

# FRONT SIGHT



Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

July - September 2019, Issue 47



Owen Eldred, Kelton Eldred, and Kevin Eberhardt  
Hunting Ducks on Kodiak Island, Alaska ~ See page 26-29

Picture by Mary Harter



# JOHAN PIETERSE SAFARIS



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Chairmen are listed first

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

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

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## Editor's Message

What a great time we had at the May Board meeting of Safari Club International held in our Nation's Capital, Washington DC.

On Wednesday, I was honored to accompany the SCI Veteran's Committee to Arlington National Cemetery and take part in laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Those with me were Kathy Butler, John McLaurin, Gary Gearhart, and Dan Brooks. I have been in the audience in the past but never a part of the ceremony. This cemetery is very special to me because I have an aunt and uncle buried there, John and Marjorie Johnson. (See photos below)

privileged to sit with him and his wife. He serves Michigan's 105th District. Also speaking, were Congressman Scott Desjarlais from Tennessee, a strong friend of SCI, and Congressman Don Young who has served Alaska for 46 years.

We met Barbara Crown, (see page 5) who is providing a new Hunter Information Service. Barbara has 20 years of experience investigating hunting related developments around the world, having been the Editor-in-Chief of the Hunting Report Newsletter. Please feel free to use this service.

The board meeting on Saturday resulted in the election of Mike Leonard from Michigan joining the board as a vice president, as well as, Mike Crawford, a great chapter friend from Alaska.

Keep hunting, Keep writing,

*Suzette Howard*

We were briefed on Wednesday morning and took a bus to Capitol Hill where we met with many of our U.S. Representatives in the Cannon and Longworth Buildings. We had many SCI members from Michigan attending so we visited Representatives from some other states explaining our Lobby Day strategies and the various bills and legislation we wanted them to support. We even visited the office of Liz Cheney who introduced the bill to delist grizzly bears. She is a great supporter of SCI and thinks regulated harvest should be a part of wild life management.

At our Friday Night SCI-PAC Banquet and Auction, Michigan Representative Triston Cole, was honored as SCI's 2018 State Legislator of the Year and we were

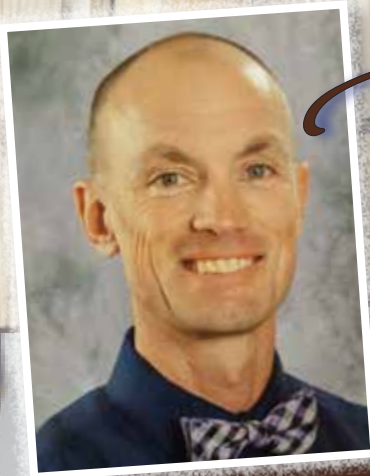


## SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

\* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Type</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
July 8, 2019	Board/Budget	5:00 p.m.	Harters
Aug. 5, 2019	Board	5:00 p.m.	Cheers
Aug. 13, 2019 (date change)	Golf Outing	7:30am reg/9:00 Shotgun	Pines Golf Course
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
Feb. 5-8, 2020	National Convention		Reno
Jan. 25, 2020	Big Buck Night		Comfort Inn
Feb. 28-29, 2020	Convention		Soaring Eagle

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: FIVE YEARS TO FREEDOM:  
THE TRUE STORY OF  
A VIETNAM POW

Publisher: The Ballantine  
Publishing Group

Copyright: 1971

Author: James N. Rowe

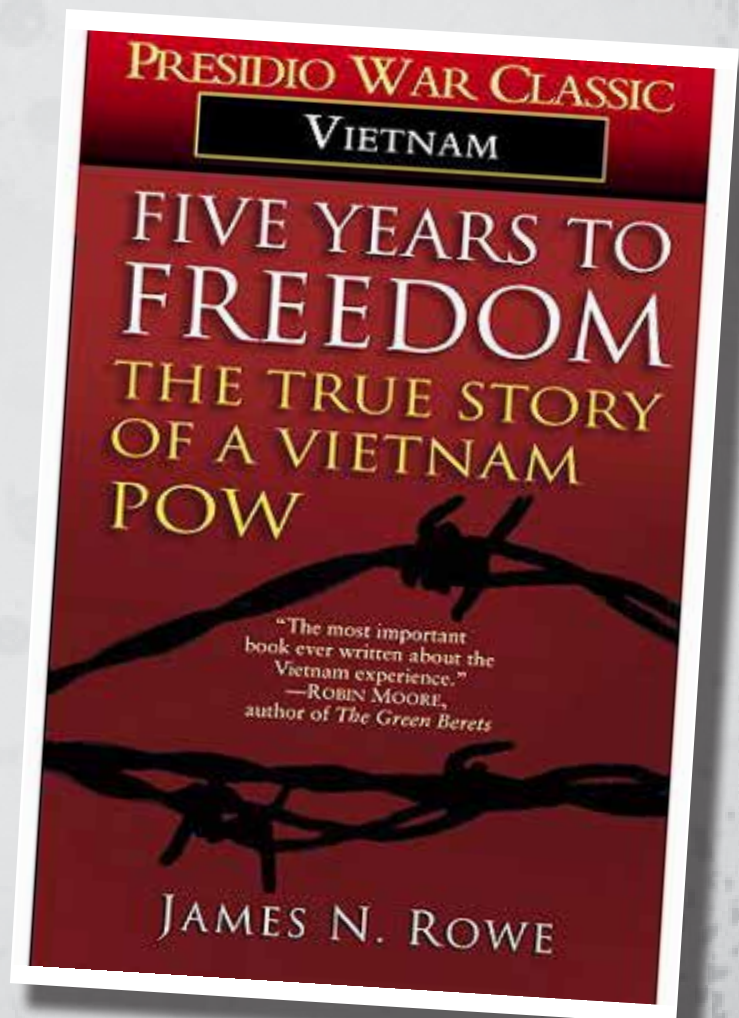
List Price: \$ 6.99

I learned of Five Years to Freedom through a social media post. It said something about a Special Forces POW being saved after many years in captivity because of his beard. I thought "this is interesting" so I investigated the post further, where I learned of a Lieutenant during the Vietnam war who spent five years as a POW. This post also explained the POW, James Rowe, authored a book detailing his experience. So I went online and purchased the story.

From the start you will be drawn in as Lieutenant Rowe details the mission he is a part of, as an advisor, that ultimately gets him captured. From there he explains the hardships he experiences, including watching as other POW's succumb to illness from the less than adequate treatment from their captors.

Throughout the book Rowe's faith and desire to be back home come up again and again as fights to stay alive even through his bouts with fungus growing on his body, intestinal problems, malnutrition and countless "lessons" by the National Front for Liberation of South Vietnam telling him of his misdeeds.

This book was not only the story of a POW, but also as story of the human spirit and what can be endured with the right mindset.



This book gets 8 out of 10 bullseyes



## SCI Launches Hunter Information Service as New Member Benefit

Safari Club International has introduced a new benefit that is available to all SCI members at no additional cost. The newly launched Hunter Information Service offers information on hunting travel, destinations, trophy importation issues and much more. The service features an online library and real-time hotline for information on all things related to hunting, hunting travel and sustainable use conservation.



Barbara Crown

The Hunter Information Service library is accessible through SCI's newly re-designed website ([www.safariclub.org](http://www.safariclub.org)), which launched in October 2018. Under the Hunter Information Service section members may research hunting opportunities, destinations and species, requirements to travel with firearms, trophy importation regulations, airline restrictions, disease outbreaks in wild game and more. A searchable database of hunt reports submitted by SCI members will be added to the service later. An online directory of exhibitors and sponsors of SCI's annual convention will also be featured as part of the Hunter Information Service, giving members direct year-round access to exhibitors.

The Hunter Information Hotline component will allow members to call or email a knowledgeable representative with questions about hunting travel, trophy importations, hunting opportunities, updates on legal challenges to hunting, hunting-related problems and other issues.

**SCI** ABOUT US MEMBERSHIP EVENTS MEDIA CENTER CONTACT SHOP

### Hunter Information Service

SCI's Hunter Information Service is designed to provide members with the information resources they need on all things hunting. We'll help you research a hunting destination, a game species, hunting operators, hunting-related services and the latest legal requirements affecting your hunting travel.

With continually increasing regulations affecting travel with firearms, hunting in different destinations the export/import of trophies, it is more important than ever that hunters be as informed as possible. your best source of information, advice and resources. Think of our Hunter Information Service as a reference library that you can visit 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

While the service will be available only to SCI members, there will be some sections of the online library available to all hunters and the press. These sections will offer fact sheets, studies and reports on sustainable use conservation and how the practice contributes to saving species around the world and the habitat they depend upon.

SCI has contracted former Editor-in-Chief of The Hunting Report Newsletter Barbara Crown to create and manage the Hunter Information Service. She mans the new hotline and provides SCI members with up-to-date information,

assistance and advice. Crown has 20 years of experience investigating and reporting on hunting-related news developments around the world and managing the hunt report program at The Hunting Report. The benefits of SCI's Hunter Information Service are exactly what Crown provided to subscribers of The Hunting Report and now provides to all 50,000-plus SCI members.

"Helping hunters get the information they need to make informed decisions about hunting and avoid or resolve hunting-travel problems is one of my passions," says Crown. "I've seen too many hunting experiences go wrong because of issues that could have been avoided with a little bit of knowledge. My mission with SCI's Hunter Information Service is to help as many SCI members as possible have outstanding hunting-related experiences."

The online Hunter Information Service is already live. Members can find it under the About Us menu of the SCI website and review information about airline policies on firearms, firearm import requirements for various countries, links to conservation departments across North America and links to all the professional hunting associations in North America and Africa. The section will expand throughout the coming year with more information on destinations and will eventually include a database of hunt reports where members can research hunting opportunities and operators. For questions or assistance, members may contact the Hunter Hotline at 800-997-0179 or 520-798-4859. Alternatively, send an email to [HunterHotline@safariclub.org](mailto:HunterHotline@safariclub.org).

## **Michigan Representative Triston Cole**

**Safari Club International's  
2018 State Legislator of the Year**



## **Michigan House Floor Leader Triston Cole Selected as SCI's 2018 State Legislator of the Year**

Safari Club International is very honored to recognize Michigan House Floor Leader Triston Cole as SCI's 2018 State Legislator of the Year. Rep. Cole represents Michigan's 105th District comprising Antrim, Otsego, Charlevoix, Montmorency, and Oscoda counties.

Leader Cole is a lifelong hunter and even worked as a professional guide. SCI applauds his efforts to advance legislation protecting our outdoor heritage, our tradition of hunting, our Second Amendment rights, and the valuable role hunting plays in wildlife management and conservation.

"Triston Cole is an outstanding leader in the Michigan Legislature and everyone at SCI appreciates the impact he is making in the defense of hunting and conservation. We are sincerely honored to present him with SCI's 2018 State Legislator of the Year award," said SCI President Paul Babaz. "His zeal and passion for hunting is real and it is truly encouraging for all hunters to see a leader like Triston, who knows firsthand the true value and need for hunting is in service to the people of his state."



# FEBRUARY 22 & 23, 2019 2019 MID-MICHIGAN CONVENTION



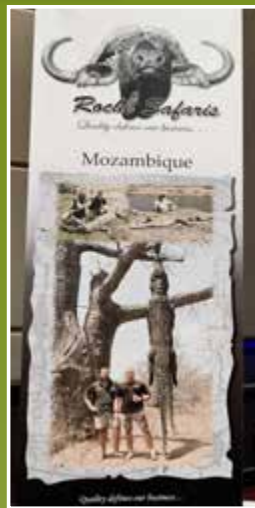
FEBRUARY 22 & 23, 2019

# 2019 MID-MICHIGAN CONVENTION

## OUR MANY OUTFITTERS



### AUCTIONEER





## DNR OFFICERS



FEBRUARY 22 & 23, 2019

# 2019 MID-MICHIGAN CONVENTION

## OUTFITTER OF THE YEAR - SAM FEJES



### TEXAS GIRLS SELLING RAFFLE TICKETS



# FRIDAY NIGHT AWARDS



*All photos courtesy of Reinke Photography Daniel Reinke*

# Thanks

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Beal City's

## BIG BUCK CONTEST

January 26, 2019



Kelly Atkinson - 116"

This was the seventh year for a Big Buck Contest at Tim's Barbershop in Beal City owned by Tim Martin. Dave Conners, a local taxidermist and official measurer, was present to help measure and score the racks of the participants. Tim posts a sign-up sheet in his window so we know approximately how many hunters are planning on participating. All entries had to be legally taken in the 2018 whitetail hunting season and harvested with a gun, bow, muzzleloader, handgun, or crossbow.



Grant Lorenze, Ashley Sytek and Luke Rau

On hand to award prizes were Mid-Michigan SCI Board Member, Mike Strobe, and President, Kevin Unger. Those receiving awards were Kelly Atkinson for his buck measuring 116" and youth participants, Grant Lorenz, Ashley Sytek, and Luke Rau.

Congratulations to everyone that participated and good luck for the upcoming hunting season. After you are successful, don't forget to register your buck at Tim's Barbershop in Beal City.



## American Wilderness Leadership School Charitable Grant

On Saturday night of our Convention, we acknowledged the use of some of our funds in the Mt. Pleasant Area Community Foundation. We have been adding to this fund for several years which have accumulated to over \$70,000 in endowed assets with a spendable balance of over \$10,000.

Last year, for the first time, we asked for a charitable grant of \$3,600 to send four teachers to the American Wilderness Leadership School near Jackson Hole, WY at the Granite Ranch. Two of those teachers were Josh and Sara Christensen who teach at Gladwin Schools. You may remember reading about them in a previous Front Sight. Because of this training, Josh is the Outdoor Education Teacher, a new class, and has had great reviews from both students and parents. Our chapter and the DNR funded an "Archery in Schools Program" which they taught plus teaching hunter's safety to 10 students for a refresher course and 21 new students.

We want to encourage any of you to make donations to this fund which can only be used for educational purposes. It is a 501c3 endowed fund and last year earned 14.2%. If you wish to do something to encourage education in the out-of-doors, have someone hard to buy for and just want to do something in their honor, or want to make a donation in someone's memory, please think of the foundation and make a donation to our chapter's fund. They are located at 306 S. University, P.O. Box 1283, in Mt Pleasant, MI 48804-1283. (989) 773-7322, [www.mpacf.org](http://www.mpacf.org)

**Mt. Pleasant Area**  
community foundation<sup>SM</sup>

# Spanish Ibex Slam

by Dan Catlin



I was in my final three days of hunting in Spain. I was riding up the mountain just outside the village of Villahermosa Del Rio, Valencia. If I were able to connect on a Beceite Ibex Billy, this would complete my Spanish Ibex Slam (all four Ibex species) in one ten-day trip. By this time, I was

excited but also very tired. The miles I put on my feet climbing the “legitimate” mountains of Spain, along with the miles I put on my back side in a car covering the majority of Spain from north, to south and then east and west, was definitely taxing on my body. However, it was the kind of taxing and tired feeling that only a hunter can appreciate. For at the end of each climb there was a prize; and for me it was the first three species of Spanish Ibex I had collected off three different mountain ranges I hunted. I told myself there's only one more for four, and I would reach my goal of collecting the Spanish Ibex Slam in one trip!!!



I met Fernando Nomdedue of IBEX ZONE over three years ago at the National SCI Convention. At SCI 2018 we connected, planned, and coordinated a hunt where both myself and Chuck Wahr, Trijicon's VP of Global Sales and Marketing, would attempt to collect all four species (Gredos, Ronda, Southeastern, & Beceite) of Ibex in one trip. To make things even more challenging,

Chuck and I each had our own cameraman to capture us hunting for The Experience TV show on YouTube and Trijicon's World of Sports Afield on the Sportsman's Channel. The filming was easy, but the logistics for two hunters, two cameramen and two guides plus gear was challenging. In



spite of the challenges, both Chuck and I collected all four species of Ibex and were very well taken care of by Fernando and his staff. Our evenings were spent in local villages and eating in local restaurants and pubs. To me this was the best part of hunting Ibex in Spain. You are not only hunting but you are experiencing Spain and its local cultures as you travel throughout the country. This is the type of international hunt where you WILL enjoy the food, wine and drinks. There are spectacular views of countryside everywhere you go. Additionally there is SO MUCH history in Europe that it's mind-boggling. The castles, structures and villages were built hundreds and even thousands of years ago. Truly amazing place to hunt, visit and tour all at the same time.

We started our hunt in the Gredos mountains in Western Spain. Both Chuck and I connected on the first day, but it wasn't easy. My GPS tracked us for nearly

10 miles on our feet as we backpacked into the mountains in search of Ibex. It was April 2019, and once we located the billies, at this time of year they were in bachelor groups and there were plenty to look at and decide upon. I had booked my Gredos for a representative trophy however there was a



silver-medal class with a broken horn that I could shoot. For me it was a “no brainer” to shoot a larger and older Ibex for the same price as a representative animal that would have been mature, but not as old or as big. Just a bonus for me to be in the right place at the right time.

From the Gredos mountains we drove south about eight hours to hunt the Ronda Ibex. This hunt along with the Southeastern Ibex, was in mountains that were close to the villages and not as much like the backcountry hunting of the Gredos and Beceite Ibex. Still a hunt that required us to climb the mountains and offered incredible views and experiences. I was fortunate enough to connect on a very nice Ronda Ibex the first afternoon which allowed us to change locations and hunt the Southeastern Ibex the following day. It was only a short two-hour drive to the new area. After taking two days to collect the Southeastern we were off to what ended up being my favorite area and favorite hunt, the Beceite Ibex.

Our first day in pursuit of the Beceite Ibex we were fortunate enough to drive to the highest points of the mountains and have a driver take the vehicle down to a point we could hike to. After approximately five miles of hiking down... well, more like down, up, down, up, up and finally down... we came to a small mountain road where



a driver picked us up. We saw one very nice billy, but Fernando wanted me to shoot an old “laid out horned” billy. Therefore, we passed on this opportunity and went to the village where Fernando has a summer home/trophy room and met with Chuck and his guide for lunch. Lunch was always around 2:00pm and then a short rest until 4:00pm when we resumed our hunt. This was the afternoon of my “CLICK”! After a short walk from a dead-end road, on top of the mountain where a fire watch tower was located, we took up a position to

glass some amazing country. It wasn't ten minutes and Fernando located a great billy across the canyon from us, only 300 yards away. There were three in this group and one of the smaller Ibex had obviously spotted us. We scrambled to get me in a shooting position, the cameraman on the Ibex, and Fernando evaluating the trophy caliber and age. It was quickly decided to shoot the oldest and largest of the group. When I asked Sawyer Peacock, my cameraman, “are you on him”? Sawyer's quick reply was “YES SIR”! I was dead solid in a prone position with my RMP Custom Rifle, topped with a Trijicon AccuPoint Scope, and the only thing left to do was... SQUEEZE! CLICK!!! In the excitement of the moment, I neglected to rack a round in the chamber! Like all guided hunts SAFETY is first and I never put a round in the chamber until just prior to shooting. Well, I forgot to chamber a round and



let down my guide, cameraman and myself. The Ibex bolted off the mountain as if they heard the click from 300 yards away and the ensuing chase was on. We never relocated that group of Ibex and returned the next morning to the exact same mountain. No Luck...

The final afternoon of my hunt we were driving the switchbacks up the mountain and stopping to glass across the canyons. We found him! A 13-year-old billy feeding all by himself in a grassy area of a 17th century abandoned home. These structures were built hundreds of years ago as the people fled the war-torn areas of the Mediterranean Sea Coast to the mountains for refuge. After the war, people abandoned their mountain homes for the cities where work was easier to obtain. The Ibex loved the green grasses that grow in and around these structures. We made a plan to close the 1200-yard distance and at a range of 372 yards I placed a perfect shot on my most prized trophy in Spain. The Beceite Ibex!

Fernando Nomdedue is a great friend, host and hunting guide. I will always be thankful and humbled to have these opportunities to hunt all over the world, and the Spanish Ibex is a MUST DO for the mountain hunters of the world. Special thanks goes to The Wildlife Gallery Team and Trijicon for making this hunt possible!



# Recipes

## from Chef Hollingwert

### BACK STRAP AND GRAPE JELLY

by CHEF RAY HOLLINGWERT

Servings 2

1 pound back strap, sliced 1/4-inch thick  
3 tbs. grape jelly  
1 c. mushrooms, sliced  
1/2 c. brown sauce or bef gravy  
1 tbs. hot sauce  
1/2 c. ruby port wine  
2 tbs. salad oil  
salt and pepper

In a hot saute pan, add oil, the meat slices and season with a little salt and pepper. Cook until the meat is medium rare.

Remove the venison from the pan, add the mushrooms, cooking until soft. Remove excess grease from the pan and pour in port wine. Let simmer 30 seconds. Add the grape jelly, brown sauce and hot sauce.

Replace the meat back in the sauce, let simmer two minutes. Season with salt and pepper.



### CITRUS GRILLED TURKEY CUTLETS

by CHEF RAY HOLLINGWERT

Servings 2

1 pound turkey breast, raw,  
cut thin and pounded  
Juice of 1 lemon plus zest  
Juice of 1 orange plus zest  
1 tbs. fresh parsley, chopped  
1 c. salad oil  
1 c. apple cider vinegar  
1 tbs. garlic, chopped  
1 12-oz. bottle Mike's Hard Lemonade

Place all ingredients, except the turkey, in to a blender, mix well.

Place mixture over cutlets and let set for one hour.

Cook on outside grill until done.

*Pictures from our May 6  
Membership Meeting where  
Chef Ray Hollingwert was our  
guest speaker.*

# Bob Cat Hunt in Michigan



by Mary Harter

*We have only had bob cat hunting in Isabella County for the past three years, so we have many bob cats around where we hunt. I have seen several while deer hunting and so has my husband and others that hunt with us. I have had bob cat come in to my turkey decoys. You know you have a good decoy when a bob cat thinks it is real.*

*The first year we hunted, it was very cold, and we saw*

*nothing. We only went out a couple of times and started to doubt our sanity for wading through the snow and almost freezing to death.*

*The second year, we were gone during the short hunting season, so did not hunt.*

*Now in 2019, the hunting season is January 1 – 11 and we were going to be home part of that time, so out we went. The first day we hunted was January 2 and it was snowy and cold. Nothing came out. We went out the second day and Don set up his predator call and a motion decoy. He used it quite loudly and then set it very soft. Don couldn't even hear it, but I could. It was a beautiful sunny day and it was nice sitting in a blind during a time when we usually didn't hunt.*

*At 4:20 p.m. out came a bob cat right from the swamp behind us. He went straight to the sound of the predator call completely ignoring the tail waving on the motion decoy set several feet away. I had to stand up to shoot him and got him before he got to the predator call. He did a flip in the air and ran right back the way he came from the swamp.*

*Wow! A bob cat! We looked at each other in disbelief. We got out of the blind and checked where he went into the swamp. The snow was sprayed with blood so I was sure we would find him. Just a few feet into the brush, there he laid. What a beauty!!! And Don had called him in.*



# Fishing in Canada with Uncle Dave

by Josh Christensen



Up until my wife Sara and I were married the only outdoors person in her family was her Uncle Dave. He was big into hunting and fishing in his younger years but as he has gotten older he has concentrated his efforts on fishing to the point where he has stopped hunting all together. Since my first family function with Sara's family her Uncle Dave has inquired as to how my hunting seasons went and where we planned to hunt next. He has always been a genuine man with an infectious laugh who is still very interested in the outdoors.

Since 1967 Uncle Dave has been traveling every year to Canada to fish. Around 2008 he invited me to join him on one of these trips. I accepted, as I had always wanted to do

a fly-in-fishing-trip and told him I wouldn't be able to go in September, when he usually went, because it didn't fit into my teacher work schedule. Year after year I was unable to join him due to either the date of the trip or plans Sara and I had with our boys. What got me to say I'd go in 2015 was a conversation Uncle Dave and I had in the summer of 2014. He told me, "You know I am 71 years old and I really want you to experience a fishing trip with me. I'm not sure how many more trips I have left." He laughed after saying it, because he was in excellent health, but it got me thinking seriously about making the trip. Later that summer we found dates that would work and our trip was planned for July of 2015.

For this trip Uncle Dave brought all the fishing gear I would need, so all I had to worry about was clothing, sunscreen and bug spray. Our plan was to depart the morning of July ninth and drive the eighteen hours to Pickle Lake and fly into camp from there. We drove nine hours on the first day stopping in Terrance Bay and nine more hours on the next day staying at the outfitters cabin near Pickle Lake. Along the way we listened to Uncle Dave's kind of music, which he laughingly called "Elevator Music," saw two black bear, a coyote and a lynx. We had a total of six guys on the trip (myself, Uncle Dave, Jim, Ed, Bob and Richard) and two trucks on the week long fly-in-fishing-trip.

Our trip to Pickle Lake was uneventful and on the morning of the eleventh we were on an Otter float plane heading to Williams Lake, a very large lake with only one cabin on the entire thing. Our outfitter (Pickle Lake Outpost) is the sole owner of this cabin.

The cabin was nice for a fly-in camp. It had a generator for lights. The generator also ran the water pump that ran water from the lake to the sink in the kitchen area, as well as the shower stall. The shower had a tankless water heater for warm showers. There was a wooden walkway from the lake to the cabin and on one side was a fish cleaning station completely screened in.

When walking into the cabin it had a main room with a dining table and kitchen area and along two sides of the main room were four small bedrooms with two to three cot sized beds in each. All along the walls of the main room there were messages from earlier fishing and hunting groups that used the cabin. This made for interesting reading over the next week. To finish off the cabin there were two outhouses thirty yards into the woods.

We flew out in two groups because there was a big group at the cabin that would take two trips to get out. Williams Lake is very large by anyone's measure. It is technically one lake, but it has four large lake areas connected by long "narrow" strips of waterway. These "narrow" strips were around 400 yards wide and could be as long as a mile or two. On a map in the cabin the lakes were numbered one, two, three and four. The cabin was on lake one while lake four was the lake furthest away.

Once we were all at the cabin we settled into our rooms and had brunch before we ventured out to lake one. We had three sixteen foot v-bottom boats, each equipped with fifteen horse mercury motors. We set out two men to a boat and went our separate ways. This first afternoon I was lucky enough to fish with Uncle Dave and he taught me the ropes of fishing in the far north for walleye. The temperatures on this mid-July day were stifling! We didn't have great success on this first afternoon fishing, but we did have the opportunity to see a cow woodland caribou, a golden eagle and a bald eagle. We also got to see how quickly Mother Nature can change the weather. We went from very hot to a rain storm within minutes. Luckily Uncle Dave and I had just enough time to dawn our rain gear, others weren't so lucky and got absolutely soaked to the bone. This storm produced some of the biggest rain drops I have ever seen.

In all the six of us caught 52 fish from noon until 4:00, before a new storm came rolling in. This one had thunder so we high-tailed it back to the cabin for the day. That evening,



***Back row L to R: Jim, Ed, Dave and Bob.  
Front row L to R: Richard and Josh.***

and many other evenings on this trip, we were treated to fresh walleye. Every time we would eat walleye or release one back into the lake Uncle Dave would say "There's a \$20 dinner," and laugh.

That night we had our first run in with the other residents of this cabin...bats. Apparently the cabin was infested with them. With the temperatures as warm as they were it was too hot to sleep in our sleeping bags and at one point in the night I felt something land on my foot. Needless to say I decided to move to a different bedroom in the cabin the next night.

On the morning of the twelfth I was up at 6:30 and was the last to rise. Ed and I fished together on this day and we were out from 8:00 until 2:30. We stayed in lake one and the fishing was once again slow on this very warm day. With the temperatures making it uncomfortable we all decided to wait until later in the evening to go back fishing. We sat around the cabin and discussed our day of fishing up to that point. The six of us had caught 72 fish so far that day. After dinner we decided it was still too warm and hatched a plan to try our luck at lake three the following day. The group of fishermen that left as we were arriving said they had good luck on this part of Williams Lake.

The cabin had several board games and decks of cards to help us pass the time. I found a cribbage board, but no one else knew how to play. Richard offered to play if I taught him how and almost every night we played multiple games before turning in for the night. That night it was warm again and the bats visited me in the room I moved to. This time one landed on my pillow. As you might imagine I didn't sleep well the rest of the night.



I was up at 5:00 the morning of the thirteenth and was able to witness an amazing sunrise over the lake. After another great breakfast we set off for lake three. Ed and I were in the same boat again this day and were in the lead on our way to lake three. We overshot our target and ended up in lake four. By using a map from the cabin we noticed our mistake and worked our way back to the small inlet that led us to lake three. Within minutes of being in lake three we were catching fish. We stayed out fishing all day as we trolled around the lake. We fished for over nine hours, and by the time we made it back to the cabin had traveled 23.6 miles according to my gps.

In those nine plus hours, Ed and I caught 78 fish. Most were pike, but we also caught some nice walleye for dinner. As a group we caught 253 fish on this day! We decided to go back to lake three the remainder of the days we fished.

That night the weather cooled down a great deal, making sleep come a bit easier, because I was able to hide from the bats in my sleeping bag. I moved back into the room I spent the first night in because when I awoke on the second morning I saw three bats hanging from the ceiling or in corners of the room.

We were up early again on the fourteenth and after another amazing breakfast we set out to lake three. With the weather change I was bundled up for our six mile ride to lake three. As the day progressed I took off my layers and was in my t-shirt before noon. I was amazed at Uncle Dave's knowledge of finding where the fish would be and his ability to look at a shoreline and know if fish would be near it or not. I caught more fish in the nine hours of fishing with him than ever before or since in



one day. In all, our boat caught 157 fish! This was the most any boat caught in one day the entire trip. Once again, most of these were pike. It seemed like we were constantly catching fish, releasing them, and then catching another. This night was cool again allowing me to avoid any altercations with our bat roommates.

The fifteenth was pretty much the same as the fourteenth; up early, bundle up, take the six mile ride to lake three and catch lots of fish! I was with Uncle Dave again on this day and we got into a lot of walleye. They seemed to be very hungry. As we were trolling at one point my lure got caught up in the rocks. Uncle Dave took the front of the boat to where I was snagged. After a few times of putting tension on the line and releasing it the lure came free. As I reeled it in I caught a walleye. It must have been sitting in the rocks the entire



time. The temperatures that evening were cool and thankfully the bats weren't a problem.

On the sixteenth I fished with Bob; a Vietnam Veteran. We had a great time fishing and talking about life and how things were similar and different during our different eras in the Army. Some of the things he told me will stick with me the rest of my days. One of which was how Vietnam Vets were treated when they came back from the war. I truly feel for the men and women who were not welcomed with open arms back home after going through the things they did. Something my generation has never had to encounter.

The weather on this day started like the prior two with overcast skies and cool temperatures, but around noon the sun broke through and wind completely went away. It became very warm, but that didn't stop us from catching a ton of fish. We used many of the techniques I had picked up from Uncle Dave over the previous two days.

These last two nights were warm and sleeping in a sleeping bag was not an option. We decided to try to combat the bats by burning mosquito repellent coils. We figured if there weren't any bugs in the cabin the bats would have no reason to fly around us. We had so many of these coils burning the last night that when Uncle Dave got

up to get a drink in the night he thought the cabin was on fire with all the smoke from the coils.

The seventeenth was to be our last day of fishing. On this day I was paired with my cribbage opponent Richard. The weather in the morning was decent; not too hot and not too cool with overcast skies. The fishing was good all morning. In the afternoon the temperatures soared again and the sun shone through making it quite uncomfortable. Overall, this was our best day of fishing as a group. Each group/boat brought in over 100 fish each.

The next day we all rose early and watched the sun rise before getting our gear packed for our trip back home. The float plane picked us up around 8:00 and took us back to Pickle Lake in one trip. We loaded the truck and drove nine hours back to Terrance Bay for the night. The next day we made another nine hour drive back home.

There are many things I have taken from doing this fly-in-fishing-trip. Some of those are being able to fish with Uncle Dave and learn from his vast knowledge, catching so many fish as a group (in all we caught 1,707 fish in seven days!), the comradery and conversations we shared, and me using only one lure the entire week! This lure was a ¾ ounce perch colored clio and by weeks end it didn't have any paint left on it from all the fish strikes.



# Sitka Black Tails on Kodiak Island

by Mary Harter

We had hunted sitkas a couple of times but never were successful because we hunted early before they come down to the shoreline after it snows higher up in the mountains. They come down after rut to eat kelp on the shoreline. This time we went on the last hunt of the season with several from the Wildlife Gallery, Jered Peterson, Kevin Eberhardt, Nick Kannawin, Aaron Rees and photographer, Kelton Eldred, plus Guy Gorey. We were hunting out of Larsen Bay Lodge with Mike Carlson and his wife, Tamryn.

We flew from Grand Rapids to Seattle to Anchorage to Kodiak, overnighing, and then on to Larsen Bay. We all settled in to the beautiful lodge which is right on the bay and enjoyed a delicious meal, as they were all delicious, prepared by Debbi Low. The views from the lodge were stunning with the mountains in the background.

On the first day we went out to look for deer. T. Jay was our guide and driver. Frank, Mike



Carlson's son, also was a guide. Mike had several new boats since we were here last. The fronts let down to load us all in, so it was much easier to get on board. I got the first shot and missed. Later Don missed. It is hard to shoot from a rocking boat. Owen and Kevin went out for ducks several times with Kelton filming. They saw harlequin, golden eye, and merganser. We saw many deer but does, fawns, and spikes. We did see a fin whale, the largest species of whale.

On the second day we saw a few deer but no bucks. The guys shot three ducks, mergansers

and golden eyes. We pulled the crab cages and they contained no crab but an octopus was in one. During the night we received a lot of snow.

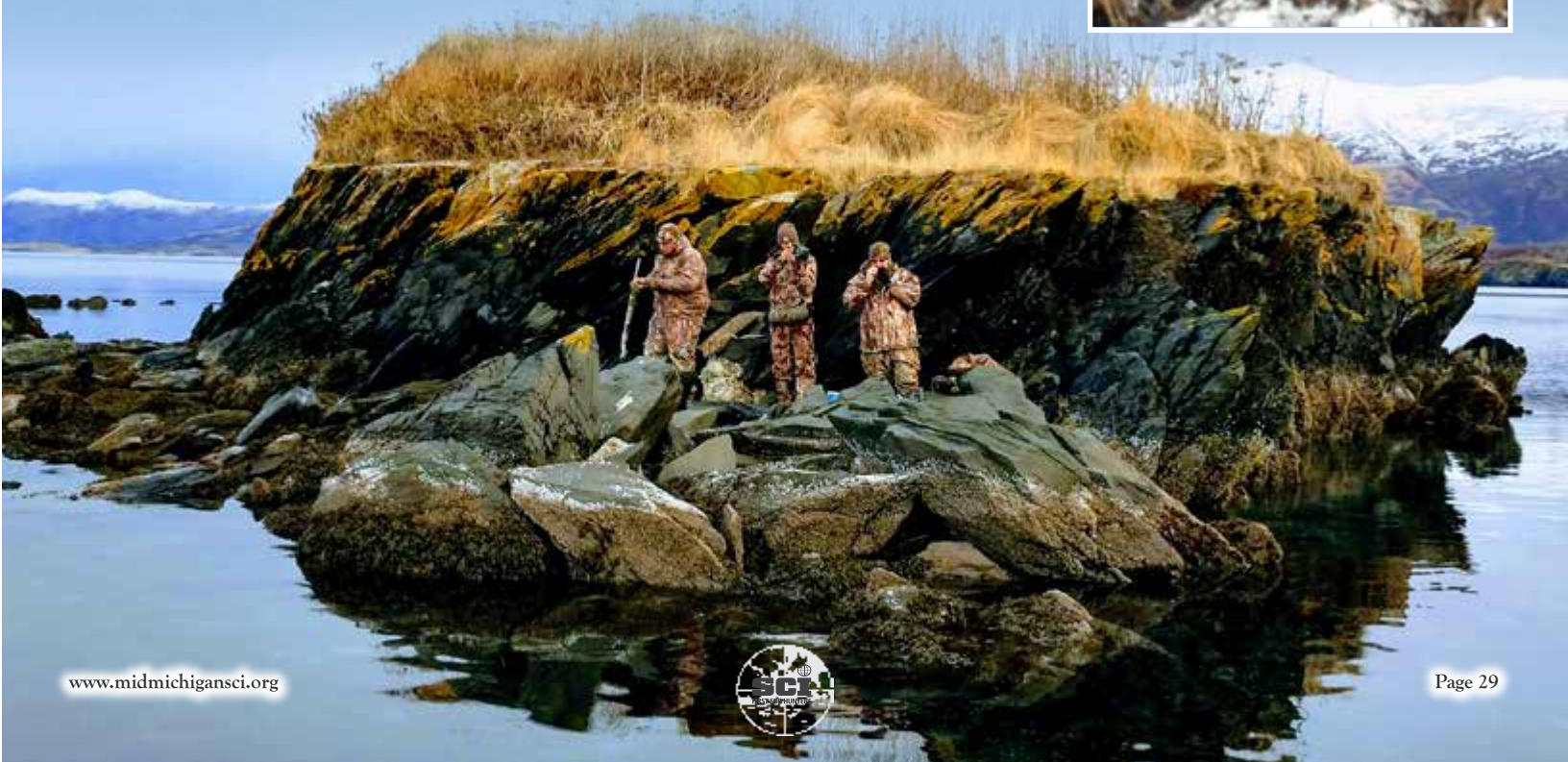
On the third day it was very windy, but we went out driving around looking for a black fox, which was on my list. During previous hunts we had gotten a red and cross fox and I wanted a black fox to go along with them. We drove to the airport and the docks seeing bear and fox tracks. Snow blew all day. Three of the guys went out to walk beyond the airport. Nick shot a very nice

buck. They were back around 4 p.m. They saw a fox and about 20 other deer. The weather was so bad no boats could go out.

On the fourth day we could go out. Owen and Kevin shot bucks and Owen shot a fox. Great to be out in the boat.

On the fifth day we were out with Mike to the outer area because it was calmer. You can only venture out to the ocean area when it is very calm and expected to stay that way for a while. We went to Bare Island, Sour Dough and the North East Harbor and beyond,

harvesting six deer and two fox. Jered and I got fox. Don, Guy (2), Jered, Nick, and I got deer, very nice deer. I found it much easier to shoot from the front of the boat and just time the waves. From the side you get the rolls which are hard to predict. What great





hunting and the bucks were down on the shoreline at low tide eating the kelp with it hanging out of their mouths.



We were tagged out and got ready to fly home. Guess what? The next day we were snowed in. The next day, the wind was blowing too hard. Jered spend a great deal of time on the phone with his mother, Sandra Chaney, our travel agent at Valley Travel, rerouting our travel to try to get us home. Small planes cannot fly in bad weather and we had to get to the Kodiak airport before we could fly on to Anchorage. Our chef, Debbi Low had worked 100 days straight during the hunting season and was very ready to fly to Florida, where



she lived. Jody was from Jamaica and had been on the island for two years and was very ready to fly back home. But in the meantime, they took great care of us.

Finally, we could fly out. Thank goodness, Sandy had booked us several different ways to get home and flights were full and many couldn't get flights. Out of Kodiak, one airline that was cheaper, even told us to book with their competitor as their flight would probably be cancelled, and it was. We were booked on both, thanks to Sandy. Arriving in Anchorage, we had more choices, but Sandy had taken care of us all. Getting home was easy for us but not for many more. Thanks Sandy!! Valley Travel!!

And a very special thank you to Mike Carlson and his staff at Larsen Bay Lodge for a wonderful, successful hunt. We had a great time and would encourage anyone to hunt or fish here.



ROGER AND MARGO CARD/MATTHEW AND NANCY KLEIN

# *Adventures* in Copper Canyon via the CHEPE train!

January 30- February 5, 2019

by Nancy Klein

Day 1: We left the Card hacienda at 4:30 am and flew on Aero Mexico from Puerto Vallarta to Mexico City then onto Los Mochis located near the sea of Cortez or Gulf of California and near the Port City of Topolobampo of the state of Sinaloa. We arrived at 11 am and was driven an hour and half through farming communities to El Fuerte. During this drive, we learned about topes (speed bumps), or what the Mexicans call the Mexican Massage!! Los Mochis train station represents the most western part of the Chepe (Chihuahua Pacific Railroad) train. Los Mochis was founded in 1903 by Americans as a sugar cane and railroad town. Los Mochis is a modern city now with about 450,000 in population compared to 350,000 residents in Puerto Vallarta. It is located about 310 miles northwest of Mazatlán. Los Mochis is an agricultural area with rich soil for growing many vegetables and corn. The area is noted for black bass fishing. Roger has fished the lakes near Los Mochis at a fishing camp owned by the family of Balderrama. Water is in abundance for irrigation in Los Mochis valley during the dryer months from all the Copper Canyon mountain runoff.

Observation: Flight attendants dressed fastidiously, wearing red Jackie Kennedy pill box like hats with matching red lipstick! Efficient, helpful and friendly. We added extra day on Tour to learn more of the history of El Fuerte, Spanish for the fort. The town was founded in 1563 by conquistadors looking for gold and silver and has maintained the friendly feel of an old Spanish town. Old Spanish mansions protected with beautiful doors and fenced with large bars of solid iron molded into grills are located near and around the town plaza. It was at one time the capital city of Sinaloa state. The train between Los Mochis and El Fuerte



takes 3 hours, hence, the drive to El Fuerte to begin our tour. Also, the flat, semi-arid scenery is not as enjoyable or breathtaking as beginning the trip at the train station in El Fuerte.

After arriving in El Fuerte, we begin our adventure with lunch and Margaritas at our monson hotel, the Posada Del Hidalgo. We enjoyed the relaxed ambience of eating and drinking by the pool while overlooking the Old 18th century Spanish church. Siestas are always a part of the day in the Cards routine. Matt was pleased! While Margo, Roger and Matt enjoyed the old mansion rooms, Nancy ventured to the top of the hill behind the hotel to view the old fort, the municipal palace, the colonial main plaza and old mansions remaining from an era of opulence and riches of years past. We signed up for a walking tour led by our guide, Michael who has lived in the area throughout his life. He provided





historical facts, many local stories and detail about the historical Posada Del Hidalgo in both English and Spanish. The Posada Del Hidalgo hotel as well as all the hotels on our tour are part of the Balderrama Collection. Following the walking tour, we joined in at the palapa bar and pool area for the El Zorro (born in original part of hotel) Show and of course imbibed more Margaritas and Pina Coladas- national drinks of Mexico! We had black bass and river Langosta dinners in the beautiful main dining room.

Silver mining in Copper Mountain provided wealth to land owners in the town. The less wealthy were not able to use the plaza or obtain their water or food on the plaza. To show the historical distinction, the state of Sinaloa supported painting the old mansions bright bold colors within a two-block area of plaza to show the difference between the mansions and the homes and businesses of lower privileged community members. Over the years, a gazebo and royal palms were planted in the plaza of which a number are over 100 years in age. Eventually several wealthy owners moved to California to avoid the Mexican Revolution and find more gold! I wonder if the name Robles (wine area in California) was one of those owners. Robles was listed in the Zorro story posted in Posada Del Hidalgo. Many of the old mansions are being converted to hotels. Observations: Gas stations are in Los Mochis but there are none as you go further north and visit communities near the train. Fuel must be hauled. All hotels were clean with decorations that reflected



their location and historical significance. The service provided by the staff was excellent, friendly and efficient. Tours were on time and informative.

Day 2: Matt and Nancy left at 8 am for a two-hour birdwatcher's river raft float on the El Fuerte River. The rafts had chairs with the boat rower located in center of raft. Viewed egrets, blue herons, coots, duck, eagles, osprey, green parrots, cardinals, hawk, crows and pelicans. We walked on a tropical area next to the river where the guide (Zorro) described many plants used by Indians for medicinal reasons as well as herbs. He could also whistle to the birds so they would come close to us. He



had a whistle for each bird. We also walked to the Hill of the Mask (Cerro de la Mascara), site of ancient Nahuari (Toltec) petroglyphs believed to be between 800 and 2,500 years old. Almost all the Copper Canyon rivers flow west into El Fuerte river.



There were at least 6 hummingbird feeders located at the palapa bar at the hotel with many violet crown and black throat hummingbirds feeding and co-existing with each other (unlike the "rufus" humming birds that we have in Michigan. They are very territorial.)

At 11:00 am Cards joined us for lunch then a three-hour tour of Mayo Indian reservation of Capomos. Mayos are relatives of

Apaches and Navajos of the old west. The women demonstrated how to make tortillas, pottery, Indian artifacts and we watched a Mayo Indian do the deer dance while three tribal members provided rhythm by using a file like piece rubbing across a corrugated piece of wood. Mayo are adept at fishing and agriculture. They number around 40,000 and there are 72 Mayo tribes located in the Sinaloa state. They had cell phones! We also saw a gigantic bee hive and was able to taste the honey from the hive. The hive was hanging from a tree limb. A short siesta followed the tour prior to us touring the fort museum and dinner at one of mansions repurposed into a restaurant and hotel. While at dinner, the Cards and Kleins established a bet as to how many train cars would be used on our train. Margo won the wine bottle by saying there would be 12 cars and she was correct!

Day 3: Started day by boarding the Chepe train at 8:30 am at the El Fuerte station located a mile from our hotel. The "First Class Train-Express" leaves at 6 am in Los Mochis and makes 8 stops on way to Chihuahua. The "economy class train" leaves about an hour later and makes 15 stops, and takes longer, but at half the fare. Construction of this line began in 1898 and tracks were laid in Creel in 1907. Work on the railroad was interrupted by the Mexican Revolution but was reinitiated in the 1950s and finally finished in 1961. The total length of the route is 650 kilometers (400 miles) with 37 bridges, and 99 tunnels and takes 16 hours to complete entire route on economy train and 13 hours on express. Highest point on route is 2,800 meters (9,186 feet) above sea level. The most attractive places where the train stops are Creel, Divisadero, San Rafael, Cuiteco, Bahuichivo (Ceriocahui), Temoris (Chinipas) and El Fuerte (Sinaloa). From March to end of June everything is very dry with some mountain fires. Rainy season is between June and late October. Temperatures are low from November through February with the chance of snow at higher elevations. Copper Canyon is larger, deeper and greener than the Grand Canyon in Arizona. Observation: we did not feel or see (since it was dark!) the 180 degree turn by the train within the longest tunnel. If you watch the valley when entering, it is necessary to move to the other side of the vestibule between cars to view the valley



when exiting the tunnel. Temoris Switchbacks at KM 707 were spectacular! It is three levels of track starting with the train on the low bridge, followed by the La Pera Tunnel, (3,074 feet long which does the 180 degree turn inside the mountain). I paid 200 pesos to walk through dinning car, past kitchen, through rest area for conductor, etc, past engineer running the train and then inching out to an area on the front of the engine to feel the exhilaration of the wind and the view that the conductor/engineer has!!



After traveling on the train for about 5 hours, we exited the train at Bahuichivo and traveled 14 kilometers by van to Ceriicahui that is home to 1,000 inhabitants. The town is nestled in a valley surrounded by grape vines. The Balderrama family started a winery three years ago and as can be imagined we had to try the wines. Margo and Roger learned about the wines and had a tasting of their red ones. The elevation of the small community is 1,670 m/5,478 Ft. The town was visited by the Spanish in 1679 and Mission of San Francisco was founded in 1694 by the Jesuits. The Spaniards were looking for gold and silver and wanted to spread Christianity. The Spanish king recalled the priests in 1767 and they did not return until 1936 had to rebuild the old the mission church. There is no recorded history about the town between 1767 and 1936. In 1941, the priest founded the Tarahumara Indian girls boarding school located next to the Mission. For 60 years, the Servants of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Poor have worked to protect, educate and change the lives of the Tarahumara children living in the Sierra Madre Mountains. Many Tarahumara children still live in caves with no running water or electricity, especially for those who live a long distance from the railroad. Ten years of draught has created food shortages for this agrarian culture. Tarahumara are descendants from the indigenous people who originally lived in Copper Canyon area. A Tarahumara athlete carried the Olympic torch throughout Mexico when Mexico hosted the summer Olympics in 1968. They are self-sufficient and semi- nomadic. They were named by the Spanish. Raramuri is the name in their own language, meaning foot runners since they can run over 100 miles to exhaust prey such as deer. They run barefoot. They number 50,000 to 70,000 and live either in the various canyon valleys during cooler weather and in the

mountains during warmer weather. Family groups are highly valued and have minimal interest in belongings other than for survival. During our trip we saw many women dressed in brightly colored clothes while working on baskets made from palm leaves or pine needles. During the 17th Century, silver was discovered by the Spaniards in land where the Tarahumara lived. The tribe members were enslaved to mine the silver. There were uprisings but eventually they were forced off the more desirable lands and up into the canyon cliffs. They still live away from city people and away from the train and remain isolated in support of keeping their culture in tact. Some tribes accept government funding for roads to encourage tourism. Others do not and remain very isolated. Copper Canyon was featured on Season 1, Episode 12 of Man vs. Wild on the Discovery Channel on Raramun Tale.

One of our guides shared that there are over 70,000 Mennonites that live in the Chihuahua city area. They use buggies for transportation just like they do in Michigan.

After lunch at our hotel, La Mision, opened in 1968, Matt and I joined a walking tour of 6 kilometers that followed a stream in order to view the lower and higher waterfall. We used all three hours for the hike and returned via the vineyards at dark in time for dinner at La Mision! Of course, Matt was ready to stop and return to the hotel when he faced crossing the stream by hopping on rocks to reach the other side! During our hike we met Alfredo Rios Camavena and Silvia Suarez del Real, who were celebrating their 25-wedding anniversary during their week-long vacation in Copper Canyon. Alfredo is a lawyer and has worked in government for 30 years, only recently leaving for private practice. He had worked for 4 years on all the legal permits to expand the Mexico City airport. However, the new Mexican President canceled the construction on the project. They have a daughter who is a junior in high school who completed a year of study in Washington DC. She is interested in political science. Alfredo's father teaches constitutional law at one of the Universities in Mexico City. They live in the southern part of Mexico City. They were very charming, enthusiastic, positive about life and spoke English. It was a very cold but non snowy night with heat for our room provided by a wood burning stove which we "fed and stoked the fire" until bedtime.

Day 4: At 8 am we left for a three-hour tour of Urique Canyon which is the largest of the six canyons. The overlooks provided panoramic views of Urique River. We bought a basket with top (tortilla basket) from basket weaver at overlook. Urique canyon is the deepest canyon within the six separate canyons comprising Copper Canyon. It is a four-hour decent down to Urique over very bumpy road. Urique is an old silver mining town at the bottom of the canyon. Silver is still being mined in the area by an American company. There was no time for hikes into the Canyon. We left La Mision at 11:30 am for our drive of



55 minutes to Posada Barrancas train station and check-in at Hotel Mirador. The hotel is "perched" on the edge/rim of Copper Canyon and every room was located at the edge of the canyon. A short walk from the hotel brought us to the balancing rock, and several overviews of this beautiful canyon. A Tarahumara Indian presented their history and led some of us on a hike into the canyon and returned by climbing many steps to reach Hotel Mirador. We hiked by a Tarahumara family who also had an artesian watering spring in the rock that consistently provided water. The trails were unmarked.

Day 5 Super Bowl Sunday: We left at 9 am for a drive to Creel and a 5-hour tour of Creel area including a visit at Arareko lake, the Mission of San Ignacio, Tarahumara cave dwellers and valley of the Monks, Mushrooms and frogs! The Valley of the Monks represents area of tall rock formations colorfully named by Tarahumara as Bisabirachi – "Place of erect penises"! A boarding school for girls was present near the Mission church. The city of Creel was founded in 1907 and named for a governor of Chihuahua. Creel is almost at 8,000 feet above sea level or 2460 meters and has a population of 4,000. Creel is a tourist cowboy town. It is surrounded by pine forests and is a lumber town with a local town mill. We stopped for a beer and chips at a local restaurant.



Roger was very ecstatic when Margo was able to find an English-speaking TV station that carried the game!! Margo reserved a bar table with game side viewing close to the TV! Roger kept track of several game bets, with the bet with his brother being the most important. He had taken the Patriots as winners with a three-point spread. To say the least, the game was so exciting that Roger stood for entire second half and talked to the TV!

Day 6: Travelled 5 minutes to Cooper Canyon Adventure park in the morning. The Park offers rock climbing, zip line, rappelling, cable car rides and hiking in the canyon. We checked out of the Hotel Mirador at 12 and waited for our train to return us to El Fuente. The trip lasted 6 hours of repeat viewing of the spectacular scenery! We were met at the train station by our delightful guide to drive us to Los Mochis to stay the night at the Santa Anita Hotel. A shower felt fantastic!

Observations: We were pleased with the mountain views from the train from El Fuerte travelling north and on our return enjoyed the mountain views from Barancas south till darkness occurred. Both directions are spectacular. Stopovers are very important: wish I could have hiked/done zip line experience at Barancas train stop. The Cable car was worth the trip but needed more time to explore into the Canyon. We often saw Tarahumara women selling crafts such as pine needle baskets, dolls, violins, rugs and blankets, flutes, drums, pottery and traditional clothing and wood carvings. We chose to buy several crafts at the Valley of the Monks. The women were not pushy nor was there any bargaining. Bring small denomination pesos since there are no ATMs! Only hotels accept credit cards.

The most important observation is regarding our co- traveling friends, Margo and Roger. We laughed together, told stories and certainly really enjoyed each other's company. A special thanks to MARGO for working with Superior Tours to set up all

the details for our adventures in Copper Canyon. The three of us so appreciated MARGO'S efforts in being our outstanding Spanish/English interpreter. Margo always enjoys meeting and making new friends and sharing her life's experiences of living in Mexico.

*Editor's Note: Dr. Matthew Klein is Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Ferris State University and worked with Roger Card to develop the Card Wildlife Education Center at Ferris. Dr. Nancy Peterson-Klein is Associate Dean Emeritus of Academic and Student Affairs for Ferris State University's Michigan College of Optometry and on the Michigan Board of Optometry.*



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