

FRONT SIGHT



SCI
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

July-September 2016, Issue 35



Caza Pampa, Argentina
Photos by Mary Harter



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 5070 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 website for copies of the Front Sight, listing of events, and fundraiser auction items.

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SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Type</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
September 11	Membership Shoot	4:00-6:00 p.m.	Isabella Sportsmans Club
October 3	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
December 5	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Jan. 14, 2017	Big Buck Night	5:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn
Feb. 14, 2017	Las Vegas Convention		Mandalay Bay
Feb. 24-25, 2017	Mid-Mich. Convention		Soaring Eagle

Reservations required. Please call and leave a message at 989-330-4463
or email Maxine Warner at maxiwar27@gmail.com

President's Message



Last week, I returned from attending the Spring National SCI board meeting in Washington DC. Many of your fellow SCI members visited with our state legislative congressmen and senators; in some instances to thank them for positions they have taken that support hunters and the conservation of wildlife and in other cases to express our positions. I

am continually amazed at all the positive activities National SCI does for its members; promoting hunting through effective marketing, the media communication department, litigation staff – these folks seem to work endlessly within the legal system protecting our hunting rights, education and humanitarian efforts to just touch a few. To get a better idea of the support we all get from National SCI, please go the National SCI website and subscribe to the "Crosshairs" publication, it is free and you can read the articles that interest you.

We have just completed our most recent fundraiser, while the analyses for the expenses are not 100% complete; it looks like this will be a very good year, which will allow your chapter to make donations to programs that promote; shooting sports activities, youth and veteran hunts, education, sportsmen against hunger, etc.

Please be aware your Chapter is going to have a Membership Cookout on Sunday June 26th for members and guests. More details to come, please reserve the date!

Sincerely,

Joe Mulders

President

Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI

Editor's Message

We are proud to be members of the great "family" of SCI. After Don's experience which you can read about in this magazine, we received so many calls from people asking how he was. We have so many friends who understand the situation he was in and were so glad he lived to tell about it. All I can say is that "Prayers Work!". We were hunting with a first class outfitter who took great care of us and made it very clear that they would do whatever was necessary. We are members of Global Rescue but didn't need to use their services, thank goodness.

It is a strange experience to go to the emergency room in a foreign country where you do not speak the language. Most countries do not have hospitals like we have, even a country like Argentina which used to be one of the most prosperous in the world. We need to appreciate what we have here in the United States.

We recently attended the SCI board meeting in Washington, D.C. where Don was re-elected as Vice President for another two years. We spent a day on the "Hill" visiting the offices of our congressional representatives presenting them with materials about hunting ideas and proposals. Michigan has many voting members in SCI and you should be proud of how the current SCI group comes together with their ideas and how to use them.

Hunting is changing world wide. Who would have ever thought that one lion would impact hunting so drastically in only one year and to the detriment of wild animals all over the world.

It is a great pleasure to be able to be a part of this group and to see all of the interactions, ideas, and implementation. It takes a lot of time (you have no idea!) and effort to be leaders of this group and I want to thank them all. We all want to hunt but it takes a lot of work and research to ensure the continuation of hunting for all.

A special thank you to Daniel Reinke for taking all the wonderful photos during our Mid-Michigan SCI Convention.

Keep Hunting and 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

\$ 35 National Dues

\$ 25 Local Dues

= \$ 60

3 Years

\$ 150 National Dues

\$ 75 Local Dues

= \$ 225

Life

\$1500 National Dues

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= \$ 1,800

Over 60

\$1250 National Dues

\$200 Local Dues

= \$ 1,450

Check/Cash attached \$ _____

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Mid-Michigan SCI

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Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: HAPPY, HAPPY, HAPPY:
MY LIFE AND LEGACY AS THE
DUCK COMMANDER

Author: Phil Robertson

Publisher: Howard Books

Copyright: 2013;

List Price: \$24.99

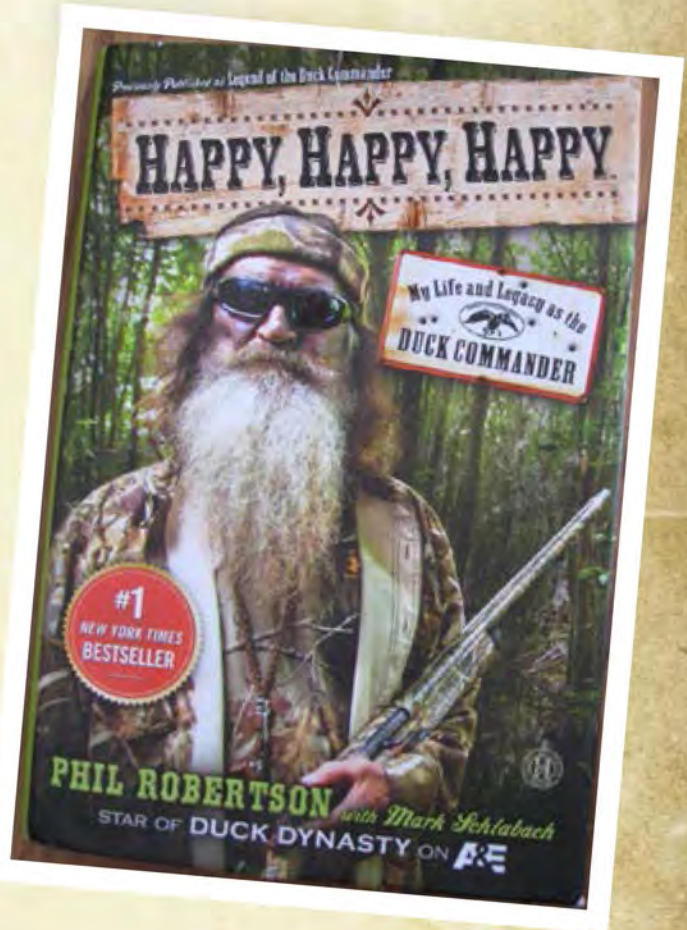


Phil Robertson is the patriarch of the Roberston clan and creator of Duck Commander. Many might be familiar with him and his family through the television show Duck Dynasty on A&E. This book is about his life and what made him the man he is today.

Happy, Happy, Happy centers on Phil's upbringing and choices he made to get him to this point. It talks about his humble beginnings where his family had to live off the land and he had to share a bedroom and bed with three of his brothers.

Phil also discusses his years as quarterback at Louisiana Tech, where he played in front of Terry Bradshaw, and how hunting and alcohol were more important to him at the time than football. He explains his issues with alcohol which almost cost him his family, and how he turned his life around for them.

We also learn of Phil's different career choices before he finally started his duck call business. Learning along the way many things such as why he started the company, why he was called the "Duck Commander" and how he was able to get his duck calls into stores (both small and large).



This book gets 8 out of 10 bullseyes



MEASURING SEMINAR

BY LARRY AND JOANNE WITTE



On February 20, 2016 an SCI Measuring Seminar organized by Larry Witte was held at Jay's Sporting Goods in Clare Michigan. Chris Emery from the Tucson office assisted with details and requirements. He sent a notice via the web to members in Michigan and adjoining states and mailed packets to Dr. Terry Braden, our instructor and a chapter member. Michigan is very lucky to have an Instructor so close to home.

The idea for a seminar came from Larry Smith, SCI Board member in the Michigan chapter in Grand Rapids, but only 2 members of that chapter, Larry and Bill, were interested in attending.

Chad Stearns, from Jay's, arranged for a conference room for the group to use at Jay's and also contacted a caterer. There was a \$150.00 SCI charge to take the course and that included the measuring kit. A nominal fee was charged for lunch.

Attendees were Chad Stearns, Jeff Tyson, Dave Wiesenburger, Larry Smith, Bill Bettys, Dave Edel, Scott Estes, Jay Moore, Jim Bolson, Mike Bolson, Jim Walker, Doug Chapin, and Bruce Tyree. Jon Zieman, already a measurer, also attended for a refresher. Joanne Witte handled registration.

The presentation lasted for the morning. After lunch participants practiced what they had learned on racks, horns, and skulls that the Witte's and Terry brought. One person brought an impala shoulder mount he wanted measured. Terry had score sheets for the animals he brought so participants could compare their measurements with his.

After the seminar participants had to take a test and send it to National to receive their certification.

Three of the participants, Jay, Jim and Mike, were from Wisconsin. They saw the notice on the web and contacted Larry to reserve a spot. They were not members of SCI so Larry told them they had to join first. We were very pleased to get new people interested in SCI.

The seminar was very worthwhile: Terry is a great instructor and now we have increased our ranks of measurers by 11, not counting our new Wisconsin friends. Two participants came from Grand Rapids and one from Port Huron.

Our efforts paid off handsomely.



Opening Ceremonies with the Board



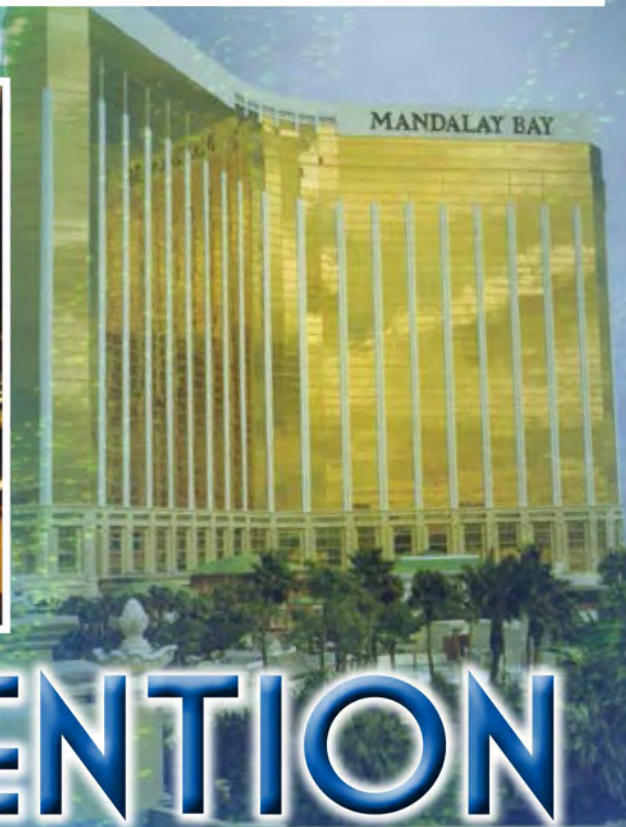
Joe Mueller, Mike Leonard, Abbe Mueller, Don Harter



*Nancy Bollman and
Deb Cunningham*



*Don Harter and
Larry Higgins*



SCI CONVENTION IN LAS VEGAS



Roger and Sheri Froling



Lance and Inja Norris



Mary Cabela, Larry Higgins, and Renee Snider



Saturday Night - Merle Haggard
 Merle left his hospital bed to perform for us. He was on oxygen with an ambulance waiting for him to take him back afterwards. Merle died on April 6 on his 79th birthday.



During the Merle Haggard performance there was a surprise performance by Toby Keith



Wednesday Night - Blood, Sweat, and Tears featuring Bo Bice



Thursday Night - "Night of the Hunter" hosted by Eva Shockey with Jim Shockey and Ivan Carter

EVENING ENTERTAINMENT AT CONVENTION



Stony and Alma Bing



Dan and Julie Olson

Thank You

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Major Contributors - \$3,000



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Thank You

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

Awards Night

February 26, 2016



Women's Top Hunter of the Year:
Sara Christensen



Muzzleloader Hunter of the Year:
Tim Torpey



Crossbow Hunter of the Year:
John Jefts



Men's Top Hunter of the Year:
Matt Esch

2016 Major Award Winners Mid-Michigan Chapter Sci

	<u>Animal</u>	<u>Hunter</u>
Africa	1. Red Lechwe	Paul Jefts
	2. Common Reedbuck	Gale Hixson
	3. Kalahari Gembok	Paul Jefts
North America	1. Tule Elk	Jeff Sackett
	2. Black Bear	Alfred Luis
	3. Dall Sheep	Keith Davis
North America Introduced	Rusa Deer	Corey Hyde
Europe	Reeves Muntjac	Larry Smith
South Pacific	Sika Deer	Matt Esch

Bow Hunter Of The Year: Don Harter

Crossbow Hunter Of The Year: John Jefts

Muzzleloader Hunter Of The Year: Tim Torpey

Women's Top Hunter Of The Year: Sara Christensen

Men's Top Hunter Of The Year: Matt Esch

Youth Hunters Of The Year

Elijah Christensen	Northeastern Whitetail Deer
Cole Harter	Black Bear
Dylan Harter	Black Bear
Tyrel Hoover	Eastern Turkey
Kyler Koch	Black Bear
	Northeastern Whitetail Deer
	Rocky Mt. Elk Estate
Jenna Koch	Bison
	Black Bear
Cody Torpey	Northeastern Whitetail Deer
Konnor Wilson	Eastern Turkey
	Northeastern Whitetail Deer



Jeff Sackett



Keith Davis



Larry Smith



*Bow Hunter of the Year:
Don Harter*



Paul and Denise Jefts



Gale Hixson



Corey Hyde



*Youth Hunters: Konnor Wilson, Cody Torpey, Jenna Koch, Tyrel Hoover, Kyler Koch,
Dylan Harter, Cole Harter, and Elijah Christensen*

FEB. 26 & 27, 2016

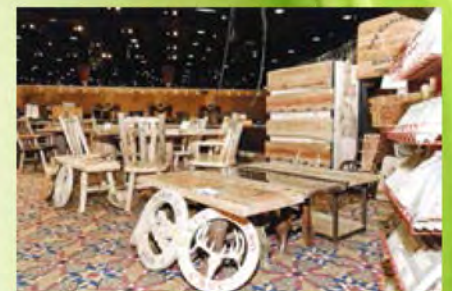
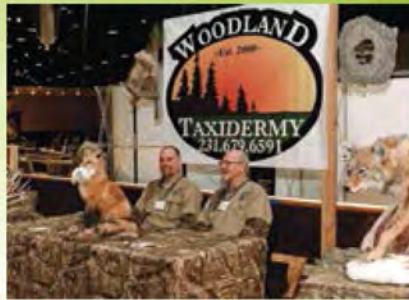
Our Mid-Michigan Convention

SOME OF OUR MANY





OUTFITTERS AND DONORS



FEB. 26 & 27, 2016

OUR MID-MICHIGAN CONVENTION

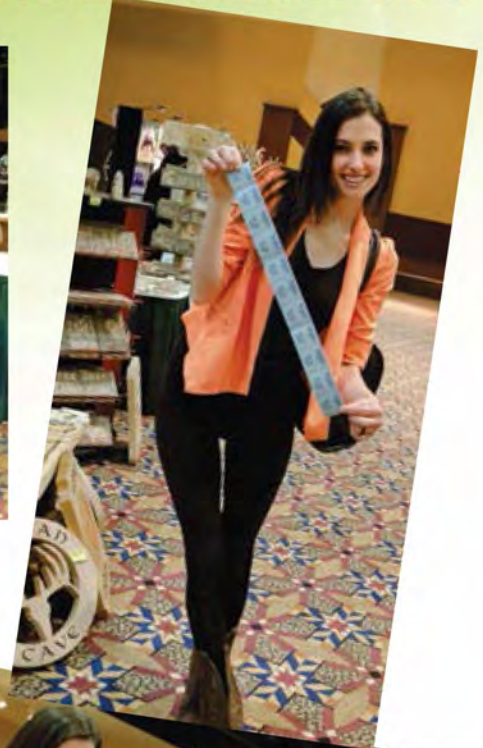
MANY OF OUR BOARD MEMBERS,



WORKERS AND ATTENDEES



OUR MID-MICHIGAN CONVENTION



Thank you Daniel Reinke for all the photos.

Present and Past **SCI** FIRST FOR HUNTERS **PRESIDENTS**



Photo by Daniel Reinke

At the recent Mid-Michigan SCI Convention held at the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan on Saturday, February 27, a special tribute was paid to the present and past presidents of our SCI Chapter.

Those present were from left to right, Tim Hauck (2005 - 2008), Roger Froling (1994 - 1997), Pat Bollman (1979 - 1980), Gale Hixon (1981 - 1983), Sid Smith (1983 - 1985), Larry Higgins (2001 - 2005), Don Harter (2008 - 2011), Kevin Unger (2011 - 2014), and Joseph Mulders (2014 - present). Pat Bollman was our first president who went on to become the International President as well as Larry Higgins, our current International President.

What a special honor to have all of these past presidents attend our 37th Anniversary Convention.

Michigan records second consecutive hunting season with no fatalities

(from Statewide DNR News)

For the second year in a row, Michigan recorded no fatalities in 2015 during all hunting seasons, according to reports compiled by the Department of Natural Resources' Law Enforcement Division. Thirteen incidents resulting in injuries were recorded in the state during the year, up slightly from 10 incidents in 2014. Twelve incidents occurred in the Lower Peninsula and one in the Upper Peninsula.

This is part of an overall trend toward fewer hunting-related fatalities and injuries over the past several decades, a downward trend that started in 1988 when completion of a hunter education class became mandatory for all first-time hunters born after January 1, 1960.

In 1988, the state saw the lowest fatality rate -- four deaths -- since annual record keeping began in 1970, when there were 18 fatalities. Record keeping began in the 1940s, but fatalities and injuries figures were compiled per decade rather than per year.

"Our excellent hunter education program saves lives," said Sgt. Steve Orange, supervisor of the DNR's Recreational Safety, Education and Enforcement Section. "When looking at the downward trend over the last five decades, it becomes very clear that our hunter education program is one of the major factors attributed to preventing fatalities and injuries."

Injuries have fallen substantially since hunter education classes became mandatory.

From 212 injuries in 1970 and climbing to 275 injuries by 1974 -- the most recorded in a single year -- injuries have, for the most part, steadily decreased every year since. Incidents involving injury fell below 50 in 1991 for the first time, and after a very slight increase over the next several years, injuries began dropping again. Incidents resulting in injury have not exceeded 15 per

year for the past five years.

The steadily decreasing numbers are attributed by Orange to the dedicated team of hunter education volunteer instructors -- who currently number over 3,400 -- and the expanded hunter education programs, which now include a home study program and online hunter safety courses.

"Our many hunter education volunteers -- who cumulatively donate over 35,000 hours every year -- are dedicated to providing new hunters with the skills needed to handle and operate their firearms or archery equipment safely, which results in enjoyable experiences for them and others in Michigan's out of doors," said Orange.

He also noted the benefits for experienced hunters in taking or retaking a hunter education class as a refresher.

Individuals completing home study or online hunter safety courses must still complete a hands-on field day, where they receive instruction and practice in operating firearms, bows, traps and more. Field days are taught by volunteer instructors and conservation officers.

Hunter education classes have been available since 1946, although they were not mandatory at that time. In 1971, the program became mandatory for first-time hunters ages 12 - 16. That was expanded in 1988 to all first-time hunters born after January 1, 1960. Since 1988, more than 600,000 hunters have completed hunter education classes. In recent years, over 20,000 hunters complete the program annually.

During the 2015 season, 651,588 base licenses were sold. Michigan's hunting incident rate per license is .002 percent. The base license is required to purchase any hunting license.



Of the 13 incidents resulting in injury reported in 2015, one involved a turkey hunter, one involved a waterfowl hunter, one involved a trapper and six involved deer hunters. One injury does not specify animal hunted because the report is pending. Victims ranged in age from 21 to 74. The majority of injuries, over 60 percent, were a result of self-inflicted gunshot wounds.

Five of the deer hunting incidents were reported during the firearm deer hunting season November 15 - 30 and occurred in the counties of Calhoun, Gladwin, Roscommon, St. Clair and Van Buren. The sixth deer hunting incident that resulted in injury occurred during late antlerless firearm season December 19 - January 1. The incident took place in Lapeer County,

The DNR reminds hunters to follow all safety rules and recommendations to ensure a safe hunting season, including:

- Keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction at all times.

- Treat every firearm with the respect due a loaded gun. It might be loaded, even if you think it isn't.

- Be sure of the target and what is in front of it and beyond it. Know the identifying features of the game you hunt. Make certain you have an adequate backstop; don't shoot at a flat, hard surface or water.

- Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot. This is the best way to prevent an accidental discharge.

- Make certain the barrel and action are clear of obstructions, and carry only the proper ammunition for your firearm.

- Unload firearms when not in use. Leave actions open, and carry firearms in cases and unloaded to and from the shooting area. Point a firearm only at something you intend to shoot. Avoid all horseplay with a gun.

- Don't run, jump or climb with a loaded firearm. Unload a firearm before you climb a fence or tree or jump a ditch. Pull a firearm toward you by the butt, not the muzzle.

- Store firearms and ammunition separately and safely. Store each in secured locations beyond the reach of children and careless adults.

- Avoid alcoholic beverages before and during shooting. Also avoid mind- or behavior-altering

medications or drugs.

"Although these are all common sense rules and recommendations, the majority of accidents and fatalities happen because one or more of these safety points were not followed," Orange said.

Cpl. Dave Painter of the DNR's Recreational Safety, Education and Enforcement Section reminds hunters to wear hunter orange during designated seasons. "It's the law, and it's paramount in keeping hunters seen and safe," Painter said.

In 1977, wearing hunter orange became mandatory on certain lands for the first time. In 1984, the law was amended to require hunters to wear hunter orange on all lands open to public hunting.

Regulations require hunters, during designated hunting seasons, to wear a cap, hat, vest, jacket or rain gear of hunter orange.

The garments that are hunter orange must be the outermost garment and visible from all sides.

"Hunter orange is a high-visibility color hat, when worn according to regulations, increases hunters' safety," Painter said. Hunter orange is readily identified as the color worn by hunters, according to Painter.

"For nearly 40 years, hunters have worn this color so that they can be seen by other hunters while in the field. This is an important added safety measure and can also be attributed, along with hunter education programs, to saving lives and reducing the number of incidents leading to injury."

Painter encourages individuals who aren't hunters but enjoy public and private lands with hunters -- such as hikers, birders and general outdoor enthusiasts -- to also wear hunter orange during designated seasons so they are seen and recognized.

"Outdoor enthusiasts who share lands with hunters are taking the initiative to wear hunter orange because they recognize its significance," Painter said. "They correctly attribute the color to safe hunting and safe outdoor recreation."

Information on the hunting incidents recorded in 2015 can be found online at www.michigan.gov/conservationofficers under Law Enforcement Reports.



BY JOANNE WITTE

And a wonderful time was had by all!

My husband Larry and I took our grandsons to Texas with us hunting from November 20 to 23, 2015. This was the 14th year for Larry and me to hunt at the Texas A & M University Research Station near Sonora Texas. Every year for four days the 3500 acre ranch opens up for hunting in order to reduce the deer population to manageable levels. The ranch does research on goats and sheep. They are trying to develop a type of goat that thrives on juniper, an invasive species in Texas, and still tastes good. There is a big market for meat goats on both the East and West coasts. The sheep they are developing are self-shearing.

The ranch sponsors 10 hunts. A hunt consists of two whitetail bucks, two whitetail does, two free-ranging

Axis deer, two turkeys, and a javalina—if you see one. Hunts can be purchased by one person or shared by two people. Many hunters come in pairs—parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren. Consequently there could be as many as 20 hunters in all. Hunters must bring towels and sleeping bags; food is provided by a caterer and the staff takes hunters to their blinds for morning and afternoon hunts. Each evening hunters draw for one of the 23 elevated or ground box blinds. About half of the blinds are doubles—suitable for two people.

Many of the hunters are from Michigan; others are from Texas and southeastern states. Usually the same people come back every year. This was probably the last



Ian with his Texas Whitetail.



J.R. Clock with his Axis Deer.

year for the hunts since the Superintendent of the station is retiring in May 2016 after 42 years at the ranch where he began as a student.

We thought this was the perfect time to take our grandsons hunting. There might not be another chance. Ian Wenk is 23 and working as a personal trainer in a gym in Grand Rapids. Needless to say he is very fit! J.R. Clock is 13 and an eighth grader at a school just outside of Ann Arbor. He is an excellent student and his parents and teachers readily gave permission for him to miss a week of school.

Our hunt began with an overnight stay at a motel in Grand Rapids so we could be at the airport at 4:30am to be ready for our 6:00am flight. Larry's brother and nephew who drive to Texas to hunt took all 4 rifles and our luggage. The boys each had a duffle bag and a camo backpack to take on the plane. We arrived in San Antonio about noon after changing planes in Minneapolis. Once there we rented a car for the 3 hour trip to Sonora, a small town about 30 miles from the ranch.

After an overnight stay in Sonora we headed to the ranch the next day. Larry and I had our usual room over the horse barn with about 8 beds and a huge bathroom. The boys were in the Pavilion—a large gym-like building with communal showers and one side blocked off for beds and the other side used for meals. There were six hunters in the Pavilion. Other hunters were assigned to several of the old houses which are part of the research station. The festivities began at dinner after which we checked our licenses and drew for blinds for the next day.

Ian and I hunted alone the first day and Larry and J.R. hunted together. Ian was so excited! He saw many deer and loved every minute. The deer at the ranch are not very big but they are plentiful. The staff uses corn feeders and alfalfa and when the feeders go off at 7:00am you can see the deer start to migrate toward the feeders. We have realized over the years there is usually a dominant whitetail buck at each feeder. That buck does not necessarily have to be the biggest deer.

The corn feeders are used for two weeks prior to the hunt. For the rest of the year the major supplemental food source is cotton seeds which are much more nutritious than corn.

The Axis deer are becoming more numerous than the whitetail deer and behave differently. They are usually in large family groups and they move through the area. They often stop at the feeder but only for a short time while the whitetails sometimes stay for several hours.



Larry with Ian Wenk and his Axis Deer.

About 10:00am the hunters are picked up. Everyone gathers at the skinning shed to see who got what. That first morning there were very few animals brought in because most people wait and hope for something bigger. Larry and J.R. saw a huge hard horned Axis deer just as it was getting light. Larry had a good view of the deer and wanted J.R. to take the shot but he could not get a shot due to brush in the way.

We always have a big lunch about noon, a rest and then out again about 2:30. That afternoon I shot a nice 8 point whitetail buck. The other 3 guys did not shoot anything. They were still waiting for something big.

The next morning I sat with J.R. in a double ground blind. We had a great time. We had told him he could not bring any electronic devices in the blind but he could bring books. He brought two books and read one a day. He is a very fast reader! After that he borrowed some of my books and liked one so much that he wanted to get more books by that author. There was lots of brush in front of the feeders. It needed trimming badly.

When we were picked up about 10:00am for lunch I told our driver that the brush between the blind and the feeder needed trimming. We could not have gotten a good shot at an animal at the feeder if we had seen one. He went out before lunch and trimmed the brush. Now we could see.



Joanne and J.R. with his Javalina.

When we got back at noon, Larry and Ian had both shot Axis deer in velvet. The Axis have no special breeding season so you can find bucks in velvet or hard horned at the same time.

About 3:30pm I saw 2 javalina come out of the brush beside the blind and eat some corn we had spread there. I told J. R. to get his rifle up. He was a little slow on the first one but he got his sight on the second and dropped it. He was one happy boy! We dragged it back to the blind because the deer do not like the javalina.

About 4:30pm a big Axis deer came to the feeder by himself and started to feed. J.R. got his rifle up and made a great shot and dropped it. Two animals in one sitting! He was thrilled. I thought the excitement was over but at dark J.R. spotted a javalina at the far end of the feeder. By the time I got my rifle up it was gone. A few minutes later J.R. said, "It came back!" This time I got it in my sights and dropped it. Wow! We had 3 animals. Quite a day.

Larry and Ian were still looking for the "right" whitetail to shoot. They saw lots but nothing that excited them.

The next day I sat with J.R. again. We were in an elevated double blind but the brush was still a problem. The day was VERY cold—below freezing. J.R. never gets cold. He is a big kid. Even though he is only just 13 years old he weighs 200 pounds, is 5 feet 10 inches tall and wears size 12 shoes—the

biggest in his family. He almost always wears shorts. In the winter at home his parents have told him if the temperature and/or wind chill is 32degrees or below, he must wear long pants and a jacket. Today we told him he needed to wear everything he brought—long underwear, long pants, long sleeve shirt, warm jacket, camo over pants and parka, and a hat. He did. But when we got in the blind he huddled down and said, "It's cold." He finally experienced cold. The nice thing about Texas weather is that by afternoon it had warmed up to a comfortable temperature.

Mid-morning we saw a nice 7 point buck behind the feeder and I told J.R. to shoot it which he did very handily. It was not as big as he had hoped but the whitetails were not very plentiful and I decided we better take this one.

When we were picked up for lunch we asked our driver to bring a saw and cut some of the brush that was in our way before the afternoon hunt. When we returned we found a small buck eating corn in the path where we had spread it before we left for lunch. It stayed there just 3 feet off the road while we cut the brush and then returned to feeding in the path when we got back in the blind. We watched it for over an hour and eventually decided that its back leg was crippled.

About mid-afternoon a hard horned Axis deer came to the feeder all alone. I took aim and shot it. It did not drop but fortunately it ran beside the blind so I got out and finished it off just a few feet from us.

When we got back that night Larry and Ian had still not shot whitetails. Only one other javalina was shot the whole 4 days in addition to the 2 J.R. and I got. A few turkeys were shot but not many. It is fun to be able to shoot turkeys with a rifle in Texas during deer season.

The next day, our last day, I was so tired from getting



J.R. (sleeping) and Ian in the pavillion.

up at 4:00am and not getting to bed till 10:00pm that I decided to stay in our room and sleep. With a whitetail, an Axis and a javalina I didn't have anything to shoot but a turkey anyway. Even though we could shoot does, we rarely do because we have so much meat already.

J.R. went with Larry the last morning but Larry still did not see a deer he wanted to shoot. He had a great time though, hunting with his grandsons and he saw lots of deer. Ian shot a nice 8 point that morning. He has been hunting with us since he was about 5 years old. At first we had to have a high chair (without the tray) for him to use in the blind so he would be high enough to see out the window. Ian killed his first deer and several more while sitting with Larry and is thoroughly hooked. He told us that morning that he had decided if he saw a nice 8 point he would shoot it. He was tired of waiting.

That afternoon Larry went out alone. I started packing and the boys slept. In the late afternoon after they woke up I went to the Pavilion where they were staying and we had a good talk. I found out some things I bet their parents don't know. The boys really enjoy each other and have spent lots of time together while growing up.

Unfortunately Larry still did not see a deer he wanted

to shoot. He has much more restraint than I do. He was happy with all the animals he saw and being with his family. For me the hunt is not complete until I have something in hand.

The next day we had to get up at the crack of dawn in order to get our meat, luggage, and rifles into Larry's brother's truck for the trip home. Then we had a 3 hour drive to San Antonio where we had to return the rental car and get to the airport. It always takes us longer going through security partly because Larry is in a wheelchair in airports and he has lots of metal in his body.

On the return trip we had to go through Detroit so we left J.R. there. He only lives about 20 minutes from the airport. His mother had to get a gate pass from the ticket agent and come to the gate to get him because at age 13 he was considered an "unaccompanied minor". Since he left us in Detroit he had a different ticket from the three of us. Things worked out fine though. We were in Detroit about 6:00pm but we had a 3 hour layover which turned into a 4 hour layover due to deicing the plane. Luckily Ian did not have to work the next day.

We had a great time hunting with our grandsons and highly recommend it.

Correction*

NAPA CABBAGE SALAD

by Joanne Witte

1/2 c. sugar

1 c. oil

2 pkg. ramen noodles - don't use flavoring packet

1 sm. pkg. slivered almonds

3T. sesame seeds

1 head Napa cabbage leaves - break off stock, rinse, and cut up

6 green onions, sliced

1/2 c. vinegar

3T. soy sauce

***1/2 stick margarine**

Mix together in saucepan: sugar, oil, vinegar, and soy sauce. Bring to a boil to dissolve sugar, then set aside to cool. Melt margarine in skillet and sauté together noodles (broken up), almonds, and sesame seeds until golden brown. Spread on paper towels to cool. Mix together cabbage and green onions with noodle mixture and pour cooled dressing over all. The three parts may be made up ahead and then assembled at serving time.

Makes a very large salad but can easily be cut in half.





NORTHERN PATAGONIA - ARGENTINA
CAZAPAMPA
Hunting Ranch

My Water Buffalo Hunt I Lived to Tell About

by Don Harter

I had been hunting a big water buffalo in Argentina with Caza Pampa. They had seen this old boy which they said was very big and I would know him when I saw him because he was almost a grey color instead of all black like the younger ones. Well, we had been looking for him for five days. We had seen lots of buffalo but not him. On the fifth day, in the evening, on our way back to camp, we saw him with several cows. Our guide, Charly Watson, told me I didn't have much time to shoot because he was going to go into the thick bush.

Mary and I did not bring our own rifles on this trip, so we were using their rifles and bullets. They have Ruger .300 Win Mags with 165 grain bullets. These have worked great for all the other animals we have shot but it is a very light bullet for a big water buffalo. We were hurrying so Charly had Mary stay in the truck and we did not think to have Charly take her rifle with us. Later we wished we would have had it.

Anyway, we got about 70 yards from the water buffalo and he gave me a nice broadside shot. My first shot was on his shoulder just where I wanted it. My second shot was while he was moving and I hit him on the shoulder again. My third shot was just as he was going into the thick bush. I hit him again but a little too far back. At this point we were moving closer to the bush where he went in.

We got about 40 feet from where he went into the bush. I looked up from reloading the rifle to see him charging me. What a sight!! At this point I knew my only hope of stopping him was with a brain shot. I knew the 165 grain bullet would not stop him with a chest shot. He ran at me. I put the crosshairs on his forehead and shot. I racked in another shell and put another shot into his forehead. He was still coming. Later we learned those shots were to the right of his left eye about an inch apart but must have just missed his brain.

I was closing the bolt of the rifle trying to take a third shot when I saw his nose about 18 inches from the end of my gun barrel. I knew I was in trouble when he hit me full speed in my chest and he had me on the ground mauling me with his head and horns. At this point my guide, Charly, had the courage to come and grab the bull by one horn to get him off me. Undoubtedly Charly saved my life! The bull knocked Charly down, wrenched his



thumb and stomped on his left calf.

When the bull left me I saw two small trees a few feet to my right so I had the sense to crawl to those trees to give my head and chest some protection for when he came back. About that time he came running back and stepped on my left calf before going back into the bush. I heard him fall.

I got up off the ground and looked for my rifle. Charly said, "I found it." We went about 40 feet into the bush expecting to see him down and there he was 20 feet away standing staring at us. I said, "Oh, shit!" and told Charly to hand me the rifle. This time he was standing and not charging yet. I put the crosshairs between his eyes and 1 1/2 inches high. When the gun went off, his legs buckled and down he went, finally!!!

At this point there was so much adrenaline flowing I didn't even realize I was hurt. Charley said we needed to get back to camp which was about two miles. Charly thought his leg might be broken but it was only badly bruised. He didn't know about me. He saw that I was bleeding from my upper lip.



We were back in camp and then the pain started setting in. My sternum felt like it was broken and I had all kinds of pain in my back. The decision was made to take me to the hospital for x-rays. Luis drove and his son, Vinnie, went along to be our interpreter. I took 800 mg of ibuprofen to help with the pain before we left. It took us 3 1/2 hours to drive to the hospital in Santa Rosa because they had to drive slow down the rough gravel roads. I felt every bump. Half way there I thought I might even have a broken leg because of all the pain in it.

At the hospital, they got me into a wheelchair and into the emergency room onto a bed with the help of three people. They gave me an IV drip with pain killer in it. After about 1/2 hour I was starting to feel better. The meds were working. They took seven x-rays and told me it did not appear that I had any broken bones.

We all stayed overnight at Luis' house and went back to camp the next morning. Back in camp I took a shower and when I came out Mary said, "Did you look in the mirror?" I said, "No." She said, "You are black and blue from your ankles to your chest." I was still in a lot of pain but thanks to a good friend from Alaska, he gave me some muscle relaxers and good pain pills. He had better ones than the prescription they had given me in the hospital.

Over a month later, my right thigh is still sore to the touch and my chest and back muscles still have pain but are getting better. How many people can get charged and mauled by a buffalo and live to tell about it. The Good Lord was looking out for me. Mary watched this all happen but that is her story.

And now the rest of the story:

A Diamond in Argentina

by Mary Harter



We met with Luis and his representatives and Mike while at the SCI Convention in Las Vegas and made our plans for this hunt. Mike was going as well as three of his friends from Alaska so that made six of us hunting together.

We arrived in Buenos Aires on Saturday, March 26, after flying all night. We all headed to the Leather Shop Factory where Mike had shopped in previous years and I bought a purse made of capybara hide which had a suede finish. Capybara is indigenous to South America and I wanted to get one and thought it would be nice to have something made from their hide. We had a wonderful steak dinner at the Cabana Las Leila's Restaurant which was right on the water, a canal that goes through the edge of the city.

The next day was Easter but stores were open and we again went to the Leather Shop, ate lunch at an outside cafe, and dinner at an Italian restaurant, La Pecora Nera. Mike had made all the arrangement for our hotel, the Fiers Park Hotel, and the dinner reservations.

The next day we flew to Santa Rosa where we were met by Carlos from Caza Pampa with a Mercedes van which took us an hour and forty minutes to camp.

What a wonderful place! When we arrived and started carrying things to our room,

For a couple of years we had been talking to Mike Crawford from Alaska about hunting in Argentina. Mike is a Regional Representative for SCI and has become a good friend of several in our chapter. Mike also books hunts for Caza Pampa, near Santa Rosa in Northern Patagonia, with Luis Managanaro. Mike secured a donation for our chapter to auction last year and we bought it.

out from one of the rooms came Tom Verunk. He and Linda who are from Grand Rapids were there hunting and we had no idea they would be there. Linda is a past president of the Michigan Chapter. With them were Gail and Mark Rhode, also from their chapter. We settled in to our rooms and then glassed huge red stag right from the gate. The rooms were set up much like a motel with eight rooms across from the lodge where we ate and enjoyed the game room with many animals mounted. They washed our clothes daily.

Our guide was (Carlos) Charly Watson who had been guiding for several years and spoke great English. Our interpreter while in camp was Lucas. Luis' son, Vinnie, also spoke English.

The next morning, March 29, we went out to hunt after sighting in the rifles. We were using their rifles which were Ruger .300s with 165 grain shells.

We saw numerous animals but the first one we went to check out was a fallow deer. We could see his antlers sticking up through the tall grass. We went closer and thought he was pretty good but Charly wanted to see his antlers better so I set up to shoot, Charly threw a rock at him, he stood, Charly said he was good, and I shot instantly and he was down. Charly was amazed that I shot so fast but he was learning about us. The deer has been fighting and had some damage to his head so he was probably



sleeping off his encounter.

We saw many, many animals and we knew we were going to have a great time. Huge red stag tempted us every day everywhere. They were in rut and roaring night and day. There were lots of black bucks, axis deer, fallow deer, sheep, etc. We took my deer to the skinning shed and on the way back out Charly spotted a huge mouflon and after following him for a ways, I got a great shot.



After lunch and a nap during the heat of the day, we were back out hunting again. We found a great fallow deer for Don just a little past where I shot mine. We didn't know just how great he was until Mike scored him. Wow!! He was expensive.

Next we found a great feral goat but he didn't cooperate. Charly went to get the truck and as he drove back to us, the goat came back even closer and I got a great shot. A little later we got a very nice mouflon across the field where we were looking for blackbuck.

On to another area and we spotted some water buffalo. We had to cross a fence to get nearer. They live in the free range area with the cattle. There were several but Charly said one was better than the rest and when he got broadside and was clear of the others, I shot. I shot again and then shot again. I think he was dead with the first shot as he hunched up and was probably bleeding to death. Anyway, he went down but a female wouldn't let us get any closer. Charly shot twice in the air and the rest of the water buffalo finally left. What a huge trophy!! Charly called for a trailer with a wench for the retrieval.

On March 30 we were out again looking for blackbuck. I shot first and got a very nice one. Two males stood together and I had to choose. There are so many and the

males are usually darker. We found a nice one for Don and he and Charly stalked quite a ways but he just kept going in the tall grass. They came back to the truck and we drove where Charly thought he was headed. We checked out that field and glassed for awhile and then a third field and walked the edge through the brush. Finally they spotted him and Don made a great shot. Since mine was still in the back of the truck, I suggested we take some pictures with both animals which we did.

On to another area where three hybrid sheep were feeding. One laid down. We stalked closer and then closer. Charly could finally see both sides of the one laying down so he had me shoot. The sheep took a couple of steps stiff legged and went down. The other two just mingled around and Charly had Don shoot one, also. Mine had a very close curl. I don't think he could see very well as the curls came in front of his eyes. Don's horns were longer and very nice.

When we got back for lunch, Mike Crawford had gotten a water buffalo with his bow, his goal on this trip. We went to see it and he and Don measured several of our animals. Mike is a master measurer.

Mike's friends with him from Alaska are interested in free ranging red stags and maybe a black buck. His boss, Mike, has never hunted large game before and he is very excited to be on this hunt. Six Canadians also joined us in camp. They were anxious to hunt free ranging red stag.

In for another wonderful three course lunch complete with their own wine. All meals are fabulous with our harvests being served. Today's lunch was a slice of quiche, stew with sliced potatoes, followed by a martini glass dessert of a pudding, brownie like mixture with fruit jam on the bottom. All of the animals we shoot are utilized. Much is used by the camp staff but any extra is donated to rural schools like Chapalco which is in the area. Luis and his wife, Virginia always eat with us and usually have their little 8 month old son, Vittorio, with them. He is such a special treat to talk to.

After a nap which became a



daily routine, we were out again for the evening. We saw a huge feral goat but he didn't cooperate. Near him were two multi-horned sheep, a black and a white. We decided to take them but as we approached, off they ran. We went after them. Finally I got a shot on the black one. Down he went. Don shot the white one while he waited for his friend to get back up. Two down. Another double.



stag meat. We ate outside on long tables. This was historic and delicious. The ranch is about 40,000 total acres with 25,000 acres on one side and 15,000 acres on the other side. About 6,000 acres are high fenced.

Back out hunting after a nap. We saw lots of game but no shooting.

March 31 and this time the first thing we spot was a group of axis deer. We approached in the tree line and Charly told me to shoot the second from the left. I do and they all run in the brush behind. Mine is hit but we wait a half hour before tracking him. After we cross the field and are near the brush where he went in, we spot his horns sticking up in the brush. I shot again and put him down for good. He was a very nice axis deer.

We drove around spotting a lot of game but none we needed. Finally we drove to a free range area and found many water buffalo but Charly was looking for a certain one and we didn't find him.

We checked out many red stag back in the fenced area. I said they should advertise that they have a red stag under every tree. We saw so many great ones it was just like shopping but we aren't ready to buy yet.

Back for lunch and boss Mike had harvested a nice red stag and they put streaks of blood on both of his cheeks to celebrate his first kill of a large animal. Such a wonderful animal for his first kill.

We drove to an old original home on the ranch which has been fixed up with a bathroom and kitchen area. In the olden days, gauchos came here for supplies just like a grocery store. They were barbecuing a lamb for lunch. They also deep fried empanadas made out of red

We saw Mara, a rabbit like animal, that jumps just like a rabbit but is much larger and has a skirt of fur edged in white. We saw flocks of green parakeets and several parades. We went to an elevated stand overlooking a waterhole and sat there until dark. We saw three sheep and eventually four wild boars but it was too dark to see if they had tusks.

We went back to camp and got the truck with spotlights and climbed in the back. In the first field we spotted a capybara and I shot it. I had never seen one before. They are the largest rodent in the world and look a little like an 80 pound guinea pig.

Back to the waterhole where we sat earlier and Charly spotted a peccary in the tall grass. We could just see his rear end. I shot and his head raised up, he quivered, and was dead. I had the two indigenous species I needed for the diamond level for the continent in the same night. Now ten animals in total for me and six for Don. We each need eleven including two indigenous species for the continent award and that is our goal.

April 1 and out a little earlier after it rained most of the night. In the first field we spotted a very nice axis deer. Don shot and he was down. We drove around looking for a very specific water buffalo they knew was on the property. We saw a few but not the right one. We saw several Maras, rabbits, a gray fox, and an armadillo.

We glassed several red stag and found one Don liked. After a short stalk, Don shot him right in the chest and down he went. Charly asked Don if he shot him in the head because he dropped so quickly. It was just a great frontal shot. Charly called for the truck and help setting up the stag for pictures. They came out with Champaign and glasses and we had quite a celebration.

Back for lunch and a nap and then back out looking for that big water buffalo for Don. No luck finding him but at the very last light when we were



coming back, we saw a free ranging red stag. It was my turn! Out we went after him. It was getting dark and I couldn't see ruts so I fell once but got back up and away we went. Charly set up the sticks, I shot and hit him and slowed him down. He passed by us and I shot again. The stag was still alive but down. I had to get to him and shoot again. Then he was done. He was a beautiful 5 x 5 with mud caked all over his rear. Many of the other hunters had walked miles looking for one like this.

Back for dinner and a special toast for me completing the diamond level for South American animals.

Back out hunting for a capybara for Don spotted at the waterhole near the skinning shed but no luck.

April 2, Saturday, was very foggy and chilly but we are out still looking for a water buffalo for Don. We stopped to watch a red stag roar; such a beautiful sight. Beyond him were a couple of sheep and a feral goat. We decided to take the goat and that made the 8th animal for Don. The fog didn't lift so we went back to the lodge for a snack and wait to see if the fog would lift.

We went back out and took a long walk high up around a waterhole. Nothing but a few sheep. Charly took a walk further after we got back to the car. He spotted a wild boar sleeping under a tree under a lot of brush. He came back to get me saying all he could see were balls and tusks and that was all we needed. We made a stalk of only about 300 yards and I could see him. I shot and he never got up. He was about 300 pounds and all black with nice tusks. Back for lunch.

Out again about 5:00 looking for water buffalo. Nothing big enough. We sat at a waterhole but saw nothing. Then we drove around with the spotlight. Nothing.

April 3, Sunday, and Luis went out early looking for water buffalo through the thick stuff on horseback. While just driving around we jumped a peccary. Don got out and tracked him just a short way and shot. He had his peccary.

We met up with Luis who had looked for four hours on horseback for the water buffalo but couldn't



find the one he wants for Don. He unsaddled his horse and put him in a corral and rode back to the ranch with us for lunch. He was going back out to look with another rider after lunch.

After lunch, it was still raining but we went out and about the same place where Don shot the peccary earlier, we found a wild boar. Don got out, shot, and he had his wild boar. We drove around and around looking for the large water buffalo but never found him.

April 4, Monday, and it was still raining. We slept in an hour longer but Charly came knocking and we went out looking for that water buffalo.

We spotted several and Don and Charly did a stalk to check out a group of three but they weren't big enough. As it was still raining, we went back to the ranch to score some of our animals and have tea. They drink a tea called mate out of a gourd with a silver spoon type straw which is quite a social, sharing event. They load the gourd with loose tea leaves and keep adding water as they drink.

Back out after lunch and a nap still searching for the huge buffalo. We searched several sections, sat for awhile, then searched some more. The buffalo seem to be moving more tonight and we saw many but not the right one and we still have a few more days left to hunt for him.

Near dark as we were leaving the free range area, we spotted several buffalo walking on the far edge. Charly drove out on the road for a closer look and decided the big one was there. I stayed in the truck thinking this would





be over quickly. The buffalo went in the brush. Don shot, shot twice more, reloaded and shot again just as the water buffalo was about three feet from him. I could see the fire from the end of the gun, the buffalo hit Don center chest with his head!!!!

After the first shot, I got out of the truck, ready for pictures. After the third shot, I shouted, "Reload!" Now I see the buffalo knock Don down and grab my rifle, ready to shoot if I see the buffalo again.

Oh, this is bad!!!!!! I don't see Don or Charly for an "eternity." Then I see Don up taking another shot at the buffalo and eventually I see Charly standing. They are both alive. Prayers work. They came to the fence, cross it, and Charly said, "No pictures tonight. We come back tomorrow. I think I broke my leg." He got in to drive and his thumb was swelling.

Don was in a great deal of pain and was knocked flat by the buffalo and then mauled. Don had crawled to a tree to try and get it between him and the buffalo. Charlie had pushed the head of the buffalo off Don as it was grinding down on him, grabbed the rifle and handed it to Don. The rifle was a Ruger 300 with 165 grain shells. Don got up and that was when I finally saw him and my heart started to beat again. He shot another shot into the buffalo's head. He was still standing, ready

for another charge. Finally, down goes the buffalo. The buffalo was shot through the shoulder and lungs twice and three shots are in his head right between his eyes.

We got back to camp and I gave both Charly and Don some pain meds. Charly started icing his knee and thumb and could bend both. Don's back is very painful. We don't know if anything was broken or if he had any internal injuries so after a little discussion we left for Santa Rosa and the hospital. Luis drove and Vinnie, his son went with us to interpret. The bumpy road was hard on Don so we went slowly and the hour and a half drive took over three hours. Half way was gravel but finally we got to the new paved road which was much better.

When we reached the hospital, Vinnie went in to get a wheelchair and then Vinnie and I went to register Don. They gave him some more painkillers in an IV and after he relaxed a little, they took him for x-rays. They also checked his neck as so often it can be damaged but not hurt until later. Don's right leg was very painful by now but after looking at it, they figured the buffalo had stepped on it and it was badly bruised. It was swollen and starting to turn purple.

After another "eternity" the x-rays were read and nothing was broken. The doctor wrote a prescription for pain meds and released Don. Luis drove us to his home in Santa Rosa where we ate a quick sandwich and went to bed. It was about 1:30 a.m.



April 5, Tuesday, we got up about 7:30 a.m. as Don needed to use the bathroom so we got ready to leave. The pharmacy opened at 8:00 a.m. so Vinnie got Don's meds, we grabbed some coffee and rolls and took a much faster ride back to the ranch. Don was still in a great deal of pain but the relief of knowing there was no broken bones or internal injuries other than bruising and a few hours of rest did wonders.

When we got back, Charly greeted us and everyone else. Charly was limping with an Ace bandage on his swollen knee but smiling as always. Nothing was broken. We went out for pictures of the DEAD water buffalo and then back to the ranch for a toast and snacks on Luis' patio. Lunch followed shortly with a special presentation to the "survivors" of

a picture with the buffalo and another toast.

We went to our room to shower and change out of our dirty clothes and rest for about an hour. Don still had mud behind one ear from his buffalo encounter. Charly ask Don if he thought he could shoot as they were looking for a capybara in a lush field where they love to eat. He came knocking on the door that the capybara were spotted. Mike Crawford also went. They soon came back with two in the back of the pickup. Mike shot his with his bow. Now Don had his two indigenous animals as well as nine others for the diamond level.

Don slept the rest of the afternoon but at dark we went out to hunt a puma with the spotlight. Don rode inside the truck. Charly and I checked several fields and saw many eyes. I learned that the eyes of a puma show up a greenish yellow. We looked at edges of the fields along the bushes while riding in the back of the pickup. After several fields, Charly spotted one. He can see so much better than I can, especially at night. I finally found the eyes in my scope, aimed just below them, and shot. Charly said he thought he heard the thud of the shot hitting the cat. We waited a few minutes, drove to the spot, and there lay my puma, dead. The cat was very old with one canine tooth almost gone and all of the front teeth between the canines gone, both top and bottom. What a wonderful animal to take! I couldn't believe I had a puma. Back to the lodge for pictures and everyone came out to look.

April 6, Wednesday, and we slept in! Don finally got a lot of rest. Got up to measure the rest of our animals that hadn't been measured and pack up a few things. Had an open fire roasted beef ribs and sausage for dinner.

April 7, Thursday, and we are up and ready to ride to Santa Rosa and then fly to Buenos Aires. We settled our bill, tipped, and said our "good-byes". The skinners set up our trophies on the lawn for pictures.

Back in Buenos Aires, we went to the Cabana Las Leila's Restaurant again and the Canadians from camp went with us.



April 8, Friday, and Don slept in. I got up and had breakfast with Mike and his friends and we walked to the Leather Shop where I needed to get the capybara belt Don had ordered earlier and Mike needed to get the black leather coat and vest that he had ordered. We did a little more shopping and I got a beautiful pair of black leather boots.

The Alaskans left for the airport around 3:00 p.m. and Don and I ate lunch, napped, and were picked up at 8:00 p.m. to go to a tango show, "Senor Tango". This show is owned by and stars Fernando Soler, who is president of the Buenos Aires SCI Chapter. Fernando was gone but his executive representative Pablo Mauro, greeted us as we sat

in a private booth where we ate dinner and enjoyed the show. Pablo talked to us about our hunt, their chapter, and gave us several of their award winning magazines. I had met Fernando Soler several times when we both were receiving magazine awards in Reno and Vegas. We had a great meal and wonderful seats to enjoy the amazing tango dancing, music, and singing.

April 9, Saturday and Don is catching as much rest as he can for our long ride home. We left the hotel at 3:00 p.m. for the airport and flew all night to Atlanta and then on to Grand Rapids. We are both very thankful that Don wasn't hurt more seriously. Many ask Don about our hunts and which was the most dangerous or most memorable. Now he has an answer!





by Dan Catlin

August 2013 in the Wrangle Mountains of Alaska I was on the final push for my first-ever North American wild sheep. A moment in time I will never forget; the quest for Dall Sheep! What I didn't realize at that very moment is that I would have the "Bug" ...Sheep Bug!

Since then my thoughts often drift back to that August afternoon and what it would ultimately mean to my life, both personally and professionally. I'm now a sheep hunter and the quest for the FNAWS (Four North American Wild Sheep) is a goal that not only defines my hunting career but is personal too. You see a guy like me really doesn't have the financial ability to book these hunts; but if there's a will there's a way! It took a lot of tag applications, Wild Sheep Foundation banquets, relationships and networks with the hunting community, and pure determination. Fast forward to January 2016 and I'm headed to ole Mexico with my great friend Jim Hall. With Jim's help, I was able to book him a desert sheep and mule deer hunt; which gave me an affordable opportunity to hunt a free-range desert sheep myself. We booked with San Jose Trophy Hunts on the advice of my very good friend Jeff Ward. It proved to be an excellent decision and an opportunity of a lifetime for a guy like me.

Jim and I flew to Hermosillo Mexico where we were met by our camp host, Jorje. We also met my cameraman, Dallas Heymyer. Another big reason I was blessed with this opportunity to hunt sheep is my role as co-host for Trijicon's World of Sports Afield TV. The hunt and adventure was all captured for future TV shows. From here it was about an hour and a half drive from the city to the foothills and mountains of San Jose's camp. We were roughly 50 miles, as the crow flies, to Tiburon Island. Our area was roughly 30,000 acres of Sonora desert and mountains. The excitement grew as we drove through each cattle gate on their ranch. I was in Mexico and hunting Desert Sheep!

Our first afternoon was relaxing, shooting our rifles to ensure they maintained their "zero" and then sitting down for some of the finest food I'd ever eaten in any camp. It doesn't hurt that I love Mexican food; but it wasn't always Mexican food that we ate. The steak dinners and anything else they cooked was amazing! We finished our evening by sitting around the outside fireplace as many hunting stories and high anticipations filled the air. Then off to bed and up before dawn.

My first couple days of hunting started out just glassing from the bottoms looking for a ram that was worthy of climbing for. I thought the first couple rams were worthy, but those that know me understand patience isn't my strong point. I was kept under wraps by my guides and I listened...for the most part. On day three however, we spotted a group of three rams together. Within that group, two of the three were big enough and mature enough to go after.

As we glassed with the spotting scope from over a mile away, the plans for our climb began to unfold. The advantage of hunting the Desert Sheep, as opposed to the Dall Sheep, was the ability to drive a truck through the bottom to close the distance for our climb. In Alaska, it was a true backpack hunt with no vehicles or horses to get us to the base of the mountains that we needed to climb. So my first impression was this will be so much easier...until we started straight up. It was still a challenge with all the sharp rocks, thorns, thistles and cactus to challenge our ascent. After a couple hours of climbing we were finally to a point that the sheep should reveal themselves.

As we approached the highest point where we believed our view would be clear to see the three rams again, my heart rate accelerated by 100! As a hunter it's like an automatic response of excitement when you realize the moment of truth is near. It's the ability to control this excitement that will define your ability to make a proper shot.

As we dropped our packs and crawled to the summit to peek over, we spotted the three rams feeding across on the next mountaintop. We were separated by 350 yards and a deep canyon between us that made our ability to get closer impossible. My desire was for a closer shot; but I was confident I could make this shot based on my practice, and ability to make similar shots in the past. The most important thing was to get a solid rest, take my time and squeeze the trigger, rather than slap the trigger in anticipation.

At this point, Dallas and I looked for an area on top where I could get into a prone position with a solid rest, and would also allow him to have the camera on a tripod. Like many times when you are trying to capture a hunt on camera, our extra movements and jostling around alerted the sheep and we were spotted. Now the encounter became even more intense and I struggled with NOT rushing my shot.



Now I'm on the rifle and have a sight picture; I feel comfortable with the shot but couldn't decide which sheep was the largest. Because of our positioning, choosing the right ram was up to Dallas and me. Even if I had my guide next to me, I couldn't understand a lick of Spanish. Also, in a prone shooting position it's impossible to use hand and arm signals in order to communicate which sheep was best. So I picked the ram with the most visible mass that carried it the furthest down his curl and confirmed my target with Dallas to ensure we would get it captured for TV.

Here we go! I adjusted my Trijicon 5X20X50 to 300 yards, turned the safety of my Ruger Magnum Hunter 300 Win Mag to the fire position, and narrowed my sight picture on the vitals of this incredible Desert Big Horn Ram. Muscle memory kicked in and I consciously thought, "squeeze-squeeze-squeeze" as the rifle surprised me and "reported" across the canyon. After the recoil I immediately chambered another round and reacquired the ram I thought I had shot in my scope. My initial instinct was to take a second shot; but my ability to reason kicked in, thinking what if I shoot a different ram? I could see that the ram I was now looking at was not hit, and not knowing if my shot was true, I hesitated while the ram went over the summit and out of sight.



I turned back to my guide and Dallas with a sinking feeling in my gut...I MISSED? At this point neither one of them could give me an indication otherwise. I told them everything felt right but the sheep just walked over the summit and appeared unharmed.

After some conversation with Dallas he decided the only way to be sure if it was a hit or miss, was to watch the shot footage again on the camera. There are lots of disadvantages to filming a hunt for TV, but the number one advantage is having the ability for a "replay" on the shot and shot placement. As I lay about 15' in front of Dallas with no view of the footage myself, I focused on his face intensely trying to read his reaction to the results of the shot. As a HUGE smile opened up on Dallas' face I started feeling really good. Dallas finished watching, looked up at me and said, "You Smoked Him! That ram is yours!!!"

My disappointment turned to a feeling of relief and excitement. We quickly started planning on how to best cross the canyon that separated us from the mountaintop where my ram should be laying. After nearly two hours of more hiking and work, we found ourselves standing where my sheep had been prior to the shot. My heart rate immediately went through the moon as I started over the peak into the direction my sheep ran after the shot. 30 yards over the top lay my 2nd in a "Quest for 4"! The beautiful, magnificent, and majestic Desert Big Horn Sheep! After many hugs, high fives, and huge smiles we took the time for reflection and photos. I give thanks to God first because without him there would be no sheep in this world and I would not have the drive and desire to pursue my dreams.



Natural Resources Commission approves year-round coyote hunting season in Michigan

Statewide DNR News (from their website)

The Natural Resources Commission, at its monthly meeting in Lansing, Michigan in April, approved new coyote and nighttime furbearer hunting regulations.

Effective immediately, coyote hunting season is open year-round in Michigan. Please note that dogs may not be used to hunt coyotes April 16 through July 7.

Nighttime hunting season dates now match the daytime hunting season dates by species. Coyote and opossum hunting are open year-round. Raccoon hunting is October 1 through January 31, and fox hunting runs October 15 through March 1.

Raccoons, opossums, foxes and coyotes now may be taken at night with 3 and 4 buckshot. Nighttime furbearers can be taken with a bow and arrow, crossbow, a rimfire firearm .22 caliber or smaller, or a shotgun with loads other than buckshot larger than number 3, slug or cut shell. Centerfire rifles may not be used to take furbearers at night.

Portable artificial lights may be used throughout the open nighttime season of the target species. Examples include flashlights, portable battery-powered spotlights and headlamps.

Nighttime hunters must use the aid of a game or predator call and/or dogs while hunting at night. Dogs may not be used from April 16 through July 7. While hunting with dogs at night, a firearm, crossbow or bow and arrow may be loaded at the point of kill only.

To hunt coyotes, Michigan residents must have a valid base license, and nonresidents must have a valid base license and a valid fur harvester license. Residents hunting other furbearing species will need a base license and a fur harvester license.

Raccoons and coyotes may be taken all year on private property by a property owner or designee when the raccoons or coyotes are doing or about to do damage to private property. A license or written permit is not needed.

These changes are for coyote and nighttime furbearer hunting only. Trapping season dates and regulations are not affected by these changes.

The Wildlife Conservation order, containing complete listings of regulations and legal descriptions, can be found at mi.gov/dnr/laws.

Department of Natural Resources hunting digests are available for download at mi.gov/dnr/digests.

Be Smart on Social Media

(from the SCI Crosshairs Newsletter, Safari Club/What-We-Do/Freedom-to-Hunt/First-for-Hunters)

Social media is a great way to keep in touch with family and friends. It's also quickly becoming a top resource for breaking news. However, without taking the proper precautions, social media can place you in the crosshairs for privacy violations and personal attacks.

Knowing how to safeguard your information and privacy on social media is key to effectively utilizing Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms. In addition to spammers and identity thieves, our community is prone to attacks from an entirely different group of people -- anti-hunters. Time after time we hear stories of anti-hunters attacking our fellow hunters on social media, solely for enjoying our favorite pastime. Back and forth engagement on social media is often more detrimental than helpful; before responding reach out to our DC office and let us know what is happening so we can assist. One important step you can take is to spend a few minutes ensuring your social media profile has the appropriate privacy settings in place.

We suggest you take the following steps with your Facebook profile:

Change your Privacy settings so that only Friends can see your posts; the audience for your past posts is limited to Friends; and search engines outside of Facebook cannot link to your profile.

Change your Timeline settings so that only Friends can post to your timeline (if you know all of your Facebook friends) or only You can post (if you have friended people you do not know well).

Change your Followers setting so that only Friends can follow you.

By taking these steps, you make it more difficult for non-Friends (such as anti-hunters or spammers) to view your profile or contact you. If you would like a visual guide to walk you through these suggestions step-by-step, click on Guide to Changing Your Facebook Privacy Settings.

While you are on Facebook, head over to our Hunter Advocacy Facebook page and give us a LIKE! You can search for "SCI Hunter Advocacy". Also you can sign up to receive emails of the SCI's Crosshairs Newsletter from which this article came.

Looking Ahead

to our
Next Issue -



CENTERSHOT NATIONALS
by Dr. Michael Ritchie



**MY SECOND ATTEMPT
DALL SHEEP HUNT**
by Keith Davis



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