

# FRONT SIGHT



Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

April - June 2019, Issue 46



**Apalachicola near where we hunted alligators in Florida** ~ See pages 18-19  
Picture by Mary Harter





# JOHAN PIETERSE SAFARIS



**SOUTH AFRICA  
ZIMBABWE  
MOZAMBIQUE**



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In This Issue - April - June 2019

- 4 Chapter Officers and Board Members
- 5 President's Message
- 5 Editor's Message
- 5 Meeting Schedule
- 6 Book Review — *by Josh Christensen*  
Outbreak — *by Joshua C. Chadd*
- 7 Black Bear Hunting with Dan Kirchner  
— *by Sherri and Roger Froling*
- 8 - 9 Big Buck Night
- 10 - 11 National SCI Convention — *Reno, NV*
- 12 - 14 Africa - Hunt of a Lifetime  
— *by Brandon O Jurries*
- 15 Youth Membership Registration Form
- 16 - 18 Africa — *by Elijah Christensen*
- 20 - 22 Florida Alligators — *by Mary Harter*
- 23 Annual Veterans Pheasant Hunt  
— *by Sandra Meyer*
- 24 - 27 1972 Polar Bear Hunt — *by Paul Conner*
- 28 - 29 Raffle Winner's Mule Deer Hunt  
— *by Abbe Mulders*
- 30 - 31 A Veteran's Advice for Young and Old  
— *by Robert Mills*
- 31 Application for Membership
- 32 - 34 Gladwin High School  
Hunting Education Thank Yous
- 35 Larry Higgins Receives Hall of Fame Award
- 35 Looking Ahead
- 36 - 37 Nadagascar Fishing Adventure  
— *by Rod Merchant*
- 38 - 46 Advertisers



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 3855 and changes yearly on February 15th. Please carry membership identification on you when you visit the range.



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Chairmen are listed first

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  - Sportsman Against Hunger - Mike Strobe
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    - Veterans - Randy Raymond
    - Blue Bags, etc. - Brandon Jurries

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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Pat Bollman	1979 - 1980	Louis Kaczynski	1988 - 1989	Larry Higgins	2002 - 2005
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Sid Smith	1983 - 1985	Jerel Konwinski	1997 - 1999	Kevin Unger	2011 - 2014
Dr. E.H. Kowaleski	1985 - 1986	Doug Heeter	1999 - 2001	Joe Mulders	2014 - 2017
Robert Doerr	1986 - 1988	David Petrella	2001 - 2002	Kevin Unger	2018 - 2019



## President's Message

The Mid-Michigan SCI Chapter just had their 40th Annual Awards and Hunting Convention/Expo on February 22 and 23 at the Soaring Eagle Resort in Mt. Pleasant. It was a great success with over 500 people attending and outfitters from all over the world. We raffled off over 40 guns and other great gifts plus had an amazing auction. The money we raise will go towards shooting sports, veterans and youth hunts, education, camp for kids, hunter safety classes, and much more. Thanks so much to those who participated. We could not do all we do without you.

On January 26, we had our Big Buck Night at the Comfort Inn in Mt. Pleasant. We had 166 hunters attend and some of the biggest bucks from the 2018 hunting season which won many awards. This is a date you should put on your calendar for next year, January 25, 2020.

This will be my last President's message as I will be stepping down in July. I served as your president, three years my first term and two years my second term. I attended a SCI Christmas party at the Embers in 1992 and have been hooked on SCI ever since. It has

been a pleasure serving the Mid-Michigan Safari Club Chapter with so many wonderful board members and people on this journey,

Jon Ziemann is vice president and will become president in July. He will do a great job for our Chapter.

Remember, there is still a lot to do outdoors: ice fishing, rabbit hunting, etc.

Once again, it has been my pleasure serving you. Please feel free to contact me anytime.

Best Regards,

Kevin Unger  
President

(989) 560-7288 • Kevinunger1@frontier.com



## Editor's Message

What a wonderful convention we had at the Soaring Eagle Casino in Mt. Pleasant. Hope most of you were able to attend. We visited with so many like minded friends! It is so much fun to be able to talk about hunting with people who understand. Many interesting hunts were purchased at our auctions and I hope you write stories so others can share in your experiences.

We have new chapter pins which were passed out at convention. The chapter membership pins are gold colored metal with our logo trimmed with white and red enamel and the chapter life membership pins are all a gold color. When you attend a meeting, ask for yours.

We will soon be asking for interest in members to run for our board of directors. Please consider joining us and helping to further hunting, conservation, and humanitarian services. There are many opportunities to help our chapter so please let us know if you are interested. We just need people to volunteer.

Also, if any teachers are interested in attending the American Wilderness Leadership School near Jackson Hole, Wyoming, please let us know. We like to send educators who can bring back the information to their students. Check it out online. Classes are available for several different weeks during the summer. Our chapter pays for the class and up to \$500 for travel.

At convention I discussed our account at the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation and using some of the funds to send four teachers to the AWLS program. Please think of this account when you wish to make a donation. Don't forget that you could donate to honor someone who is difficult to buy a gift for and they will send a letter of your choice to make a donation in their honor. Also, if you wish to donate in memory of someone who has passed, they make it easy. It keeps your money working for your cause FOREVER! MPACF, 306 S. University, P.O. Box 1283, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-1283. (989) 773-7322, www.MPACF.org

We sure have had an interesting winter with unusual conditions. Hope none of you have been stuck in a snowbank! Let's wish for a nice spring.

Keep hunting, Keep writing,

Mary Harter  
Editor

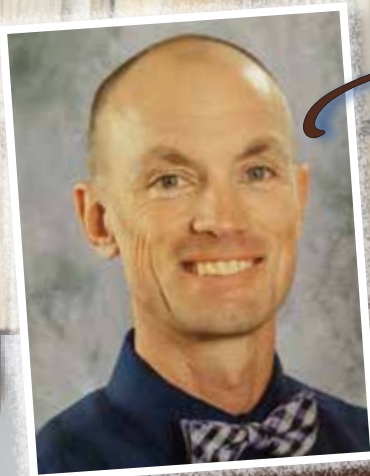
## SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

\* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Meeting Type	Time	Location
April 1, 2019	Board / Membership	4:30/6:00/6:45 p.m.	Comfort Inn
May 6, 2019	Board / Membership	4:30/6:00/6:45 p.m.	Comfort Inn
June 17, 2019	Board-Election	5:00	Cheers
Aug. 3, 2019	Golf Outing	7:30am reg/9:00 Shotgun	Pines Golf Course
Aug. 5, 2019	Board	5:00 p.m.	Cheers
Sept. 9, 2019	Board	5:00 p.m.	Cheers
Sept. 14, 2019	Skeet Shoot	12:00 reg/3:00 final round	Isabella County Sportsman's Club
Oct. 7, 2019	Board	5:00	Cheers
Dec. 2, 2019	Board	5:00	Cheers

All board meetings are open to our membership. Reservations required.  
Please call and leave a message at 989-560-1061 or email Suzette Howard at [suzettejhoward@yahoo.com](mailto:suzettejhoward@yahoo.com)





# Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: The Brother's Creed -  
Book 1 - OUTBREAK

Author: Joshua C. Chadd

Copyright: 2017

List Price: \$9.99

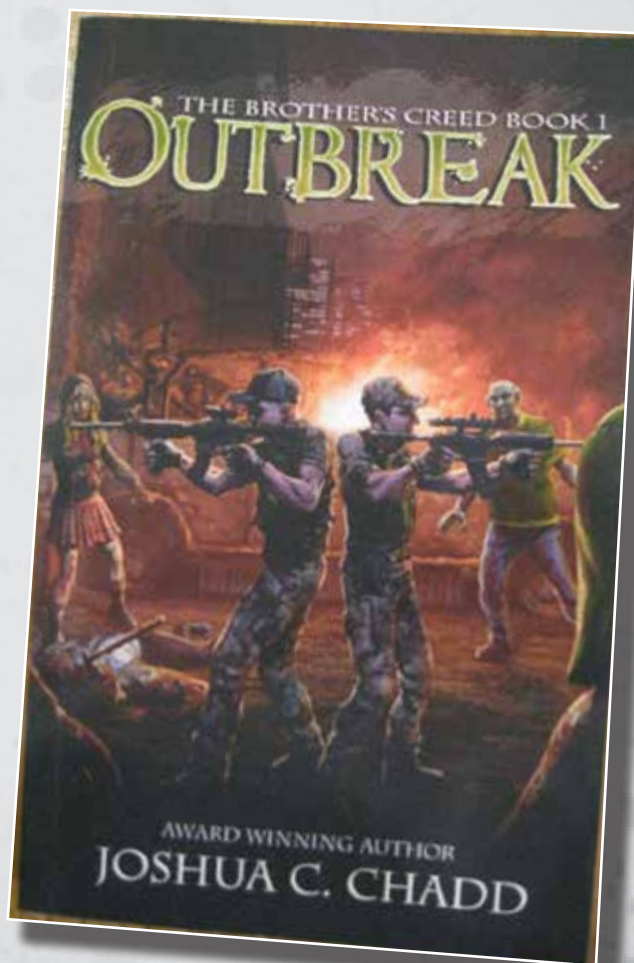
You may have noticed the author of this book has the same last name of an outfitter who has been involved in our annual fundraiser for over twenty years. Josh is one of the register guides of Majestic Mountain Outfitters. When he's not hunting or guiding hunters he enjoys writing, hence OUTBREAK.

When our editor Mary Harter contacted me about reviewing a book written by one of our outfitters I was all for it. When I learned the book was about zombies I wasn't as excited, because the "Walking Dead" thing isn't my scene.

I will say I was pleasantly surprised when reading OUTBREAK. The development of the characters and story line drew me in, making it difficult to put the book down. The story brings us to the beginning of the zombie apocalypse as we read about two groups of people and their paths in the days that follow the craziness.

On one side of the story we have two brothers who are on a mission to save their parents and on the other side of the story we have a father/daughter duo trying to escape the undead fate.

Josh has written in a way that makes the reader feel they are with each pair and wondering what will happen next. If you read OUTBREAK and find the storyline enjoyable know this is Chadd's first book in his five book series.



This book gets 10 out of 10 bullseyes





# *Black Bear Hunting with Dan Kirchner*

## *Powers, Michigan ~ 2018*

Sherri Froling's father, Joe Pennington always wanted to go bear hunting. Dan Kirchner donated a Bear hunt and so Sherri and Roger bid on the bear hunt at the auction and gave the hunt to her father for his Birthday present. Sherri and Roger and Joe and his wife Jean all went to the Upper Peninsula and Stayed at the Island Resort and Casino which is not far from Dan. The weather was very nice in fact little too warm. The first couple of days sitting on baits did not work as the bears were coming to the baits after dark. The fourth day with Dogs loaded on the trucks they headed out to check the baits and the cameras. The first three did not have any recent bears there then the fourth camera was active. Only a half hour before we got there the bear was there. The guys got the Dogs out and put them on the bear track.

The Dogs chased the bear a mile away and with the GPS collars you could see where and how far the dogs were from the road. Then with luck the bear turned and headed back toward the road and Bear Hunting Big Joe Pennington. The Dogs finally treed the Bear and Joe headed into the thick woods climbing up through the timber and mountain with the guide. Once at the site the dogs were barking and the bear was staying up in a tree, but only after biting one of the dogs, luckily not killing it.

Joe using his 30-06, made a Good Shot and this filled his lifelong dream of getting a Bear.

The Bear was processed there by the local processor Dan took us to and he did a fine job cutting up the bear. Joe and Jean Pennington have cooked up some roasts and are enjoying the meat.

The bear Hide will make a great piece once tanned. We all had a great time there hunting in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

*Sherri and Roger Froling*





# BIG BUCK NIGHT 2019

January 26, 2019



Many Entries



Winners!

## Big Buck Night Award Winners

- Youth Hunt – *Medals for every participant*
- Biggest In State Rifle – *Tony Woodbury 125 1/8*
- Biggest In State Bow – *Rachel Stickler 128 4/8*
- Biggest Out of State Rifle – *Kevin Clare 158 1/8*
- Biggest Out of State Bow – *Rachel Stickler 165 6/8*
- Biggest Estate Buck – *Dawn Manthei 197*
- Biggest Youth Estate Buck – *Wesley Stillin 78 3/8*
- Biggest Out of State Muzzleloader – *Ransom Leppick 145 5/8*
- Biggest In State Crossbow – *Roger Froling 130 5/8*
- Biggest Out of State Mule Deer – *Roger Froling 148 5/8*
- Overall Biggest Youth Buck - *Gabe Jones, 168 1/8*
- Overall Biggest Women's Buck – *Rachel Stickler 165 6/8*
- Overall Biggest Buck In State – *Gabe Jones 168 1/8*
- Overall Biggest Buck Out of State – *Rachel Stickler 165 6/8*
- Biggest Non-Member Buck (free membership) - *Frank Jones 160*







**Youth Participants / Youth Practicing**



*Winners!*



**Sherri Froling - Reverse Bingo Winner**



A very

*Special Thanks*

to those who came to score for our awards:

**Nick Giuliani • Dr. Terry Braden  
Chris and Dawn Manthei • Gary Tilmann  
Dave Connors • Jon Zieman**



**DNR Officers**



**Ticket Sellers**







*Roger Froling and Jeff Chadd*



*Ollie North*

# 2019 NATIONAL



*Entertainment -  
Trace Adkins,  
ZZ Topp  
and  
Bellamy Brothers*



*Roger Froling  
and Scott Carter*



# RENO,





*Opening Ceremonies*



*Pat and Nancy  
Bollman*

# SCI CONVENTION



*Mary and Don Harter with  
Ivan and Ashley Carter*



*Roger and Sherri Froting with  
Mary and Don Harter*

NEVADA



# AFRICA

## Hunt of a Lifetime

by Brandon O. Jurries



In my wildest dreams I never thought I would be able to say that I have gone on a big game hunt in Africa. I grew up in a rural farming community in western Michigan. My parents were hard working people but we didn't have a lot while I was growing up. I went to work at an early age and gave my earnings to my parents to help make ends meet. In 2017 I was blessed with the opportunity to experience what I thought would be the best hunt of my life. I hunted with legendary Pieter Viviers at Marupa Safaris. During our 8 day hunt I harvested some phenomenal trophies including a gold medal Impala, a gold medal 60" southern greater kudu, and a silver medal cape buffalo. I was also able to harvest a sable, eland, gemsbok, black wildebeest, as well as a second impala and kudu. After shooting my cape buffalo in South Africa we named it Mattanu, which means "Gift from Above" in Afrikaans. I was officially hooked and now wanted to go after the Dangerous Seven.

My first South Africa animal was a beautiful 42" Sable harvested on July 27th; it will always have a special place in my heart. Little did I know how much South Africa and the people that I would meet would have such an impact on me. You see, Pieter and I really became like brothers on that first trip, and now we find ourselves talking to each other at least 5 times a week. Later in 2017 Pieter told me that he was going to be a part of a new free range concession in Mozambique with everything, including the Dangerous Seven. Here was another dream come true! I was going to have the opportunity to hunt with one of my best friends; and go after a leopard, crocodile and possibly a hippo if time allowed. The date was set for the end of May 2018. I was ecstatic to say the least, and my goal was to outdo my last Africa hunt.

A few weeks before leaving for Mozambique, I was fishing the Muskegon River with my good friend Kyle Randall from The Wilderness Journal. I was telling him about the trip and my goals of harvesting a croc, hippo and

leopard. He informed me of the SCI Blue Bag Program and I was intrigued. I was a new SCI member but I was unfamiliar with the program. I contacted Doug Chapin who coordinated the bags and learned that SCI provides the bags filled with supplies and has partnered with Delta Airlines to fly the bags free of charge. These bags are packed with school supplies, coloring supplies, chalk, soccer balls, and air pumps.

Now the day of my departure arrived and I was more excited than a little boy at Christmas. I'm sure if you ask my wife Tracy about the days leading up to this she would be willing to share some of my crazy behavior. She and my daughter Anika drove me to the airport that day loaded with all the necessities along with the SCI Blue Bag, and I was off on an adventure to Africa. Upon landing in Johannesburg, Pieter picked me up and we headed back to his house for a family dinner and a little rest before the 10 day adventure ahead of us. The next morning I was blessed to have breakfast with Pieter's kids and ride along to drop them off at school. After saying our goodbyes, we were on our way to the airport to fly into Tete, Mozambique to meet up with one of Pieter's professional hunters G.C. He had driven through Zimbabwe with supplies for the hunt and then met us at the airport.

After being cleared by security we headed out on a 6 hour drive through some rough terrain. When we arrived at the rustic camp late in the evening, I was exhausted after my 3rd day of travel and practically fell into my bed. The next morning I was awoken by hippos calling out to one another, what a beautiful sound! I felt like I was in a dream and couldn't believe where I was and what I was getting to do. At this moment I recall closing my eyes and humbly saying a prayer of thanks to God for everything he had done and has created. We had arrived in the dark, and as I crawled out of my tent that morning I was amazed by what I saw. There were so many beautiful things everywhere I looked. I could see hippos and crocs





in the water, impala running over the grasslands, and a fish eagle swooping down to the water. Truly amazing! I will remember the sounds and sights from this trip for as long as I live.

After breakfast we headed out into the bush to sight in the guns and find bait for the leopard hunt. My 300 win. mag and my 458 Lott were right on the money and we proceeded to scout the area, looking for impala and deciding the best baiting locations. Later that morning I was able to draw the first blood of the trip on a nice male impala; now we were officially hunting for leopard.

On the third day our bait was hit by what they figured was a smaller lion or leopard. It was difficult to tell because the bait was torn out of the tree and dragged off. We decided to watch this bait area for activity that night, so we asked our trackers to build an elevated blind for us while we went for more bait. After a little while we found some impala and brought it back to them. I couldn't believe it, but the blind was almost complete upon our return. In fact, they probably would have been finished if it wasn't for a run in with a lioness while gathering wood and brush. She was apparently napping in the weeds when they accidentally walked up on her! Fortunately, she was full from a big meal and didn't bother chasing them. We couldn't help being on edge after that; this was true Africa! We decided to sit in the blind for safety but soon heard the cracking of trees and heavy footsteps coming towards us! A large herd of elephants stopped about 60 yards away from our blind. I recall Pieter leaning over and telling me that if they got much closer we would have to shoot to prevent being trampled. Thankfully the elephants went around us but the destruction they left behind them was amazing to witness. That night we spent in the blind was freezing. Pieter had worn only short sleeves and shorts; I had on long pants with a thin shirt and a light jacket. We ended up passing the coat back and forth to try and stay warm through the night. It was too dangerous to walk back to camp after seeing elephants and lions. We couldn't have left even

if we wanted to, as the only way to get out of the blind was by climbing out the backside of it and onto the top of the truck. G.C. had left with the truck and without a way to communicate with him, we were stranded there until morning. I don't think I've ever been so happy to see the sun come up as I was that morning. Thankfully, the truck was warm when he picked us up at first light; I'm pretty sure I was in the truck before Pieter even got down. My body was painfully sore from shivering all night, but the suffering was well worth it because I was able to witness wild elephants for the first time.

We decided after a cold night we should take a short nap and then see if we could harvest a crocodile. The trackers, Pieter, G.C., and I visited several different villages to talk with locals and ask about any troublesome crocs. We looked at many different crocs over the course of several hours but nothing really caught our eye. The last village we inspected was where the Chief lived. We talked with a Mother there that had recently lost her young daughter to a crocodile. It was at this point that we knew no matter the size of this croc, he was our target. By this time, it was evening so we decided to wait until the next day when the sun would be directly over us. That night in the blind while leopard hunting, the only thing I could think about was the lady from the village. She was just doing laundry with her daughter when her daughter was taken from her by a huge crocodile. My heart broke for her because I have a daughter of my own and could not bear the thought of losing her.

We had no luck getting a leopard that night so after breakfast and a short nap, it was time to pay a visit to the village with the problem crocodile. Midday came and it wasn't long after 1 pm that the croc showed up, although he didn't present himself on shore for a good shot until about 2:30 in the afternoon. We had the camera set up and recording, I was on the sticks with my 458 Lott and Pieter was ready with his 500 Nitro just in case. I looked







through the range finder just to make sure we were not too far away. It registered at 81 yards which was good because my gun was sighted in for 100 yards. I could feel my heart pounding as I closed my eyes, said a prayer, controlled my breathing, and then opened my eyes, ready to shoot. Pieter asked if I was ready and I gave him thumbs up and squeezed the trigger. Perfect shot! He was done right away but his nerves made him do a slow circle so we found ourselves putting a couple more rounds in him. He ended up half in the water and half on shore with zero movement. We celebrated knowing that the fun part was just ahead of us: the retrieval. We paid a couple of local guys to take the canoe across the river to fetch the croc that had done so much harm to the village. The man eater was dead! Once the croc was brought to our side of the river we used the Land Rover's wench to pull him up. While this was going on, something I will never forget happened. The Mother who had lost her daughter approached me with tears streaming down her face and wrapped her arms around me in a big hug. Even though we didn't speak the same language, I could understand every word and tears began to roll down my cheeks. I was thankful to have been able to bring her some peace in her tragedy and my heart was changed forever that day. Everyone from the village came down to check out the croc; we took pictures with the Chief and many kids. Reality was setting in and I was a happy hunter, I just harvested a 15'2" croc!

On our way back to camp to have the croc skinned out, God spoke to my heart and I realized what needed to be done. You see, they don't have wells so they must collect water from the river for drinking,

laundry, washing dishes, and bathing. Over 1,000 people are killed by crocodiles in Mozambique every year. I wanted to find a way to raise money to bring wells and pumps to the area to make life safer for the people. It wasn't until the next day after Pieter and I visited the schools with our Blue Bags that we would know how to do this. What an experience! Interacting with the kids, handing out school supplies, touring the two room school, and sitting on their long log benches was the highlight of my entire trip. The children sang for us that day, their smiles and laughter were something I'll never forget. I cannot believe how blessed we are here in the United States. I was dismayed to find out that most children do not attend school beyond 14 years of age. After that, most start families of their own. The books they use are nearly 20 years old, and they have to share pencils or chalk to write.

It was so much fun watching the kids play a soccer game with the new balls we had brought for them. Soccer is the major sport there and with only 2 soccer balls in the blue bag I brought with me, I really wanted to do more. I visited a local store but this was nothing like a store found in the states. The room is about 12' x 12' and contained only a few clothing items, some sandals, and two soccer balls. I bought



both and gave one to the school and the other to the village to be the designated game ball when they played matches against other villages.

As the trip came to an end I was leaving with a big croc, and a heavy heart. Pieter, G.C., and I talked about what to do for the villages for almost the entire 26-hour drive home from Mozambique, through

Zimbabwe, and into Johannesburg. I decided to start a non-profit organization called Marupa United Network to help bring croc free water to villages and work with SCI and the Blue Bag program. The Blue Bag program is such a huge way for hunters to give back to the people in the areas that they hunt. We must work together and improve the lives of others wherever the sport takes us.

Marupa United Network will be working with Pieter Viviers and Tommy Steele of Marupa Safaris to bring at least 2 water wells and or pumps to the villages in Mozambique that I hunted. Marupa Safaris donated a hunt at the Mid Michigan SCI annual fund raiser on Feb. 22nd and 23rd. I'm excited to report that the hunt went for \$3750 which almost covers the expenses for both pumps that we are hoping to purchase. I am hopeful for more donations to enable us to cover the entire expense of these pumps. I plan on returning to Africa in May 2019 to see these pumps placed. I will again be taking a couple of blue bags with me as well as supplies and personnel to build the pumps. This trip should be awesome! For me it is no longer the harvesting of animals that is driving me, it is the desire to improve the lives of others. Our desire is not to change their culture or their way of living, but to hopefully ensure that no parent will have to face the reality of having their child taken by a crocodile.

In the end, what I thought was the hunt of a lifetime on my first trip to Africa and the harvesting of so many animals, didn't compare to the experience I had in Mozambique. This was a life changing trip for me; my view on life will never be the same. I'd like to thank SCI for organizing the Blue Bag program; Kyle Randall for telling me about it; and Pieter Viviers for allowing me to experience it. If you are traveling anywhere to hunt, I would encourage you to talk with your outfitter to arrange a visit with a Blue Bag. If the outfitter doesn't want to collaborate with you on the Blue Bag program, then perhaps you should rethink that outfitter.

For more information please visit my website at: [www.marupaunitednetwork.com](http://www.marupaunitednetwork.com) to see pictures and stories from people that have participated in the Blue Bag program. I challenge you to help others by donating time or financial gifts to make dreams a reality for people across the world; this will make your hunt, A HUNT OF A LIFETIME.

*"Be the change you wish to see in this world" - Gandhi*





# SCI YOUTH MEMBERSHIP

21 and under



Safari Club International's new Youth Membership is sure to capture the hearts of our youth and teach them the importance of our hunting heritage. Our schools and educational systems are inundated with misinformation about hunting, conservation and wildlife management. **Don't miss this opportunity to set the record straight, sign up a youth member today so our heritage doesn't disappear tomorrow!**

#### Membership Benefits Include:

- Electronic Publication of the bi-monthly Safari Magazine and Safari Times Monthly
- Official Safari Club International Membership Card
- Safari Club Youth Decal

Safari Club International's new Youth Membership is for members aged 21 and under.

*Hunting Wildlife*  
*Conservation Youth Education*

Please print clearly

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth  
(mandatory)

Email Address (mandatory) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Parent, Guardian or Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ SCi# \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Funds or charge to:     

Account No \_\_\_\_\_ exp \_\_\_\_\_

Name printed on Credit Card \_\_\_\_\_

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# AFRICA

## *A Trip I Will Never Forget...as told by*

Two and a half years ago my dad approached me and asked if I wanted to hunt in Africa. I easily agreed on going. We did a lot of stuff to get ready. We shot at bottles, bought all sorts of clothes, and talked about what we were going to hunt. I choose to hunt an impala, blue wildebeest, and a warthog.

My dad told me that we would be hunting with three others, Lance, Lon, and John. My dad and I left on June 12 at 6:45 in the morning! I was dead tired but I couldn't sleep because I was so excited. We went to Lon's house. Then Lance came. We were driven to the airport and had lunch there. John met up with us

while we were eating, so we were ready. We walked over to where the plane was and waited.

We were flying from Grand Rapids to Atlanta, then Atlanta to South Africa. The whole way to Atlanta I played on my phone. Then, in Atlanta we took a train to get from one end of the airport to the other. Then we waited for the plane. We were on by 8:00 pm and the plane was HUGE! I got the seat right in the middle of the plane. Right after we took off we got hot towels and a dinner with shrimp. Then I started watching movies like "Captain Underpants" and "Coco".

After that I decided to take a nap. We were on the plane all night and most of the next day. We arrived in Johannesburg around 4:30pm. The five of us made our way through the airport and found or PH Peiter, and another PH Dolf. Then we began our 4 hour trip to camp. We stopped once for food at a place called Spur's where I ate a ginormous burger and everyone else had eland. Later we had to stop because my stomach was hurting from it. While we were stopped we got to look up at the stars and it was awesome because the moon wasn't shining. A constellation that we saw was the Southern Cross. We made it to camp at 10:30ish and I was out cold before my head hit the pillow.

The next day everyone woke up at 6:30 and ate breakfast. Then we split up, my dad and I going with Peiter and our tracker, Jack. We drove around until about 9:00 and then we stopped at a water hole and waited for about an hour before spotting a nice impala. So I got into the prone position (lying down) and shot. It was an amazingly placed shot and the impala only ran about 40 yards. The shot was from 170 yards!



Elephant in Kruger



# AFRICA

## *Elijah Christensen*



My dad gave me a pocket knife after shooting it. After bringing the impala back to the skinning shed we went out to look again and had no luck until about 3:00. We spotted a warthog and I took a shot at it and dropped it where it was. Then we searched until about six (it's their winter so it gets dark faster) and right before dark Peiter spotted a jackal and told my dad to shoot it. So my dad shot this moving jackal and then shot it again and it was done for good. We brought the two animals back, ate dinner, and went to sleep.

The day after that, Friday, instead of 6:30 as the wake up time we woke up at 5:00. Yippee. After breakfast we went out hunting. We saw some impala but my dad got buck fever and shot at a moving one. He hit the thing low in the front leg, we found blood but no impala. We didn't see anything for the rest of the morning so we went back to the lodge for lunch, and I decided to take a nap because I was wiped out. I slept until around 4:00 and when I woke up I started playing on my 3DS. When my dad got back I received the bad news, my dad hadn't gotten anything. We ate bread shaped like a crocodile and impala meat for dinner. We heard around the fire that no one had had a successful day. My dad wanted to go night hunting, so we set off and he got a genet, which is like a big cat.

My dad was on fire Saturday, getting two animals in the morning and one in the afternoon. The first was a blue wildebeest about 20 minutes into the hunt. We spent two hours looking for it but finally found it. Then after we brought it back I spotted some impala at a water hole and my dad got it in 2 shots. Then after searching all day we



Breakfast - Bacon, egg and cheese!

were on our way back to the lodge when we spotted a few nyala and my dad got one of them, too. That was the end of that day. My dad went three for three on animals. The funniest part of the day was that after my dad shot the wildebeest, he had to use the bathroom so he cut the sleeve of his shirt off to use as toilet paper.



Elijah and Dad with his Impala





Wildebeest

The funny thing is he had toilet paper in the truck but the truck wasn't with us.

We got up Sunday at 6:00, but it felt like five. After breakfast we found out we had the whole property to ourselves because everyone else was going to Tom's place to hunt (Tom is also a PH). About ten minutes into the hunt we spotted some blue wildebeest in the exact same spot we saw them the day before after a short failed stalk we got back in the truck and tried to cut them off. We did and I nailed the shot. The wildebeest only ran 100 yards, which isn't that far because they're big animals. Plus, the shot was 180 yards. We went back to the lodge and stayed there until 10:00 then decided to head over to Tom's. We didn't see anything for the rest of the day, but after it got dark my dad shot a steenbok.



Blesbok

We got up early again the next morning and went over to Tom's property but didn't find anything in the morning so we went to Tom's lodge and had blesbok brats for lunch. While we were eating Tom spotted a herd of red hartebeests and he and my dad stalked closer. When they were close enough for the shot, Tom told my dad that it wasn't big enough and that he could find better. We went out again and I slept in the truck and I woke up when we stopped. Tom had spotted some red hartebeest and my dad and him started stalking them. My dad got it in 1 shot and then we went back to the lodge. At the lodge we found out that John was done with his hunting, because he shot his last animal that day.

Tuesday we went back over to Tom's and about 40 minutes into the hunt Tom caught sight of a huge warthog and my dad had trouble finding it in the scope. When he did get it in the scope he shot and the gun didn't go off. So my dad racked the bullet out and put a new bullet in and then shot and that one fired. The pig ran around 150 yards before falling and my dad got another one shot kill. He was done hunting now. Around thirty minutes later my dad spotted

some blesbok through some trees and I got to finish my hunt by dropping an animal right where it stood. After we took it back, we got to go out to a small blind and hunt for meat for the locals. I shot a warthog in the head with a .22. That day we also went to a school. We gave them all sorts of things, like toys and toothbrushes. They were very grateful.

Wednesday we went to a different lodge with Dolf. It was a five hour drive and I played my DS and we stopped at KFC to eat. When we got to the lodge, I was amazed by the beauty. There were four houses, one to eat and three to sleep in. Also, there was a pool, at least 25 animals on the walls, and a huge TV. I watched TV for the afternoon, and that night we went hunting for porcupine, but got 6 rabbits instead.





We got up at a decent time Thursday (8:00) and we decided to head to Kruger National Park. We left around eleven and ate lunch there. I got a bacon, egg, and cheese sandwich with chips (fries). Then we searched for animals and found three of the Big Five. We saw some cape buffalo, elephant, and a black rhino. We went to where we were staying in a chalet in Kruger and got settled in. Then we went to eat, and I ordered the bacon, egg, and cheese again. But at this restaurant, we had to wait over an hour for our food.

On Friday we had another early morning at 6:00. We went to a restaurant this morning and I ordered the bacon, egg, and cheese again. I got it so many times because it was delicious. We checked around the park and saw a few lions stalking zebra which was cool. But we never found a leopard. After that we went back to the lodge and relaxed for the rest of the day.

I got up the next morning at 8:00 and took a shower. Then my dad and I went to help Lon hunt a kudu. He didn't get anything after a few stalks and just before we gave up for lunch we all spotted a nice kudu bull and Lon dropped it. Dolf said it was a real nice one. After dinner we stayed up late and talked around the campfire. We also had fun trying to get the whip they had to make noise and looked at the star constellations.

Sunday was our last full day in Africa so my dad, John, and I went to get souvenirs. While we got the souvenirs the others golfed. For lunch we all got burgers and shakes at a place called Wimpy's. We went back to the lodge and I finished reading my 3rd book on the trip, watched TV, and packed.

Monday we flew home. I really liked it in South Africa, but I couldn't wait to see the rest of my family. We had our final meal made by Felix, our chef on the trip (I'm going to miss his cooking). Then we got on the road and started the long 5 hour drive to the airport in Johannesburg. We stopped at Peiter's house to use the bathroom. Then we went to the airport and said bye to the PH's. After that we began the long flight home. It was mostly the same as last time, because I watched movies again.

We flew all night until 6:00 in the morning. When we landed in Atlanta we had breakfast at one of the restaurants then went to wait for our flight. We finally got on our flight back to Grand Rapids. I slept the whole way. When we got off the plane we said bye to John and Lance. Then we went to Lon's place to get my dad's truck. After we said bye to Lon we started our long drive home. I helped take the luggage into the house. Then I said hello to my grandparents who were visiting from Arizona and went to sleep. It was only 7:00. I know I will never forget this trip or the people I met on it.



Warthog



School visit





# Florida Alligators

by Mary Harter



While attending the National Sportsman's Caucus auction in Traverse City, I bought an alligator hunt. We met Lane Stephens who was there and had donated the hunt and found out a little more about it. Lane is a lobbyist working mostly in Tallahassee, Florida, and hunts nuisance alligators when they are called in. Lane is the exclusive hunter in this county and we would be hunting on Lake Talquin near Quincy, which is near Tallahassee.



After several phone calls checking to see if he had permits for nuisance alligators, My husband, Don, and I were off on a 16-hour drive from Michigan to Florida. We stayed in a place at the Whippoorwill Resort right on Lake Talquin. Many boat slips were on the lake in front of our place and we talked to several fishermen who were catching bream and bass. Several families had been fishing. This would be a great place to come back and fish.

That evening we met Lane for dinner at The Whip and went out to hunt gators. When people call in to report a nuisance gator, Lane has 45 days in which to hunt for it. He can hunt within 100 feet of the property being checked or set out baits within the 100 feet and after the gator takes the bait, find the gator with the float and shoot it with a bang stick. A bang stick is a metal pole with a Powerhead, a direct-contact, underwater firearm. His was loaded with a .357 magnum.

Don and I were out with Lane in his boat by 7 pm and saw at least 30 alligators. Lane had a nice 16-foot fiberglass boat with a 70-horse motor. It got dark around 9 pm and then the gators could be spotted by their eyes using a flashlight or head lamp. None of the gators were ones we could hunt so we decided to go back to our place and try again the next day. Lane invited us over for an alligator dinner he







would cook at his father-in-law's just a few doors down from where we were staying.

The next morning, we drove to Havana and Thomasville just checking out the area. About 6 pm we met Lane and enjoyed a delicious meal of deep fat fried alligator, French fries, and coleslaw. Lane cooked the gator for 30 seconds in a basket in the 350-degree fat, then took it out for 30 seconds, back in for 30, out for 30, back in for 30, and then it was done. The best meat is white and in the tail of the gator but there is red meat in the legs and neck which is good but sells for a cheaper price.

Then we went out again hunting for alligators. Lane had set two baits and one had been taken. We searched and searched for the white float that had been attached to the bait. While out looking we enjoyed seeing the homes and cottages in the area. At one home, an old hound always slept on the dock. At another home the gators came up where they stored their jet skis. No wonder they wanted them eliminated. Many fishermen had seen gators and one was over 10 feet. We saw many large gators but always too far away from where we could hunt them. We did find one and Lane cast over his back until he was finally hooked. Then he gave me the rod and I think both Lane and Don enjoyed watching me struggle with a gator until I had him up to the boat tired out. He was small and just

hooked under the skin, so Lane took the hook out of him and let him go.

We finally found the bait after dark down in a canal. Since the alligator had swallowed the bait (pig lungs) it had to be killed even though it wasn't as large as we wanted. I used the bang stick and had to hit it twice. You really must hit them hard to make it go off. I really had to rethink what I was doing as I usually take aim and slowly and softly squeeze a trigger. You aim just behind the skull in the soft area over the spine and a .357 magnum really takes them out quick. When it went off we got sprayed with water. Don, sitting in the front, also was splashed. Lane had several permits, so I could hunt more than one gator. Lane takes between 30 and 75 each year and utilizes all the meat.

The next day we drove to Apalachicola and ate grilled oysters and oyster stew at Boss Oyster right on the water. Their motto was "Shut up and Shuck". (See cover photo)

We went out hunting again around 7 pm. We saw many gators but again, not where we could hunt them. We were getting pretty good at spotting their eyes just peeking out of the water. We put out seven more baits. That evening we joined Lane at The Whip for their Saturday night special







of potatoes and polish sausage covered in peel and eat shrimp with ears of corn.

The next morning, we went out early to check on the baits. You never know what might take the bait. Sometimes a turtle will get it and they just eat the meat off the hook and don't get hooked. Two baits had been eaten by turtles. The many turtles that we saw were very large, large enough to eat. Two baits hadn't been hit. Finally, a bait had been taken by a gator and we found him down near the edge of the lake under some tree roots. It took awhile to sort him out but after some untangling, there he was, and I shot him. I had to hit him twice. The first time I hit him hard enough to take off a piece of his skin, but it didn't go off. The next time it went off and we got soaked again. He was larger than my first gator but still small. We took him to Lane's father-in-law's dock and tied him off in the water to keep cool and continued hunting.

Another bait had been hit but we looked and looked and couldn't find the float. Another had been hit and the gator was right there. After a little repositioning, I shot and got him. He was larger than the first three. We added him to the dock. We kept hunting for the gator that had gotten away with the float and found a great gator sunning himself on a log. He was over ten feet and just what we needed. Now if only he has a string in his mouth attached to a float. The side we could see had no string. After admiring him and taking pictures, he slid off into the water and no float was attached.

That was the last bait that was out, so we called it a day and decided to go home. We had a wonderful time with Lane, saw many gators and learned a lot about the area. We had meat to take home and great memories. Maybe next time we will connect with a large gator.





# **Annual Veterans Pheasant Hunt**

## **Crooked Foot Hunt Club**

by Sandra Meyer

As avid hunters and outdoorsmen, we know the comforting feeling of peace and serenity while being in nature. We also know the comradery that comes with talking about our past hunts (and follies) with our fellow hunters. For us, the nature is a form of therapy unlike any other. And Tony Mizzoili, owner of Crooked Foot Hunt Club, in Owosso Michigan provides this type of therapy for our nation's veterans on 300 acres of pristine ground.

With the staggering number of PTSD and mental health related diagnosis for veterans, the common form of therapy comes in the form of talking and/or medications. But there is something to be said for being outdoors and with a group people that has shared a similar experience. My husband and I are both Air Force veterans serving in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom were fortunate to attend this year's hunt.

The annual Veterans Pheasant Hunt at the Crooked Foot Hunt club showcases beautiful facilities and a warm and welcoming staff. Upon arrival, we registered for the hunt and received a hat, provided by SCI, shells for our shotguns, and hearing and eye protection. We proceeded to the meeting room which had bounty of fresh donuts and hot coffee. This a great time to sit and talk with other veterans, discussing where we were stationed at, deployments that we have been on and things that we missed about the military. Before the hunt, we honored the flag by standing for the National Anthem and a safety briefing from Lynn Coleman, the Director of the Discovering Recreation & Exploring Wildlife (DREW) Foundation. The Mid-Michigan SCI Chapter was represented by Vice President, Jon Zieman and Board Director, Randy Raymond both members thanked those veterans present for their service. Names were chosen by random to participate in a shooting competition of clay targets which I'm proud to say that the Air Force won.

Then comes the moment filled with anticipation, we are transported out for the tower hunt where hundreds of pheasants were released and top-notch guides with their dogs from around the state retrieved the game. As we stood in our blind, feeling the cold wind on our face, and watching the excellent dog work, it brought a sense of thrill and joy. There was also a bit a friendly jabbing and joking about missed shots. Every so often a volunteer drove around to check if we needed anything such as more shells. We truly appreciated the feeling of being catered to.

During lunch that was generously provided by the sponsors and prepared by Jimmy Reynolds consisted of pheasant poppers as an appetizer followed by smoked pork loin, mashed potatoes with gravy and corn. Following lunch, two guns were raffled off for the veterans that were generously donated by the Grand River Chapter of the Michigan Duck Hunters Association. The joy of the winner's faces as they held their prizes was accompanied by more jabbing us veterans have grown so accustomed to. After the dishes were cleared and a few more donuts were enjoyed, a special thank you and mention to the sponsors of this event was mentioned. These organizations included the Mid-Michigan, Lansing, and Detroit SCI clubs, Michigan Operation Freedom Outdoors (MOFO), Lansing Area Veterans Coalition, Michigan Duck Hunters Association, The Mannik & Smith Group, Dean Transportation, and Towne Mortgage Company.



After all the dishes were cleared and a few more donuts were enjoyed it was time for the walk up hunt. Bringing our own bird dogs was an option, we choose to walk behind some of the best bird dogs in the state. 18 guides brought their best dogs out to display their impressive bird searching skills. Watching these four-legged companions point, flush, and retrieve was a joy.

When the hunts ended, Crooked Foot Hunt Club had a person that cleaned all the game, bagged it and prepared it for the trip home. Not enough credit is given to the experience that Tony Mizzoili, sponsors, and volunteers that this hunt provided to the 62 veterans in attendance. Despite coming from different branches of service, participating in different conflicts, the age gaps- we shared, for a moment, the brotherhood we so greatly longed for.



# Jack Feightners 1972 Polar Bear Hunt

by Paul Conner

Several months ago I had an idea for a hunting story like few others, a first ever Polar bear hunt in the high arctic with eskimo guides that had never seen a white man. I then Emailed our award winning chapter magazine editor Mary Harter and asked if this story would be of any interest and she said... YES!

I then contacted Jack Feightners widow Betty and their personal secretary to ask them about filed away papers, notes, newspaper articles and anything else pertaining to hunting and especially Polar bear hunting. Days later a large folder was delivered to my house by his son. So, now with pen in hand my work begins.

This story is about my two old friends Jack Feightner & Cecil Roberts, both recently passed on to the happy hunting grounds. They were hunting partners for many years and had been collecting all the North American trophies except the arctic creatures... Polar Bears, Walrus, Seals and Muskoxen. While out west on a hunt in the late 60's they met a hunter who had successfully taken a monster Polar bear ("White Fury") west of Kotzebue Alaska, a bear so large and famous it's still on display in a Nevada casino. They knew then and there both had to get the white bear "Nanook". While sifting through Jacks many old hunt papers, receipts, licenses, etc. stored for years in a musty basement I found letters dated 1970-71 where Jack had written for information on arctic locations that could get them a Polar bear. Then, a Canada guide friend of theirs, Stan Burrell, told them about an eskimo village in the Northwest Territories being contracted to offer an arctic Polar bear hunt in the near future. They called another friend, Bert Klineburger, about this and he confirmed it was true. Jack then wrote to the head of Big Game Management in the Canada Northwest Territories government and was given all the necessary forms to complete for two polar bear hunters on the first Polar bear hunt ever offered on Holman Island the following March 1972. Jack & Cecil completed all the required forms, added a deposit check and mailed everything back immediately to the NWT government officer in charge. To be permitted to offer paid Polar bear hunts on the Canadian island, the NWT government changed the Holman Island annual bear quota from "unlimited" to 12 bears per year. Guided Hunts for 4 bears per year was decided on by the Holman Eskimo committee, the balance being for village residents use. The previous year they took 84 bears. Now the story gets interesting, another letter arrived shortly after from the Holman Island Eskimo CO-OP stating the Holman Community Association Polar bear hunt cost includes all but the clothing to be worn on the hunt, attached is the recommended clothing and cost to each hunter for





a complete eskimo hunting outfit (outside caribou parka, inner wolverine parka, Wolf ruff for parka, 2 pr. Muckluk boots, 1 pr. moose gloves, 2 pr. caribou gloves with a duffle to hold everything). Made to your exact measurements at \$190.50 each. They gladly accepted the surprising offer and to this day have kept some of this unique clothing.

Also, the Canada air travel was booked for both men by the NWT Eskimo CO-OP Coordinator and all they had to do was get to Edmonton Alberta to start their journey north to the arctic. Jack had considered flying his company plane to Alberta but the trip was already quite long and March is bad weather time in the northern lands so they decided on a commercial flight to Edmonton. According to the provided air travel instructions, both hunters were booked on a Pacific Western airline flight from Edmonton to Norman Wells, then Norman Wells to Yellowknife. A couple days later they were booked on the new weekly flight to Holman Island aboard a Northward Aviation plane. Nearly a month before leaving on their hunt both hunters received a document from the Canada Minister of Fisheries, a NWT sport sealing license for two seals each on Holman Island. Very rigid instructions to be followed were also enclosed: Hunt to be north of 60 degrees north latitude, with a resident native guide, in a native owned boat for transportation. All seal meat must be given to the guide.

They both now have their Remington 7mm Magnum rifles degreased and sighted-in for the hunt and both have packed all the gear they were told was necessary to bring with them to the arctic village.

Now the flight crew to Holman, when all the very few (3) passengers were aboard, the pilot asked if anyone had a pilots license, both Jack & Cecil held up their hands. The pilot then asked if either had an instrument rating, and again, Jack & Cecil held up their hands. The co-pilot couldn't make it so Cecil, the closest to the cockpit, got to ride 2nd seat up front all the way there. After thousands of miles and many days travel they arrive at the Holman Island eskimo village where the entire eskimo community turned out to welcome their special guests and first Polar bear hunters. Most had never seen a white person. Having no air strip to land on, the twin propeller driven aircraft landed in the center of the village on the smooth hard packed snow, closely passing by many surprised residents. It's also the warmest day of the hunt at minus 35 degrees below zero!

After a long night of learning about the hunt, the dangers of the arctic, and the polar ice-pack where the hunt will take place... they got a much needed good nights sleep.







The next morning the local school was closed so the whole village could witness the two hunters start their Polar bear hunt in traditional hunting sleds pulled by eskimo dogs with village fathers, brothers & uncles for guides. Those guides are Simon, Jimmy, Morris & Patsy. Patsy being the only member of this hunt still alive today. The three sleds were pulled by 11, 13 & 15 dogs that were not pampered in the least and minded the handlers every command quickly as a command might mean the difference between life and death. All three dog sleds were tightly packed with everything that might possibly be needed for a long & cold hunt, the hunt reached out 125 miles to locate the two trophy Polar bears on day 8. The average temperature every day was minus 50-60 degrees below zero! Every night out an igloo had to be built, sleeping quarters made on animal hides to make sleep possible on the hard frozen ice-pack, and then food had to be prepared for the hunters, guides and the many sled dogs. (As a side note, the eskimos didn't know how white people went to the toilet so they built a special addition to the end of the igloo the first night out. Smiling, the guys told them it wasn't needed though)

The terrible cold and long days on rough ice, pressure ridges and the frequent snow pelting were taking its toll on the two white hunters but they were determined to get a bear no matter what it took. They found three sets of fresh bear tracks late on the 8th day, they belonged to Jacks 9ft bear, Cecils 10ft bear and a female. Arriving back to the village much much later the village elders held a traditional hunters dance ceremony to honor the bears.

About now you're probably wondering.. "Where's the pictures?" Well, they're next but this story doesn't end here. (Pictures go here) Yes, the 7mm magnum rifles did the job just fine, it's all Jack & Cecil used for 30-40 years of big game hunting, and getting, all the North America trophies available at the time.

All the eskimo guides were rewarded financially as well as being given much extra clothing & hunting equipment for their hard work, commitment and perseverance 24 hours a day. Then, the long journey back home was upon them and they returned to --WORK!

Full standing mounts were ordered for both Polar bear trophies and then the next hunt was booked in Alaska for Walrus, Seals and a Muskox. This next hunt in Alaska completed their trophy list of animals, but both were dedicated deer hunters for many years after.



Locating, restoring & remounting the many slides taken on this trip required two years and lots of Photoshop work. Many rolls of film broke in the frigid cold and the cameras both men carried worked sluggishly, focused stiffly, and often incorrectly. We made a video slideshow of this hunt for local friends and hunters to see and perhaps envy.

Thirty long years later my hunting partner of many years, Jim Stender, and myself had wanted to take this arctic hunt as well, so we had our booking agent make the arrangements. We book hunts two years ahead for preparation time and to eliminate problems. Nearing our hunt time, for some unknown reason, Jim decided to have a serious heart attack, and it was too late for a cancellation of our hunt or a refund. So, I decided to go by myself as few in their right mind would follow me to this land, where nothing is simple, forever is close to the horizon, and life is unimaginable to anyone who has never been there. A newspaper article about the 1972 hunt was titled: "On the Edge of Insanity!" Obviously the writer was not much into adventurous outdoor undertakings. Anyway, one evening my wife mentioned to Jack's wife, during a phone conversation, that she was a little worried about me going alone on this hunt and left it at that. Two days later Jack showed up at my house and said he heard of Jim's misfortune, wishing him well, and said he was going to take his place on this hunt.. period, end of story. His secretary would send Jim a check for his half of the hunt. The hunt was cold and successful with the story told in the Mid-Michigan chapter magazine several years ago.

At 88 years of age and recovering from a health issue, Jack called one afternoon and told me to book the Polar bear hunt we had talked about recently as he was ready for one last hunt, so, I called Northern Outfitters, who we hunted with previously, and said we wanted to hunt Polar bears the following November or February. Ten days later Jack died suddenly and I cancelled the hunt.

When we get older we tend to remember our friends, what they mean to us, and how we enjoy doing certain things with them. Count your friends and ask yourself how many would go with you to "The edge of insanity", for the cost of a new car, risking their lives daily just for your friendship. This was Jack Feightner, our friend.





# A RAFFLE WINNER'S Montana Mule Deer Hunt

By Abbe Mulders

I grew up with a father who was a Michigan deer Hunter. Every November I remember my Dad taking off for a week of deer hunting, and quite often, he would come home with a deer that gave us venison for supper. Interestingly enough, my mother HATED venison, so when it was on the menu for that evening, my Dad would be the one to cook supper. Even with my Dad being such an avid outdoorsman – he loved to fish as well as hunt – I never really caught the hunting 'bug'.

When I met my future husband, Joe, he really wasn't into hunting much either. He used to tell me stories about trapping animals on his farm, and spearing fish in the ditches, but he hadn't really joined the annual trek to the woods on November 15th – that is until he got excited about joining my Dad and brother the year we got married.

As traditions are created, Joe, my Dad, my brother, and Joe's Dad, Henry (he was now joining the hunting mania as well) starting planning out what State land they were going to hunt in year after year. They would start their preparations in late October – loading up Henry's motor home, planning their spots, and readying their guns.

One year, Joe actually convinced me to come out for a day and hunt with him. It was a beautiful Michigan afternoon – the sun was shining, we had a great spot to sit – perfect for ..... A NAP!! Needless to say, we didn't see a deer that afternoon and that was the end of my hunting experience.

Even though I didn't hunt myself, I was always happy that Joe enjoyed it so much. He had joined the Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI many years earlier and over the years as I got to know the people in the Chapter and the Board members, I would attend many events with Joe. I volunteered and was appointed to the Board when one of the members became ill and had to resign.

At the February 2018 Mid-Michigan Chapter Fundraiser a raffle drawing was held for a Mule deer hunt in Montana with Jeff Chadd (Majestic Mountain Outfitters) and his family. Joe & I had gotten to know the Chadd family through many SCI activities that we have attended over the years. When it came time to fill out the tickets for the raffle, without giving it a thought, I put Joe's name on several tickets and then put my name on several tickets.

Imagine my surprise when my name was called as the winner of the Raffle! I absolutely could not believe it – nor could Joe. He didn't realize that I had entered my name on any of the tickets!

Everyone at the Fundraiser kept asking me if I was going to give the hunt to Joe, which also took me by surprise. To this day, I'm not exactly sure why, but in a split second I decided that I was the one who was going on the prized hunt. Joe and I talked with Jeff and agreed that Joe could buy an additional hunt and we could go to Montana together to get Mule deer.

Since I hadn't really ever shot a rifle before, Joe and I developed a plan to practice shooting the next summer on our property to get me ready for the big hunt. As with a lot of plans, stuff happens to disrupt or change those plans. Such was the case in June when I had a freak accident and broke my ring and pinky finger on my shooting hand. I ultimately ended up needing surgery to put pins into the fingers to ensure that I would be able to get the maximum flexibility back as the bones healed. It took 8-9 weeks for the fractures to heal, followed by 5 weeks of occupational therapy. The end result is that the fingers will not bend and flex like my other fingers and probably never will, AND, I lost most of the summer without practicing any shooting.

Thanks to Joe and his experience in long-range shooting course, he knew exactly what to do to get me started and into a practice routine that





helped me quickly gain confidence and comfort in shooting my rifle. We also discovered that I had a natural talent for shooting and could overcome the limitations that my fingers posed. Within a few short weeks, we both felt that I was ready to take on the hunt.

We had hoped to drive to Montana and take our time doing some sight seeing along the way. As it turned out, Jeff called and asked us if we could come a day or two earlier so we drove straight to Montana from Michigan. It had just started to snow when we got there late Wednesday evening.

Thursday and Friday were pretty much spent scouting and glassing for animals because no shooters presented themselves. The weather continued to snow and the temperatures kept dropping. One morning the temperature reading was 1 degree at daybreak – Brrrrr! Saturday ended up being my big day – we had gotten on a few deer in the morning, but I just couldn't get myself situated to shoot, and the deer ended up taking off without me shooting.

A bit later in the morning, our guides Bryan and Ben had gotten out of the truck on a high ridge and were glassing for animals. All of a sudden, they came back to the truck and asked if I was ready to get my deer. I sprang into action and Joe helped get my gun out of the truck. Bryan

helped me set up the shooting sticks, and I was readying my aim, when Ben says – “wait a minute here comes a few more deer – maybe a better choice.” I see the other buck come up the hill and I move my scope to the new deer. The buck pauses momentarily and I aim the rifle for the heart shot, just as I had been practicing in my head for the prior two days. I was remarkably calm and upon Bryan's urging, I took the shot! I watched as the deer sprinted a few yards and then fell straight down the hill into a small gulley. I put my head down and said a little prayer – just as Joe was coming up behind me to give me a great big hug. I had done it – with just 1 shot!!! What relief and pride I felt – we were all hugging and high-fiving each other.

Now came the tricky part – the deer had actually fallen in the gulley that was not accessible with the truck – which meant somehow getting the animal up to the truck was going to be a bunch of work. Bryan and Ben decided that they were going to have to carry the deer up the high ridge. In order to carry it, they also needed to gut the animal to make it lighter to carry. I watched from the high ridge as they worked at gutting the animal and then hauling it ever so slowly up the mountain. In some ways I felt bad that they had to work so hard to retrieve my deer.

Once it was loaded up into the truck, we set out to find a spot for pictures. Bryan found a great spot and together with Ben, they posed my deer and I for some great pictures. In one of the pictures that I like the best, the deer's leg looks injured. Many people ask about that deer's leg and what happened to it, so I get to tell the story of the kill again and again.

I am grateful to Jeff Chadd and his family, Bryan and Ben for making our hunting trip a wonderful experience that I will remember for a very long time. The Chadd's not only guide for Mule deer in Montana, but also hunt sheep and bear in Alaska.

And Oh – by the way, Joe also had success and shot his Mule deer on Sunday! Our plan is to get our deer mounted as shoulder mounts and hang them on a wall together in our basement side by side.



# Deer Camp Debates Never Stop

## "A Veteran's Advice for Young and Old"

By Robert Mills, Owner, Pine Hill Club

For over 65 years I have enjoyed deer camp debates over numerous "hot topics" about hunting whitetail deer. Heated discussions about best **RIFLES, CALIBERS, BULLET WEIGHTS, and OPTICS**, to mention only a few.

My experience based on thousands of hours in the woods and many years in deer camps lead me to some basic conclusions regarding the above topics. These conclusions might serve as "good advice" for both the young deer hunter as well as the veteran.

I am well aware that whatever I say, based on my experience in deer camps can and probably will be challenged by other hunters with differing views and opinions. To those that disagree, I can only say, **"Let's agree to disagree"**. However, I stand solid on my opinions based on over 65 years in Michigan deer camps.

As a **disclaimer** for my position, I must tell you that I have made most every mistake that a hunter could make while trying to tag a deer. Hopefully I have learned from my mistakes but do not consider myself an expert but only a passionate whitetail hunter with years of experience in the woods.

### RIFLE SELECTION:

Over the years I have owned many deer rifles. I have used every action available from semi-automatics, pump actions, bolt actions, lever action, and single shot rifles. All have dropped deer, but time and experience in the woods have brought me to one conclusion. **THE HUNTER MUST BE COMFORTABLE WITH THEIR RIFLE.**

Four factory brands head my list of favorites: **Remington, Winchester, Ruger, and Browning**. Other makes could be included but a beginner or veteran could not go wrong with any of these top four.

As a youth in the 1950's, the lever action was very, very popular. Every new hunter wanted a **Winchester Model 94** in the 30-30 caliber or a **Marlin Model 336** in the 30-30 caliber. These rifles were the "benchmark" for Michigan deer hunters. (I bought my first Winchester 30-30 for \$45.00 and paid \$2.00 per week until

I had it paid off.) Considered a short-range brush rifle, the lever action was widely carried by deer hunters in Michigan.



**"Let The Buck-Pole do the Talking"**

The legendary Jack O'Conner swore by the **Winchester Model 70** bolt action in the .270 caliber. His writings about this rifle and his hunting success led to a rapid rise in the popularity of the bolt action rifle.

Any hunter today cannot go wrong with any of the four factory brands listed. All will put venison on the buck pole in the hands of an accurate shooter.

The **BEST OF THESE RIFLES** can be debated until "hell freezes over" but both the young or veteran deer hunter cannot go wrong with any one of the four brands recommended.

The most important factors of any rifle, in my opinion, is (1) **TRIGGER PULL**, and (2) **CONFIDENCE** in the accuracy on the part of the shooter. Experience has shown that a trigger pull in the 3 pound range is the standard. Whatever rifle or trigger pull used, the hunter must be able to shoot accurately. **ENUFF SAID!**

### CALIBER SELECTION:

The topic of **BEST CALIBER** for anchoring game generates numerous hours of camp debate. Deer have been poled in our camp by **ALL** calibers listed below. Other calibers, not listed, have also harvested whitetails.

Five favorite calibers among our hunters seem to rise above all others in the never-ending debate. I will tell it like it is from my many years of experience. The **"BEST CALIBERS"** for whitetails are: 30-06, 270, 308, 7mm Mag, and the "hot" 7mm-08. Other calibers have poled deer like the .243 and the 30-30, but I will tell you the most successful **REPEAT HUNTERS** use one of the above five calibers. **ENUFF SAID!**

### BULLET WEIGHT:

Hours of camp debate center around bullet brands and weight. Any bullet well placed will kill a deer. For brevity sake I will share the most popular brand of bullets used at the Pine Hill Club. **REMINGTON CORLOCK**. No matter what the caliber, hunters like to match bullet weight to hunting conditions. Lighter bullets (130, 150, 165) for long distance shooting, (200



plus yards), and heavier bullets for short distance (50 to 150 yards). The heavier bullet choices include 150 to 220 grain bullets. The debate over BEST bullet weight is never ending. ENUFF SAID!

## OPTICS (Scopes and Binoculars):

Having a quality rifle with an inferior scope is a never-ending debate in deer camp. Not only a quality scope but a quality mount is critically important to hunter accuracy and success.

One of my favorite sporting goods stores is **JAY'S SPORTING GOODS** located in Clare, Michigan. JAY'S stock a large selection of quality optics at fair prices.

Experience has taught me that a quality scope and binoculars are absolutely necessary equipment for the consistently successful hunter. Scopes in the 3 to 9 magnification range with 40 plus objects appear to work best. The larger the objective, the more light gathering ability of the scope. More light means added hunting time at dawn and dusk.

I really like **NIKON, REDFIELD, VORTEX, and LEUPOLD** brand optics. Whatever your choice, use what is comfortable. Shooter confidence is critical to shooter success.

Numerous brands of binoculars are available. Brands come in all sizes and magnifications. **Binos in the 8 x 40 or 10 x 42** range are very popular in most deer camps. Whatever size or brand you choose, get the best quality pair that you can afford. My choice is **VORTEX in 10 x 42**.

In summary, **DEER CAMP DEBATES** will never stop. Every hunter has



**Author and son with Bow Buck**

an opinion and their favorite choices of equipment. However, most hunters have not had 65 seasons, "under their belts". This doesn't make me an expert but as I always say – **"LET THE BUCK POLE DO THE TALKING."**

I hope the reader, both young or old, like my experienced opinions. **IF NOT, THE DEBATE CONTINUES!** I wish all, good luck in tagging your BUCK.

## 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. ☐

☐ HOME

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

☐ BUSINESS

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP DUES (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)

18 +

1 Year

\$ 65 National Dues

\$ 25 Local Dues

= \$ 90

3 Years

\$ 150 National Dues

\$ 75 Local Dues

= \$ 225

Life

\$1500 National Dues

\$300 Local Dues

= \$ 1,800

Over 60

\$1250 National Dues

\$200 Local Dues

= \$ 1,450

Check/Cash attached \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

EXPIRATION DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME ON THE CARD \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSORS NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF APPLICATION \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSORS ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_



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





Thank you!

# Gladwin Junior High School Outdoor Education



Gladwin Junior High School  
401 N. Bowery, Gladwin, Michigan 48624  
989.426.3808

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

I wanted to take the time to personally thank you for your generous donation towards Gladwin Junior High's Outdoor Education class. With the funds from your donation our new class was formed. Our Outdoor Education class is offered three times per year and has had great reviews from the students and parents alike during our first trimester.

Through this class our students have gained a better understanding of the outdoors while also being able to learn and participate in the Nation Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). With the money donated by your chapter as well as money from the Michigan DNR and NASP we were able to purchase archery equipment for our students to learn the sport of archery.

When the weather was a bit nicer our class ventured to the Cedar River (a river that flows through our town) to do a stream ecology lesson. We captured many creatures living in the river, using nets purchased with the money donated by you. Before releasing the creatures back into the river we took pictures of them and used those pictures to do research on what we found to include how each one contributes to the ecosystem of the river.

Another aspect of the Outdoor Education class our students took part in was Hunter Safety. After getting funding for this class I became certified to be a Hunter Safety Instructor and with our first class we had ten students get a refresher course while another 21 earned their hunter safety certification. We were able to provide the opportunity to take part in so many activities.

Thank you again for affording our students the opportunity to take part in so many activities they otherwise might not have been able to.

Sincerely,

  
Josh Christensen  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Geography/Outdoor Education Teacher  
Gladwin Junior High School

Dear Mid-Michigan St 1,

Dear Dad Michigan SCI,

Thank you for providing money for us to purchase archery equipment, bows for our river study and flint and steel so we could build our own fire. Without all of these materials our class would not be as fun. My favorite was the archery section. Now I know so much more about archery shooting and just loves it overall. After this program class I have become more educated and have learned so many life skills. I really appreciate your donations to this amazing class. I never thought I would be able to win bows, short axes, and catch water bugs in school. When I told my parents what we were doing they were so limited. I hope more children can learn about these things too. I thank you again for all you have done to make this a success.

Thanks again,  
Adrian Greer  
Junior High school

Dear Mid-Michigan S.C.I.

Thank you so much for donating money for us to purchase archery equipment nets for our over study and think and steel for shooting discs.

With the money you donated, you allowed us to have at least one class to look forward to each day. I had a blast with every thing from fire starting to archery and every thing in between. Although the other activities were very expensive, I think my favorite was archery. Thank you so much for everything you helped us with, it is greatly appreciated by everyone! With the money you donated, this class was made possible!

Thanks again  
A.C. Hble  
Gladwin Junior High

Dear mid-winter SCI

Thank You for donating someones lives I had a lot of fun with the  
street we go! Especially the afternoon. I've found it  
helped me 2 myself as always with a few and 2 someone else  
about will that money and It wouldnt thanks to you. Thank  
like! It was nice to see the selling of your  
the cotton ball has made her try to light it if it's not so  
So 2 best into the mix. Thanks again

Singapore, Lorraine

Glenn Turner High



Thank you letters....

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you so much for paying hundreds of dollars which what do our river study. We did for the river study we went to the river and caught bugs and crayfish. Another thing we did in the river is the flint and steel for the fire starting class. We were able to try to start a fire using those tools. We had lots of fun doing both those activities. One more thing we all thank you for is the money to spend on archery equipment. We played tic-tac-toe and other games. Thank you for paying for all this stuff without you we wouldn't have done any of it.

Sincerely, A student at Gladwin Jr. High School

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for purchasing the archery equipment, nets for our study of the river and insects, and the flint and steel for starting fires. In our outdoor water class we did hunter safety which is cool even though I did it for the second time. Shooting bows was fun but we wouldn't have been able to do it without your help and support in our class. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Josh



Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for all the money and stuff you donated to us. The net for the river study was awesome. The flint and steel for fire starting were pretty cool. Lots of us were able to start fires. The archery equipment was amazing as well and also was my favorite thing. We also did hunter safety. The archery was my favorite. We shot at the target and did tic-tac-toe with the agency. Popping balloons and playing tic-tac-toe were really fun because we caught crayfish, dogs, horses, and a bunch of interesting bugs. But not least the flint and steel were fun because we started cotton balls on fire. That could even help if you were lost in the woods. Thank you for all the things you donated to us!

Sincerely,  
Therese Zell

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for donating the money to be able to do all the things we did. Before we did Hunter safety we read the novel Hatchet. After that we did our river study, which was very fun. Thank you for donating money to be able to purchase the nets. Then we went through Hunter Safety. Everyone passed. I got a D+ on the test. Although I had already seen it once! I forgot to mention before we did the river study, we tried to light fire outside. Finally we got to shoot bows. That was my favorite part! I even got really close to shoot a Robin head once.

P.S. This is what I was up to in the morning.

Thank you again,  
Ashlyn Mackinson  
Gladwin Jr. High School

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for the money for our archery class! I look forward to this class every day. All of the fun we have in here every day. We used the money you donated to purchase archery equipment such as bows, targets, and arrows. We also bought nets to catch bugs around the river, and at the beginning of the year, when it was still warm, we used a flint and steel that we purchased with your money to make fires. My favorite part of this class was the archery which came out of your donations.

Thanks again,  
Sageen Cato  
Gladwin Junior High School

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you so much for donating the money to purchase archery equipment, nets for the river study, and flint and steel for fire starting. This is my favorite class, and I look forward to it every day. It's so much fun shooting bows every day, and going to the river to catch bugs was also so much fun. We also went outside to our playground for a few days to start fires with the flint and steel. It was so much fun to be in this class, but it wouldn't have happened if you didn't donate. So thank you.

Sincerely,  
Katie Seebach

Gladwin Jr. High

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI, thank you for giving this program the funds to be able to purchase flint and steel to learn how to start fire with them. Getting to use the cedar river to catch bugs, and finally thank you for giving us the funds to buy archery equipment and learn how to shoot.

Thank you again,  
Sincerely, Adam Hiesler  
Gladwin Jr. High

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for donating money for archery equipment, net for the river, and flint and steel for our outdoor ED class to use and learn how to use them. Without your help and donations we would not have been able to do any of this fun stuff. I even experienced what it is like to shoot a bow, find bugs in the water and study them, and seeing a cotton ball on fire.

Sincerely, Gavin Musc

Gladwin Jr. High

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

and my hole class appreciate the thing you donated. The first thing you donated that we used was the flint and steel. I was challenging at first, and my partner couldn't get the fire going, but after 20 minutes we and my partner were fire. Next was the nets. We went down to the river and caught bugs in the water and what they were and what their names to be there was. The money you donated so we could buy archery equipment and that was my favorite thing that we did. Thank you for donating.

Sincerely,  
celeb palmer

Gladwin



Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for buying everything for us. Everyone had lots of fun from starting a fire to Archery. You bought us the arrows and the bows. I never shot a bow till you gave me this stuff to do. School is not, but I can also when we were shooting the bow I hit a bullseye. Thank you very much.

Thanks again, Kamdyn Raughter

Gladwin Jr. High



## Thank you letters....

Dear Mid-Michigan SCL,

I thank you for the money that you donated to this class that I feel I would like to tell you some of the things we bought with it. Archery, equipment, nets for the river, and that was all for fire starting. We also took hunter safety one that was fun it wasn't my favorite part. Shooting bows was. Thank you again Mid-Michigan State.

Sincerely,  
Michael Tafel

Glendon Junior High

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI

Dear Mrs. Mengon

Thank you for donating money to get the archery equipment. My pets and I and steel. My favorite thing was the starting So thanks for getting the money to Mr. Christensen. So we paid is that. And thanks for the money to go all of this archery fine sharing and five grub.

Sincerely

Shabarin  
JH

Brake Brakes

P.S. Thank you

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI

Thank you for donating money to our School  
archery equipment. Mrs. Floyd said the  
project was already well ahead of schedule  
with the arms, we have money, we start classes.  
we also took Mother's Education -  
I cannot express our much love to you. Thank You

Sincerely,  
Logan Brown

Glad win Junior high

dear michigan scisci  
Thank you for the archery  
equipment, the Fox the river stick  
and the Flint and steel.  
We all enjoyed them and  
it was fun.  
We all made fire and  
shot arrows.

Thank you  
Steven Zwinch  
gladwin JHS

Dear, mid-michigan Sci Thank  
in the Army and

The archery champion also  
 to use the new to do  
 to thank you for the car for  
 living at the first I can for  
 power pole super hand for  
 great 447 field  
 took a really much  
 on my herkin a lot  
 you sub road my all

Earl  
Shumway Jr.

2.  $\frac{1}{2}$  gram of water

Dear Mr. Michigan Sci

Thank you for Dorcas's call the  
cool stuff like beads, drums, there's a lot  
like stuff and the the future stuff  
stuff like...

I had a lot of fun even though I was in class I shot pretty good during the day we went to the river I was with a friend the river was fun even though I couldn't go in the water because I had a lower back I was with a friend who was a boy we went to the river and had a lot of fun.

But you cant for get the fine  
steel making life's well so turn  
even shift and without the aid on  
the cotton ball. Thank you so much  
for donating all the coal and fish this  
year at 97.58.

Thank's again  
Daniel Jackson

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for the money you gave us to have this class. It provided a break from normal classes. We learned alot from the first study which you provided the notes for next. We were taught valuable lessons like how to light fires and shoot bows. I enjoyed this class, and thank you for making it possible.

Sincerely,  
Saver Ritchie  
Gladwin Jr. High

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,

Thank you for donating money for school supplies, pencils and fist and steel drums. The boys gave me and see, we taught them to do it. This class is an option here for nobody every day. I also liked you to join the fight with the school. I am like a student in school. The boys are great nice, honest and I wish they were thought that they would be here. I liked your music. I think you because it is an act of the church and outside. I enjoyed trying to start the fire and to make a challenge - could be pay to do these things without the money that you donated.

Thanks again, John Whitson  
Gladwin Jr High

Dear Mid-Michigan SCL,

Thank You for giving money for the archery equipment we had a lot of fun. Shooting bows was a lot of fun. I never shot bow before or even held one but now I shot bow and even held one it was very fun. Also I want to Thank You for the nets for the river we had a lot fun at the river we caught some cool stuff like a crayfish (craycrates rustians), a mussel and other stuff. Also Thank You for the flint and steel we burned cotton ball with vasoline it was a lot of fun.

Thanks again,  
Harpreet Singh  
Gladwin Junior High School

Dear Mid-Michigan SCI,  
Thank you.

Michigan SCI,  
Thank you for donating all the money! We used it to buy some really cool nets to use when we went down to the river. We caught some really cool objects. Our class also used the money to buy archery equipment. The bows were so much fun to use. Mr. Christensen taught us the correct way to hold and shoot the bows. We used the bows for a lot of the class. With the money you donated we also used it to buy Flint and Steel. It was so fun to be out side on the pavement recess area starting cotton balls on fire. We got a ton of huge sparks! So thanks again for donating a ton of money to our Outdoor Education program! We used one of the things you payed for every day!

Sincerely,  
Faith Knapp  
Gladwin Junior  
High

Dear Mid-Michigan S&J,

Thank you for donating a large mass of money! The money  
you donated was used for Purchasing aircraft equipment  
Pilot Performance, and First and Second. When was all  
used in the Carpenters' and don't forget the Class.  
The entire Class enjoyed being able to know that  
to start bonds, studying pilots are available in the  
first, and being able to use standard steel in the  
Class. You helped make this Class possible, because  
So many Carpenters are helping and they must  
Otherwise not have been given. Thank you once again  
for Providing the money needed to make this Class  
possible.

Sincerely

Sincerely  
Gabriel Heitler  
Gabriel Heitler Junior



## SCI 2019

# SCI Past President Larry B. Higgins Receives Hall of Fame Award

SCI Past President Larry B. Higgins received the Hall of Fame Award on Saturday evening at the national convention in Reno, Nevada.

Larry Higgins has been active in SCI for more than 40 years. He helped revitalize the Mid-Michigan Chapter in 2002 and continued moving up within the ranks, serving on 17 various committees and/or sub-committees and task forces for both SCI and SCIF.

Becoming SCI President in 2015 was his greatest honor. From the Cecil the lion debacle six weeks into his first term to the formation and implementation of the Long Range Strategic Plan, plus his continued work unifying like-minded hunting and conservation organizations to present a stronger unified force, he had a full slate. Higgins is currently Chair of the Record Book Committee and remains busy on several other committees.

Higgins had a successful career in law enforcement with the Detroit Police Dept. and, even after moving 250 miles to northern Michigan to work in the family business, worked as a Cheboygan County Sheriff's Deputy at night.

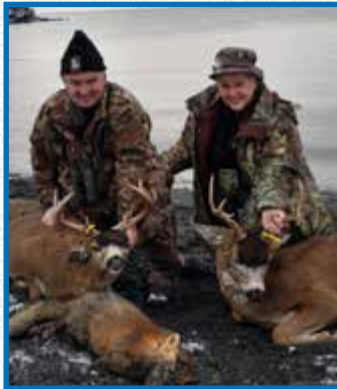
In business, Higgins has been awarded eight U.S. patents; most notably for the original hi-arc water fall faucet spouts appearing in kitchens since 1994. In 1993, Higgins won Michigan's Turnaround Entrepreneur of the Year Award for taking the family business through tough and often debilitating situations to record high sales in two short years. In the community arena, he served on numerous boards, one of which resulted in the formation of the University Center at Gaylord that, from its inception in 1985, has grown from two colleges and 22 students to more than 14 universities by 2007.



## Looking Ahead

## In Our Next Issue

**SITKA  
BLACK TAILS  
ON  
KODIAK  
ISLAND**  
by Mary Harter



**BOBCAT  
STORY**  
by  
Mary Harter



**MULDER'S  
ALLIGATOR  
ADVENTURE**  
by Abbe Mulders





# Madagascar Fishing Adventure

by Rod Merchant

Over the years, Roger and I have enjoyed the African adventure novels of Wilbur Smith. Often, when his swashbuckling heroes need a place to regroup and comeback to fight another day, they retreat to the islands of Madagascar. He goes into great detail, about the tropical beauty of the atolls and how they are extremely remote and inaccessible, nearly surrounded by treacherous reefs and shifting sandbars.

When a fishing trip was proposed to us by a travel agent, we did some checking and soon booked our Madagascar Fishing Adventure. The flight from Grand Rapids is a marathon—one leg of the journey, from Chicago to Addis





Ababa, clocks in at nearly eighteen hours. After landing at Nosy Be, we drove to a small cove, where a water taxi ferried us out to the island that would be our home for the next few days.

After relaxing twenty-four hours to deal with jet lag, we were off at daybreak for our first, full day of fishing. We caught a few wahoo that were taken to camp for food, and also a couple nice groupers that were returned to the ocean, after pictures were taken.

Unfortunately, in the over 100° temperature, whenever we took our camera out of the enclosed pack to take a photo, the lens would fog. The boats used in Madagascar all have some variation of a simple fiberglass hull, with no weather-protected storage area. When it rained, everything got wet and, if we put the camera in a plastic bag, the humidity was so bad moisture condensed inside the sack. We eventually quit carrying our camera. Thus, we don't have many fishing pictures.

I would like to report we caught some world record trophies, but unfortunately we did not. However, we took in some very nice wahoo, grouper, barracuda, tilapia, and several other species that are native to that area.

We moved four times, allowing us to see



different areas of the island and do some tourist things, as well as to fish inland lakes, rivers, coves, reefs, and the open ocean. The limestone mountain ranges on the big island are spectacular, and we found time to explore a couple large cave systems. We thoroughly enjoyed the people, culture and scenery, gaining an understanding of why Wilbur Smith wrote of the area so fondly.

If anyone has an interest in Madagascar, we'll be happy to share our experience, but keep in mind, it is a very, very long way, to go catch a fish.

*Happy hunting and fishing!*  
*Rod Merchant and Roger Card*





## RAFFLE HUNT



### HUNT RAFFLE



**7 Day all-inclusive (minus airfare) Sable Hunt for one hunter and one observer with Marupa Safaris**

South Africa – 2020 or 2021

Proceeds go to the Gladwin 7th Grade Outdoor Education Class and Boy's Basketball Program.

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Drawing: April 25, 2019 @ Gladwin Junior High 1:00-1:30 p.m.  
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