed the day's events.

Wednesday Ron again was off hunting and Mitch and I traveled to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. There we saw Henry the VIII's Mary Rose, the H.M.S. Warrior and the H.M.S. Victory. What a treat to see these historical ships. Ron was again successful and harvested a beautiful Red Stag.

Wadhurst Park is a fifteen hundred acre privately owned estate with over 1000 deer of seven species, including the second largest herd in the world of the rare Péré David. It was once part of the estate of the former Wadhurst Hall.

After sighting in the rifle we were off to find my beast. Mike, Peter and I glassed from the Range Rover looking for a Fallow deer to harvest. They asked if I had a color preference. My answer: "I am only looking for something with antlers". We circled the park and decided to go back for the first buck we saw, but as we were cresting a hill we saw some promising deer. Mike and I got out of the Range Rover and started to stalk this herd. We followed a river bed that was greasy with wet clay. After trying to get in position several times either there were obstructions in our view or there was something just not quite right with the rack. So we went back to the Range Rover to look for the original





deer. Again we spotted another group and decided to stalk that group. We got into position and Mike spotted a beauty - but the problem was, it was laying down. We waited and waited and finally it decided to get up. First it moved so I could not get a good shot (behind a tree) then it moved again. BANG - it was down. What a beauty.

After Mary's successful hunt it was my turn to go afield in search of the pre-determined Manchurian Sika. Mike and I left the Inn after breakfast in a light rain to head to the afore mentioned Wadhurst Park. There I was introduced to Peter and shortly thereafter the three of us were in the Range Rover off to the rolling hills in search of a good representative Manchurian Sika. Now the day before when Mary was out in the hills she had said that they had run into a number of good ones. Not so today. After coming upon a small herd Mike and I took off on foot to try to get in position for a potential shot which was not to be. Walking up and down the wet clay stream banks was an adventure in itself. Peter who was left in the Range Rover radioed Mike and said that a good bull had come out of the woods near where he was parked. Off we went in pursuit. There he was out in the field by himself. Once in position, one shot and a short walk in the direction that he had gone there he was. A truly beautiful trophy to conclude a successful day.

The second day of my hunt started out much like the day before. Mike and I left the Inn after breakfast to head to Wadhurst in a light mist. Prior to coming to England it was suggested that I try for A Pere David but once arriving hunting a Pere David was out. During Mary's hunt she had mentioned that they had seen several beautiful Red Stags and that maybe I should try for one of them. So that became the plan for the day. Again Peter, Mike and I piled into the Range Rover and off to the hills we went. After driving around the hills for a period of time and observing a number of stags we came upon a small group with what was determined to be a shootable one among them. Mike and I dismounted from the Range Rover and took off after them. They managed to keep ahead of us going into a wooded area. The idea was to out flank them. Again walking in the wet clay proved to be a challenge but eventually we caught up with the one we were after. After setting up, laying down on the ground in a prone position, a shot presented itself. One shot later and another beautiful trophy had been harvested. Retrieving



this animal proved to be a challenge so a wheeler with a trailer was summoned to take the animal back to where it was to be gutted and skinned. Once the skinning was complete it was back to the Inn for dinner and drinks and to talk over the prior days adventures.

Thursday we were on our way to the airport. What a whirlwind of a trip, packed full of hunting and historical sites. A trip that will never be forgotten.



# Five Reasons Why Hunting a Wild Animal Makes an Ethical Dinner

by Lily Raff McCaulou

## 1. Hunting has a light environmental footprint

No antibiotics, artificial hormones, pesticides, herbicides, or unnatural feeds were used in raising this meat. Unlike farmed animals, a wild one doesn't contribute to soil erosion, water pollution, or the displacement of native plants in favor of a monoculture. No land is tilled to feed a wild animal, so additional carbon isn't released into the atmosphere.

## 2. Wild animals aren't subject to the misery of factory farming

My venison was never confined, castrated, or branded the way most farmed steers are. My duck was never caged, de-beaked, or toe-clipped the way most domesticated poultry is. Wild animals, unlike many domesticated ones, aren't bred, fed and medicated to achieve rapid weight gain so that they can be killed at just a few weeks of age.

## 3. None of the meat is wasted

After I shoot an animal, I gut it and butcher it myself (or, in the case of an 800-pounds bull elk, with some help from friends). This way, I know the meat was handled safely. I don't have to worry about listeria or trichinosis, and I'm confident that as much of the animal as possible is used. To hunt and butcher an animal is to recognize that meat is not some abstract form of protein that springs into existence tightly wrapped in cellophane and styrofoam. Meat is life so I seek out recipes that make the most of it. I cook it with care. I share with friends and family. I make sure every bite gets enjoyed.

## 4. Hunting pays for conservation

To hunt for elk this fall, for example, I've already bought an Oregon hunting license for \$29.50, paid \$8 to enter a lottery for the right to hunt in a particular spot, and purchased a \$42.50 tag. That means I've already paid \$80 toward wildlife research and habitat protection in my home state. Bird-watchers and hikers haven't paid anywhere near that much.

With approximately 12.5 million hunters nationwide, we're talking about real money. Proceeds from the Federal Duck Stamp - a required \$15 annual purchase for migratory waterfowl hunters - have added more than five million acres to the national wildlife refuge system. Federal excise taxes on hunting equipment and ammunition garner more than \$200 million a year for wildlife management and the purchase of public lands.

## 5. Hunting promotes conservation

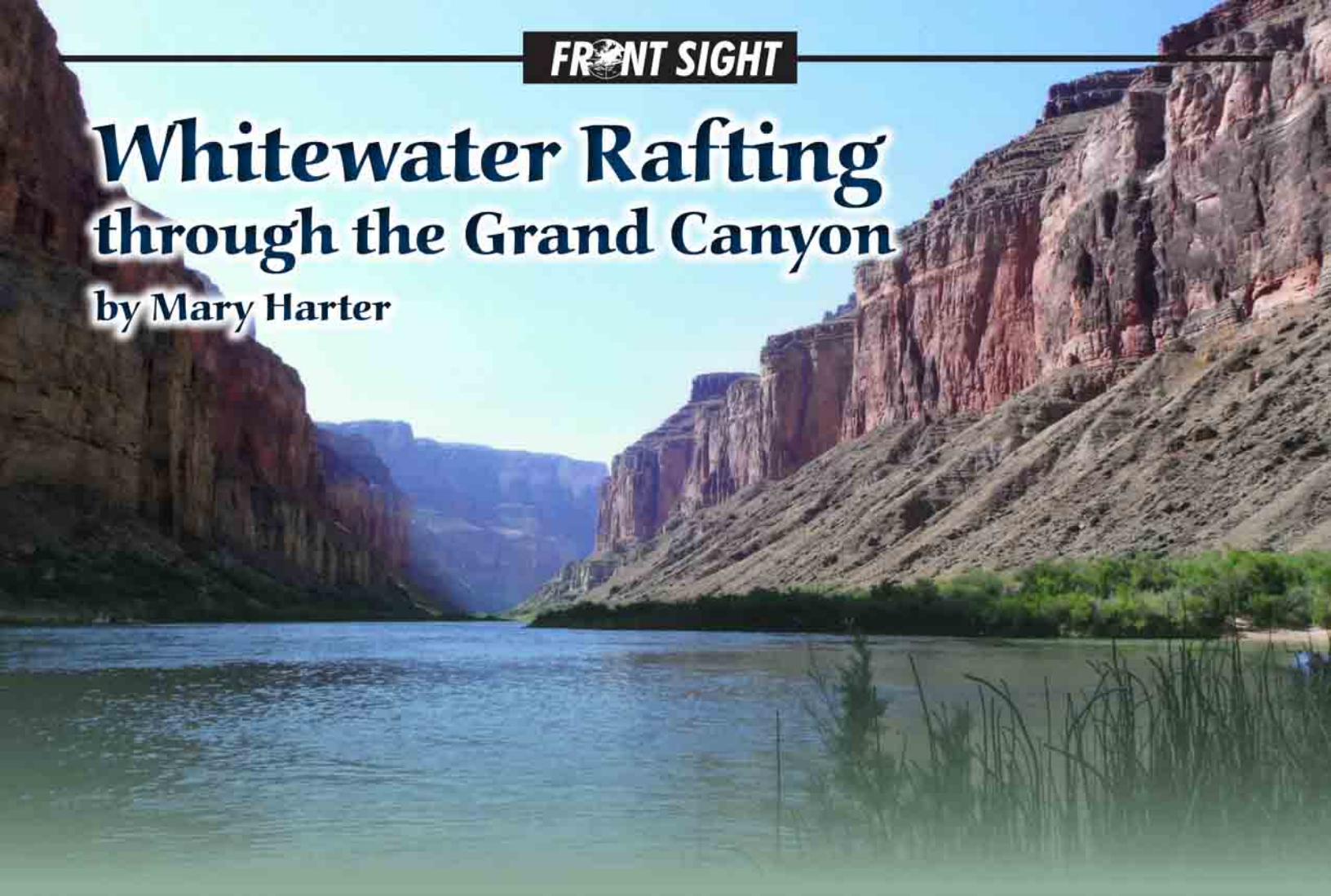
To hunt is to participate in the ecosystem rather than just watch from the sidelines. When I track an animal, I use all of my senses to take in my surroundings, as if I were a wild animal myself. So by the time I actually shoot something, I've developed a deep connection to the species and to the land. I considered myself an environmentalist before I started hunting. But back then, all of my reasons for conservation were theoretical. Now that I hunt, I have a real-life, vested interest in seeing places - and wildlife populations - preserved in the long-term. Someday, I want to take my son hunting in all of my favorite spots.

(Lily is an award winning journalist who as a non hunter, moved from Manhattan to rural Oregon to write for a small newspaper. At first she thought hunters were just barbaric gun nuts but she eventually found out that hunters were more knowledgeable and thoughtful about animals and nature than she was and bought a gun and joined them.)



# Whitewater Rafting through the Grand Canyon

by Mary Harter



In the fall of 2012, we talked about taking our whole family on a whitewater rafting trip that Don and I had done 12 years prior. When we completed the first trip, we hoped to take the whole family back sometime in the future but we needed to wait until the grandchildren were old enough to enjoy it. Our daughter-in-law, Bethany, was the first to say “Yes” and she had never even been camping before. With a little more information, everyone wanted to join us.

In July 2013, we flew to Las Vegas where we spent the night at the Residence Inn by Marriott before and after the rafting trip, were briefed the evening before about our trip and received our waterproof river bags in which to pack our personal items. We were given our own mugs which we decorated during the trip so we could tell which one was ours. The next morning after a great breakfast, we left by bus at 5 a.m. on route to Lees Ferry where we met our guides and boarded the rafts. Two rafts of 13 and 14 each traveled together and we met many wonderful people including eight ge-

ologists from Calgary, a family of four from California and a couple that were related to them, Dr. Tom from Indiana, and a couple from California.

The water was very cold at Lees Ferry (41 degrees) because it is released from the bottom of the Glen Canyon Dam (Lake Powell) just 15 miles upstream. The trip totaled 277 miles on the Colorado River which flows at an average speed of four miles per hour. It is populated by five Indian tribes - the Hopi, Navajo, Havasupai, Paiute and Hualapai. At some places on the river we could not even stop because it is sacred ground to the Indians.

The canyon is a desert but cactus and wildflowers can be seen everywhere. We also saw bighorn sheep, mule deer, coyotes, and ringtail cats. Many birds were cited including hawks, golden eagles, falcons, great blue herons, and egrets. We also saw many species of lizards and thank goodness none of the few snakes that can inhabit the area. During the beginning of our trip we fished for several of the species in these waters but after the rains, the water became cloudy and fishing





was not that good.

We had Sue, a geologist on board, who explained to us every day the spectacular geological extravaganza we were looking at. Every trip had a specific emphasis and because of all of the Canadian geologists, this trip had that emphasis which was very interesting to the grandchildren. We had asked for just a general trip but each trip has a specific emphasis like history, geology, photography, ecology, or archeology.

Sue explained how old the Grand Canyon is by using a yard stick. If you looked at the length of a yardstick as the age of the Grand Canyon, animals came on earth in the last inch and man in the last 1/8 of an inch. Geologists often take core samples by drilling deep in

the earth. Because of the depth to which the Grand Canyon is cut, it is like looking at that core sample which varied every day as we proceeded through the canyon.

When we began our trip, the top layer was Kaibab Limestone which contained many fossils and was a cream color. The next layer was the Toroweap Formation containing fossils but a darker color. Next came the Coconino Sandstone which are petrified sand dunes and wedge shaped. Hermit Shale was next and a deep red color. Supai Formation was next and also a shale that was from red to tan in color. Redwall Limestone was next and the most prominent forming caves and arches. Next was the purplish Temple Butte Limestone



not visible in some places and formed from freshwater fish. The oldest layer, Tonto Group, was made up of Muave Limestone, Bright Angel Shale, and Tapeats Sandstone. The Tapeats has ripple marks formed by ocean waves. As we traveled the canyon the various layers disappeared and others appeared.

Usually you could easily make out the various layers of rock but in many places whole layers had eroded away and in several places the layers had been changed by lava flows. The newest layer was approximately 250,000,000 years old and the oldest layer was approximately 1,700,000,000 years old. The canyon measures from four to 18 miles in width and averaged a mile in depth.

All of these layers of rock made for spectacular views as we traveled through the Grand Canyon and negotiated nearly 200 exciting white water rapids. We were following the route that Major John Wesley Powell and his explorers traveled in 1869. After negotiating some of the class 10 rapids, we learned to appreciate what the early explorers went through as they traveled this area.

We traveled almost 20 miles and



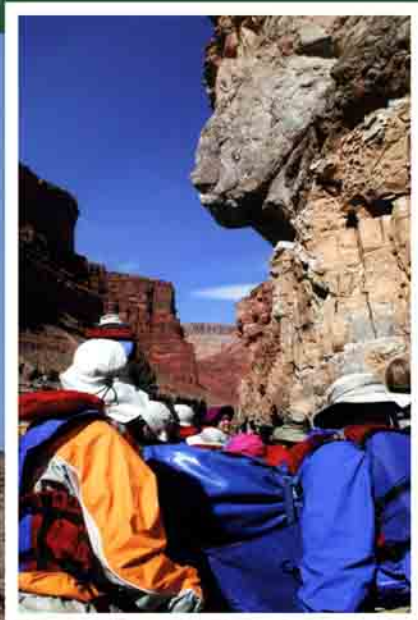
experienced several rapids the first day aboard our 37 foot motorized raft. The grandkids were wide eyed when we went through the first rapids. I just said to hold on tight and keep your mouth shut. The water was full of sediment and you would get a gritty mouthful if you didn't. We either

sat in the "chicken coop" which was the center area and more protected from the waves, or out front where you often caught a wave when you least expected it. The water warmed as we traveled but we usually wore our rain suits over our swim suits in the morning and gradually shed them as the day progressed. Of course, we always had a hat on to protect us from the sun. We each had a waterproof ammo can with our names on them all tied together through the top handle in which we

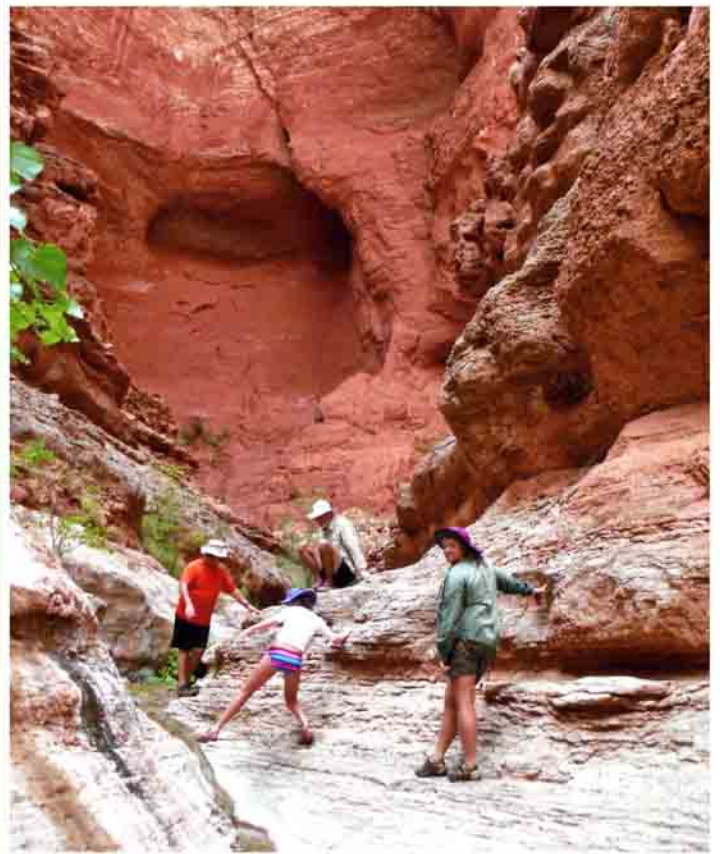
could put items we needed during the day like suntan lotion, cameras, etc. We had a cooler of water accessible at any time which was purified from the river. A bag of juices and colas hung off the back of the raft and kept cool in the water. We saw big horned sheep on this first day!!

We always stopped for lunch









about noon and helped with a relay line to set up tables for food and other needed supplies. Lunch usually consisted of cold cuts for sandwiches, sometimes a salad which was eaten in a wrap, pickles, cookies, etc. Lunch was eaten without tableware and you sat wherever you could. We usually didn't spend too much time for lunch as we wanted to get right back on the river.

When we stopped for the night they always tried to choose a sandy spot on the river with plenty of room for us to spread out. You soon learned that wet sand was the high water mark where the water would reach at some time during the night. We were given a sleeping bag (you had to remember the number on it) and a tent for two. We also had folding cots and chairs which were new since the first time Don and I were on the trip.

After the relay line to get all of our supplies up

on the beach, we sorted out our items and set up our campsite. We tried to find a level spot and set up our cots with our sleeping bags on top. We would put up one tent for the ten of us to use as a changing room and only put up the others if we felt it might rain which it did twice. It was very relaxing to sleep out under the stars.

A bathroom was set up out of sight of the campers but usually visible from the river. At the beginning of the path to the bathroom were two pails with a hand

washing set up and soap. Toilet paper was stored in a plastic bag and if the bag was there, the toilet was available. Otherwise, you waited your turn. You would carry the plastic bag to the toilet and then replace it when you were finished and wash your hands. The toilet was two pails. One with a seat was for #2 and your





toilet paper and was sealed and stored during the trip. The other was for urine only and was emptied in the water. Or you could just wade out in the water when that was all you needed to do. No paper was ever to be left behind.

Bathing was done in the river. We usually did the best we could with our swimsuits on and then changed into clean clothes for dinner. Snacks were always provided and we were called to dinner by the sound of blowing in a conch shell. Our meals were amazing. The raft had a huge storage area below in which was a lot of ice that never melted completely during the trip so food was safely stored for the duration. We had filet mignon, shrimp, fish, pork chops, Italian night, Mexican night, something baked fresh every day, fresh fruit, blue berry pancakes, and numerous other delicious items.

We woke up in the morning to the sound of the conch shell meaning coffee was ready and to bring our

own mugs for a fresh cup. Breakfast followed in about 20 minutes. Breakfast was always hot and consisted of a variety of eggs, bacon or sausage, sometimes pancakes or French toast, hot cereal, and toast. There was always a variety of fruit and juices. We washed our own dishes after each meal in a series of three wash tubs and stored them in a mesh hammock beneath the washing table.

Our guides were amazing. Our captain was Bob and Donna was his assistant who always jumped down off the boat first to tie it up or secure it in some way. Alan was the captain on the other raft and Susan was his assistant. They were not only wonderful chefs and knowledgeable captains and assistants but wonderful guides and storytellers.

On the second day we traveled 30 miles and went through the Rushing 20's Rapids where every half mile to a mile there was a rapids. We got soaked. We stopped at Redwall Cavern which is a vast chamber carved by the river. Powell thought it would seat 50,000 people.





We saw the Kanab amber snail which is endangered and thrives in the Grand Canyon.

On the third day we traveled 20 miles. We hit the Nankoweap Rapids and several others. We hiked to the Pueblo Granaries high on the cliffs where they stored their grain. We floated the Little Colorado with our lifejackets on upside down (our legs through the arm holes and sat on the back). Here lives the humpback chub which is also endangered and this is one of the only places it can live.

On the fourth day we traveled 40 miles and we were supposed to go over many rapids. Tanner Rapids had a drop of 20 feet. Hermit Rapids was the most intensive splash even though it was only rated in the 7 to 8 class. Splash wise it was definitely a 10 according to the grandchildren.

On the fifth day we traveled 27 miles. We went over 110 mile Rapids and then proceeded to Elves Chasm. At Elves Chasm the kids climbed up the waterfall and jumped off. It was slippery but they had fun. After several more rapids we came to Deer Creek where there were beautiful waterfalls. You had a short hike in to see them and it was worth it. You could go to Upper Deer Creek and there was a narrow ledge you had to walk along. Cole was nervous and Grandpa asked him, "Why?" He said, "Grandpa, some places if I fall I could get hurt but here if I fall I could die." Don just told him to keep his hand on the wall and not look down.

On the sixth day we traveled 38 miles. We packed our lunches after breakfast as we were not stopping somewhere like we had on the previous days for lunch. We were going to Havasu Creek and spending two hours. We hiked up and down through the rocks on the side on the canyon to a beautiful waterfall. After lunch the grandchildren decided to jump off the boulders into the beautiful blue-green water. They really enjoyed visiting this area.

And finally 102 miles on the last day which was a long day. We experienced the best of the rapids which



was Lava Falls which is ranked a 10 as it drops 13 feet first and then another 14 feet at the lower falls. Water covered the boat seven times. The last many miles were just flat water which we rapidly motored through.

It was a real experience to see the canyon from the river level. It was a disconnect from the outside world. The grandkids didn't want to leave their electronics at home but when we told them we would have no service, they seemed convinced not to bring them. Don did have his satellite phone and a couple of times when he had service he let the kids make calls.

We spent quite a bit of time exploring various caves, paths, rock formations, waterfalls, diving off cliffs and waterfalls, hearing the history of the Indians and of the early settlers, and seeing the wildlife. You never knew what would be around the next bend in the river. We were never in danger as our guides knew what to expect and prepared us for the worst (or was it the best) of the rollercoaster rapids. We survived Soap Creek, Hance, Sockdolager, Hermit, Crystal, and Lava Falls.

Twelve year old Jenna kept a diary during the trip. I have used many of her notes while writing this story. When we tipped the guides I had the grandkids write their names and fourteen year old Dylan added, "Thank you for keeping me alive." I think they will always remember this adventure.



## Looking Ahead - to our Next Issues -

### A Lion, Buffalo, and Dik-Dik

by Mary Harter

### 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday Buffalo

by Joanne Witte

### Black Bear Cubs

by Randy Raymond

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and jokes yet to be submitted.



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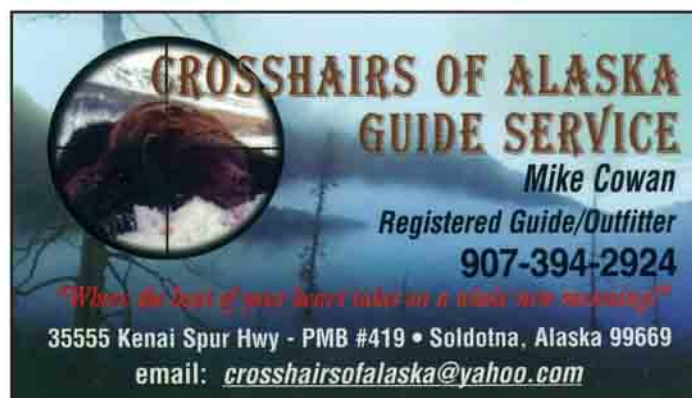
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