

FRONT SIGHT



Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

April - June 2020, Issue 50



Photo by Dan Catlin
Glassing for Red Stag in New Zealand



JOHAN PIETERSE SAFARIS



**SOUTH AFRICA
ZIMBABWE
MOZAMBIQUE**



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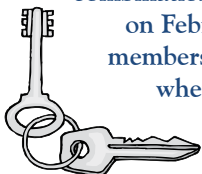
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Chairmen are listed first

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Members of Mid-Michigan SCI or Isabella County Sportsman's Club may use the shooting range located at 2872 W. Millbrook Road just east of Winn Road. The lock combination is 4590 and changes yearly on February 15th. Please carry membership identification on you when you visit the range.



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

Check our own www.midmichigansci.org website for copies of the **Front Sight**, listing of events, and fundraiser auction items.

Please support our sponsors! Call or write them for catalogs and information on their products and services. Make sure you tell them you saw their information in **The Front Sight**.

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President's Message

Welcome and I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. There is much ongoing activity in the Chapter. Here is some of what is happening:

We kicked off the year with Big Buck Night in late January. The Chapter continued its support for a young Big Buck event in Beal City as well. These events are both fun and well received by the participants. It is a nice chance to celebrate our love of the outdoors.

The Safari Club International Annual Convention was held in Reno on February 4th through the 8th. This event is the largest Hunting Expo and is something all members should experience at least once. A big news item is that SCI is acquiring the Texas Trophy Hunters Association. Each organization will continue their existing missions and will be complimentary. The Charlie Daniels Band was a last-minute addition after REO Speedwagon dropped out due to anti-hunter social media pressure. Donald Trump, Jr was an exciting keynote speaker for the Convention. A wolf reintroduction proposal initiation is on the ballot in Colorado this year. The proposal is not sound wildlife management science and SCI opposes it.

The 41st Annual Convention at Soaring Eagle will have been held in last weekend of February by the publication of this Front Sight Issue. We are expecting it to have been a great event with lots of fun and plenty of outfitters and vendors to visit. This is our major fund-raising effort for the year. Here are some of the projects those funds support.

The Chapter supports hunting advocacy, education, and conservation efforts locally and throughout the world. Examples include supporting many High School trap teams and sending kids to MUCC Youth Camps. We have an active program to send Teachers (mostly middle school) to the SCI American Wilderness Leadership School in Jackson, WY. This prepares teachers to be well versed in conservation education and the North American Conservation Model and then pass it on to their students. The ongoing Chapter Sportsmen Against Hunger program has donated over 10,000 pounds of meat in the last few years. The Blue Bags program is growing and assists local school and education efforts in remote areas. Please consider taking one on your next hunting or pleasant travels. Some airlines allow the bags to fly without luggage charges. Please ask if you have questions. Every year there are veterans and disabled youth activities supported. You have seen the articles in the Front Sight. Our support of SCI helps it to be the premier Hunter Advocacy organization. SCI litigated 100 cases last year to protect hunting and scientific wildlife conservation.

Here are some upcoming Chapter events. Please attend the Chapter Member Meetings scheduled for Monday April 13th and Monday May 4th. Details will be forth coming. Please let us know if you have any topics you would like covered in future meetings. The Chapter Trap Shoot is scheduled for May 16th at Isabella County Sportsman's Club. We are considering some new ideas for this year. Let us know if you have some!

As always, get in some hunting and fishing with your friends and families. Please share your stories with us and help all to remember what makes Hunting such a great family and friends' tradition in Michigan.



Jon Zieman
President
(989) 430-2985 jjzieman@tds.net

Editor's Message

This will be my last issue (the 50th) as editor of the Front Sight. Josh Christensen will be taking over my duties but I will be assisting him for the next couple of issues. Josh has attended AWLS in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, written numerous stories and does the book reviews for the Front Sight, so is very capable.

We had a great time at the National SCI Convention in Reno attending five luncheons and nightly events. Saturday, Donald Trump, Jr. was the highlight speaker and was very receptive to meeting so many of us and letting us take his picture. He hunts often and the Wildlife Gallery does some of his taxidermy. His girlfriend, Kimberly Guilfoyle, spoke at the Saturday luncheon, and was very interesting.

Next year the National SCI Convention will be held in Las Vegas as well as in 2022. We move to Nashville for 2023 – 2025, followed by New Orleans in 2026, 2028, and 2030, and Indianapolis in 2027 and 2029.

Ever since the controversy about respect for our flag during some sporting events, I have wondered just what is the proper American flag etiquette so I looked it up.

On June 22, 1942, Congress passed a joint resolution, later amended on December 22, 1942, that encompassed what has come to be known as the U.S. Flag Code.

The flag of the United States is the emblem of our identity as a sovereign nation, which the United States of America has been for more than 200 years.

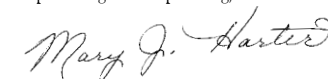
The Flag Code covers all aspects of etiquette in relation to the Stars and Stripes, including how to behave when the anthem is played. The code is never enforced, however, and there is no punishment for breaching it.

So, what should you do when our National Anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner", is played?

The code states that persons present are expected to stand at attention, remove your cap and sunglasses, and face the flag, if there is one. Civilians should stand to attention with right hand over heart, while military personnel in uniform and veterans should salute throughout. The salute is directed to the flag, if displayed, otherwise to the music. A recent amendment to the code in 2008, said that military personnel out of uniform could also salute.

The pledge of allegiance should be rendered by standing at attention, facing the flag as the pledge is spoken, and saluting.

The many other rules can be looked up regarding flying the flag and proper disposal. Keep hunting and keep writing.



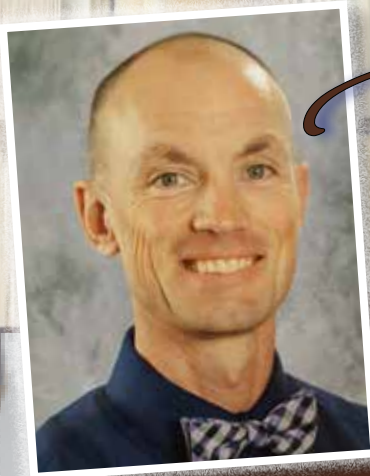
Mary Harter
Editor

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Meeting Type	Time	Location
Apr. 13	Board/Membership	4:30 / 6:00 pm	Comfort Inn
May 4	Board/Membership	6:00 pm	Comfort Inn
May 16	Trap Shoot	12 noon-Registration 3:00 Final Round Starts	Isabella County Sportsman's Club
July 13	Board Skeet Shoot	2:00 pm	
	Board Budget Meeting	5:00 pm	Harters
Aug. 3	Board Meeting	5:00 pm	Cheers
Aug. 11	Golf Outing	7:30 am	Pines Golf Course - Lake Isabella 9:00 am tee off
Sept. 6	Board Meeting	5:00 pm	Cheers
Sept. 24-28	Veterans Hunts	7:00 am	Tails-A-Waggin'
Oct. 5	Board Meeting	5:00 pm	Cheers
Oct. 24	Veterans Hunts	8:00 am	Crooked Foot
Dec. 7	Board Meeting	5:00 pm	Cheers
Feb. 3-6, 2021	Annual Convention		Convention Center, Las Vegas

All board meetings are open to our membership. Reservations required.
Please call and leave a message at 989-560-1061 or email suzettejhoward@yahoo.com



Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: JOURNAL OF A TRAPPER

Publisher: Bison Book

Author: Osborne Russell
(Edited by Aubrey L. Haines)

Copyright: 1965

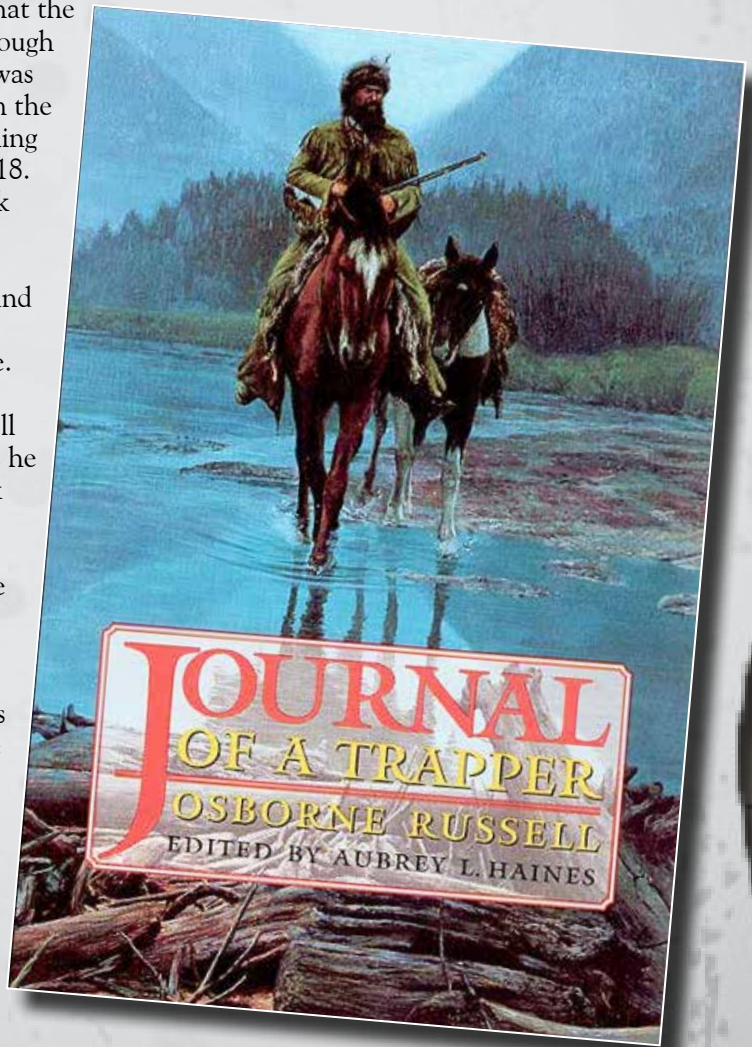
List Price: \$16.95

Journal of a Trapper is a book about exactly what the title says. It is an account of one man's travels through the untamed west from 1834 to 1843. This book was recommended to me by one of the instructors from the American Wilderness Leadership School in Wyoming when my wife and I attended in the summer of 2018. We visited several locations mentioned in the book while at the school.

This journal was originally published in 1914 and marketed as the best account of fur traders in the Rocky Mountains during the boom of the fur trade. This latest version has been paired with multiple maps and several pictures of where Osborne Russell traveled over these nine years. Some of the places he trapped are current day Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park.

Russell's adventures began in St. Louis and the book details his time as a trapper, hunter and all around worker for several fur trader companies. Over the course of this nonfiction novel there are many stories of the abundance of wildlife as well as multiple encounters with Native Americans; some friendly and some almost costing him his life.

If you are interested in the westward expansion of our country, the history of trapping or what it was like to live in the Rocky Mountains over 100 years ago this book might be for you.



This book gets 9 out of 10 bullseyes



TROPHY AWARDS PROGRAM

By Mary Browning, CHAIR

To refresh your memory, trophy awards for our Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI are decided as follows:

Score sheets are collected for a two year period. Before our Hunter's Convention in February, the sheets are categorized by country and species. The top entry for each species receives a gold award, the number two animal receives a silver award and the number three animal receives a bronze award. Animals are also separated by method of take so there could be two gold awards in one category if one animal is taken by rifle and one by bow.

The following awards are voted upon by the Awards Committee.

The continents of North America and Africa receive numbers one, two, and three awards each; the other continents receive one award. The winners are decided by which animal scores closest, numerically, to the top in the International Record Book. To find this score the rank of the entered animal is divided by the total number of ranks in the International Record Book. Also taken in to consideration are terrain taken, choice of weapon and difficulty.

Other Major Awards are for the method used (Crossbow, Muzzleloader, Handgun and Bow). These are determined by the committee based on animal species harvested, difficulty and terrain.

The last categories are Men's Hunter of the Year and Women's Hunter of the Year. This decision is also made by committee based on hunting achievements for the specific period of time, participation in conservation, and ambassador of Safari Club. This award can only be won once in a lifetime.

The period for score sheets this year is: DECEMBER 1, 2018 TO November 30, 2020

**Send your score sheets to me, Mary Browning, 6030 Madeira Drive, Lansing, MI 48917
You may contact me at 517-886-3639, or email at lrc05@att.net**

All entries must be postmarked no later than December 1, 2020.

Please remember to send pictures and to notify me if some score sheets are youth entries.
Children and grandchildren of members under age 17 are eligible for youth awards.

BIG BUCK NIGHT 2020

January 25, 2020



Big Buck Night Award Winners

Overall Biggest Youth Buck - Levi Snyder, 123"
Youth hunt medals were given to every kid

- Biggest in State Rifle – Michael Booth, 153 1/8"
- Biggest in State Bow – Randy Raymond, 137 3/8"
- Biggest Out of State Rifle – Keith Davis, 165"
- Biggest Out of State Bow – no entry
- Biggest Estate Buck – Dawn Manthei, 271 5/8"
- Biggest Youth Estate Buck – no entry
- Biggest In State Muzzleloader – David Bell, 96 6/8"
- Biggest Out of State Muzzleloader – Tim Torpey, 154 5/8"
- Biggest In State Crossbow – Anthony Guisbert
- Biggest Out of State Crossbow – no entry
- Biggest Out of State Mule Deer – Ben Harnish, 156"
- Biggest Overall Woman's Buck – Dawn Manthei, 121 2/8"
- Overall Biggest Buck in the State – Michael Booth, 153 1/8"
- Overall Biggest Buck Out of State – Keith David, 165"
- Biggest Non-Member Deer – Mike Haas, 148 2/8
(free membership)



Youth Hunters



FRONT SIGHT



Winners!



Many Award Winners!



DNR Officer

A very *Special Thanks*

to our measures:

Nick Guiliani, Owen Eldred,
Travis Wood,
Tim Torpey, and Tom Westman

2020 NATIONAL SCI CONVENTION

Reno, Nevada



Evening Entertainment: The Beach Boys and The Charlie Daniels Band

**Saturday Keynote Address -
Donald Trump Jr.**



**Donald Trump Jr. Helps SCI Top Its 48th Annual
Convention With A Record Auction To Benefit Education**

Washington, DC (FEBRUARY 11, 2020) - Safari Club International ended its annual Convention in Reno, Nevada this year on a star-studded high note. Highlighting the evening, with the help of Donald Trump Jr., was a record \$340,000 raised at auction to benefit the SCI Foundation Sables and their efforts to educate the world about the importance of hunting.



Donald Trump Jr.



Aurelia Skipwith

The evening began with opening remarks from SCI/SCIF CEO Laird Hamberlin, then moved on to the awards of the night. Brittany Longoria presented the Cabela's Young Hunter Awards to Kenia Link and Zackary Corr and then the Federal Legislator of the Year Award was presented to Congressman Jeff Duncan of South Carolina's Third District.

Susan Hayes received the Diana Award for her dedication to SCI and its ongoing education and conservation programs. Past President Craig Kauffman received the Hall Of Fame Award in recognition of his years of service to SCI and its ideals.

A welcome surprise in the form of USFWS Director Aurelia Skipwith followed President Steve Skold's address. Ms. Skipwith's speech followed the unofficial theme of the evening, centering on the need to educate the non-hunter or as one member referred to them, the agnostic hunters. She spoke of her grandfather who had introduced her to the world of hunting and fishing and stated he would be proud that she was speaking to such a large group of like-minded individuals.

Keynote speaker Donald Trump Jr. wowed the crowd throughout the evening, generously posing for selfies on the floor before the dinner began and then galvanizing the crowd with his speech. With a mix of humor and seriousness, he spoke of his unlikely beginnings as a "son

of a New York billionaire" to the world of the outdoors in general and hunting in particular.

He revealed that his maternal grandfather took him to Communist Czechoslovakia in summers to teach him the basics of woodcraft and expose him to the harsh realities of other, less fortunate parts of the world. He credits a teacher at his private school for mentoring him in the skills of hunting and sparking the passion he continues to follow, despite his many vocal critics.

The momentum from his speech helped propel the evening's premier auction item, a hunt with Donald Trump Jr. and his son in Alaska for Sitka black-tailed deer, to astronomical levels. Once the bidding started, the price rose dramatically, topping out at \$190,000.

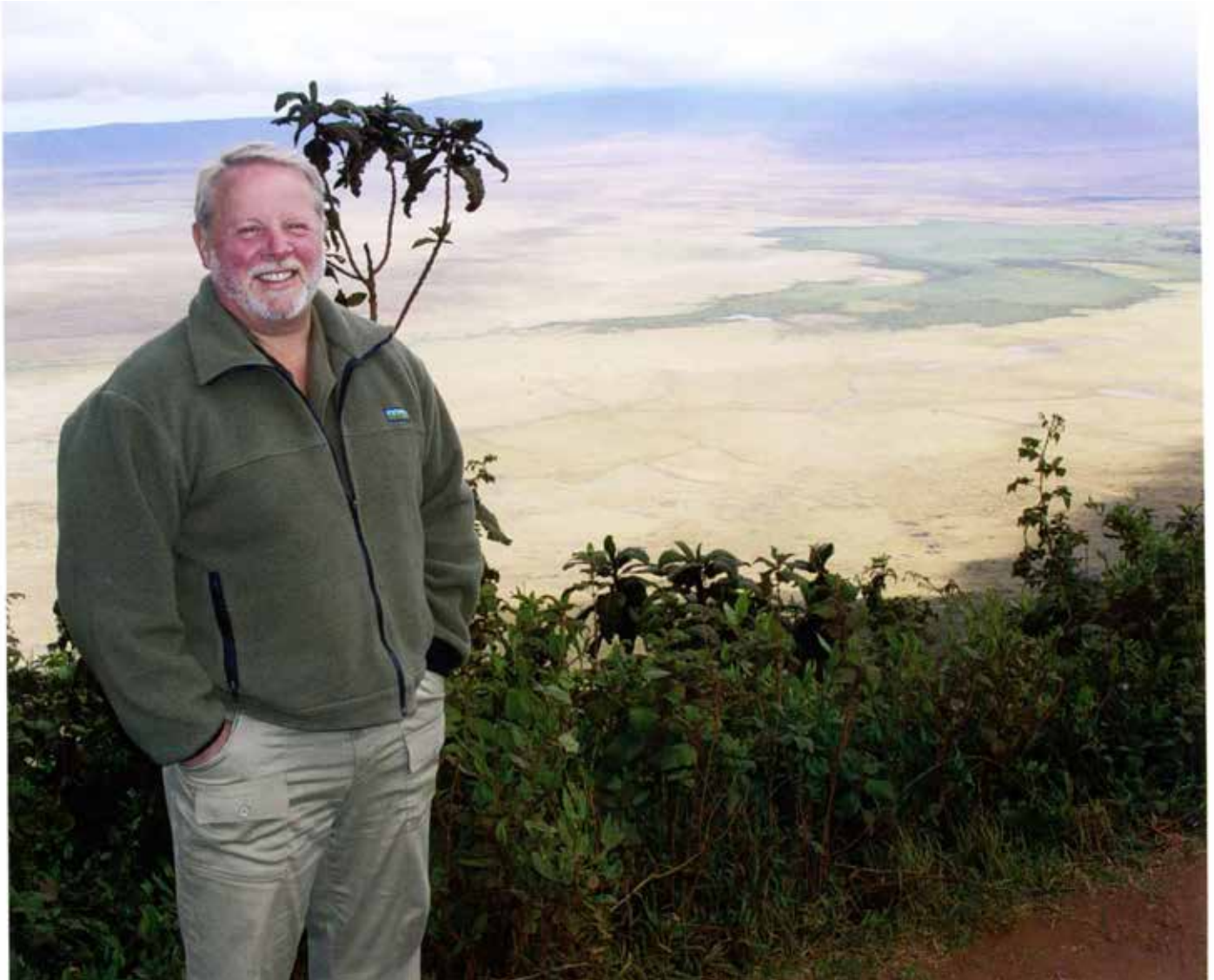
In a surprise move, Mr. Trump announced that the outfitter was offering another slot on the hunt and bidding began again, topping out at \$150,000 and bringing a grand total of \$340,000 for the first auction item alone. Bidding for subsequent auction items was spirited, as well, putting a golden finishing touch to the week's activities.

The SCI Convention will be moving back to Las Vegas Nevada for 2021 and 2022 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Safari Club International and the 50th Anniversary of the SCI Annual Convention respectively.

SCI NATIONAL CONVENTION 2020 AWARD

C.J. McElroy Award given to Larry B. Higgins

Named for SCI's founder and chairman emeritus, the C.J. McElroy Award honors a member of the world's hunting industry who has made great contributions to the sport of hunting, achieved excellence in worldwide hunting, displayed a dedication to the conservation of wildlife, and has a history of service to the global hunting community and to Safari Club International's goals.



Larry B. Higgins

Worldwide hunting has afforded me the opportunity to forge many friendships and contacts at all levels. This was extremely valuable throughout my years of service to SCI/SCIF in various capacities -- to further their missions in the global arena. My dedication to the conservation of wildlife is evidenced by monetary contributions to various organizations for their causes and also by: donating thousands of pounds of venison to local food pantries through Sportsmen Against Hunger, hunt donations to an organization in Minnesota to fund programs for underprivileged children, hunt donation to SCI-PAC, donations to local conservation programs and continued support and participation in local SCI chapters. I have spent 20 years meeting with legislators during our May meetings in Washington, D.C. and many hours with federal wildlife agencies. I also have been involved for several years helping like-minded hunting and conservation organizations to unite and work together to defeat the antis. I am a life member in several of these organizations. My focus is help keep SCI/SCIF in its leadership position for hunting and conservation worldwide.

My passion for hunting has led me over six continents and 60 different countries, states and provinces, many of which I hunted numerous times. While my hunting was never aimed towards winning awards, I have been honored with several major awards: 2017 Wild Sheep Foundation Mountain Hunter Hall of Fame Award, 2010 Conklin Award, 2020 Malek Golden Award, 2011 SCI International Hunter Award and the 2019 SCI Hall of Fame Award.



80-YEAR-OLD HUNTER ARROWS BUCK

by Robert C. Mills ~ Owner Pine Hill Club

Having bow hunted for many seasons, I still enjoy the beauty of nature. Sitting in the out-of-doors and watching the Tamaracks change color from green to golden yellow is a real joy.

My bow stand is near a large cluster of Tamarack trees that ring a cedar swamp next to a water filled cattail marsh. Between the cedar swamp and the cattails is a small ridge dotted with maple, oak, and some small poplar trees, a "super beautiful" setting to enjoy nature.

This beautiful place is located on the Pine Hill Club and is a spot that I have hunted for nearly 50 years. Many memories of past bucks dance through my head as I enjoy watching nature from this stand. Besides deer, I see squirrels, raccoons, turkeys, etc. There is always lots to watch from this natural setting.

On the evening of October 18, 2019, I walked the quarter mile, from my truck, to this serene setting. The time was 5:00 p.m. and I thought I would sit until dark and enjoy the sunset and fading daylight that only an evening hunt provides.

With the technology today, I settled in the blind, readied my trusty cross-bow and poured a cup of hot coffee. I really did not plan to shoot a buck, but fate did not agree with my plan. Texting my wife to see what mail had arrived and to check in on her busy day, suddenly I spotted a deer moving in the tall grass behind my blind. Thinking it probably was a doe, I finished the text and picked up my binoculars to check out the movement.

As hunting goes, I could not spot the deer, but knew it had not escaped my view and must be in the tall grass and hidden from my view. Being patient, I waited for another movement. Finally, I saw the deer and "locked on" to where it was located. Following a ten-minute wait, the deer emerged from the tall grass. When I saw the racked

buck come out, I knew immediately he was a shooter. He was coming toward my blind, but behind me, resulting in me having to turn around 180 degrees. The position of the buck also required me to move my cross-bow completely around, from front to back.

The buck stopped several times and looked directly at me. I was motionless as I looked out of the back window. He stood for several minutes, then proceeded to walk parallel to my blind. When he would look the other way, I quietly and slowly moved my cross-bow into a shooting position.

Having practiced with this Ten Point Cross-bow, I knew it was very accurate and would "HIT" where I aimed. Buck fever always is present, even after over sixty years of hunting white-tail deer.

I kept telling myself, be calm and take a steady aim. Finally, the buck stopped at about 38 yards and presented a standing broadside shot. I took a deep breath, anchored the cross-hairs on the buck's chest and pulled the trigger.

Immediately the bolt connected and the large buck dropped in his tracks. Must have hit his spine. I got out of the blind and walked to where he had dropped. My arrow was a direct hit and he never moved from where he was standing.

I thanked God for another great deer and quietly celebrated another victory. This is the third buck I have harvested from this blind in the past six years. Two of the three dropped in their tracks and the third buck only ran a short distance. All three were very easy to find.

Of the many bucks that I have harvested over my 66 years of hunting, the last one always seems most special. This buck had four points on the left side and three on the right – a wide racked seven pointer.

This buck appeared at 6:10 p.m. and



I was field dressing him by 6:30 p.m. Using my cell phone to call another member of our camp to come and help drag him out, I returned to my blind, poured another cup of coffee and thanked God for another successful hunt at age 80.

God willing, I will continue to hunt deer at our private camp and hope to pole many more bucks in the coming years.

My friend arrived and we loaded the buck in my truck and drove back to camp and hung the deer on the buck pole.

When the other bow hunters got back to camp, they asked, 'Who shot the deer?' I smiled and said, "Even a blind dog finds a bone sometimes." I am still savoring the October 18th evening hunt and can't wait until the Tamaracks change color to start another bow season.

I wish all deer hunters could harvest a nice buck at age 80. It can happen if you are patient, lucky, and shoot straight.

GOOD LUCK HUNTING AND HAVE A GREAT HUNTING SEASON.

Bird Hunting at Meemo's Farm

by Mary Harter

In late October, we joined Joe and Debbie Pederson, at Meemo's Farm near Evert for a bird hunt. Joe had been here before and asked for a donation to auction for the Michigan SCI Chapter. Don bought it at their fundraiser last year.

The first afternoon, we went out on a pheasant hunt guided by Dan Vining. Debbie and I just went along as observers and had a great time. It was a beautiful day to walk among the grain sorghum and watch the dogs work. First, they used Joe's springer spaniel, Sunny, and put up several birds. Sunny is a flusher and it was interesting to watch him work the fields. Next, they used Sander, a German shorthair right from Germany, the Deutsch Kuzhaar line, owned by our guide, and he is a pointer. He found several birds and it was exciting to watch Dan go in to flush the birds. After about three hours, Don and Joe had shot ten birds totally which were cleaned and ready for us to take home with us the next morning.





We stayed in “The Lanes” cabin which had a bowling alley in the lower level, a hot tub on a huge balcony located on a pond lit with several spotlights at night, and a fire pit, surrounded with beautiful Michigan wilderness. The décor was tastefully done to blend in with the log cabin style. That evening we were served a delicious gourmet meal, right in the cabin where we were staying.

The next morning, Joe prepared a delicious sausage and eggs breakfast and then Don and Joe, hunted partridge and woodcock with Dan and Sander. It was another beautiful day to hunt the 1,500 acres in the rolling hill of oaks, pines, wild cherry, aspen, and birch.



Debbie and I visited the main lodge talking with the manager, Mark, who had many exciting stories to tell.

This preserve is the perfect place for a luxury retreat for a couple, several couples, or even corporate event. There are several private cabins as well as rooms at the main lodge. There are several meeting rooms for corporate business as well.

You may visit their website at: www.meemosfarm.com or call Mark with any questions, 313-573-3996.



Hunting in New Zealand's Southern Alps

by Dan Catlin

Hunting is what we love; but hunting with friends makes it that much better! Charlotte and I were fortunate enough to host a hunt with Venator Cardrona Safaris in New Zealand. Duncan Fraser, owner of Venator, has become a lifelong friend... Charlotte and I consider him one of our family. That made our choice of destinations in New Zealand very easy. Joining Charlotte and I on this adventure were Ron and Mary Browning (Michigan) along with Guy and Sue Gorney (Illinois). Another exciting aspect was the fact that the hunt was conducted from Venator's new luxury lodge on the South Island near Wanaka. Let's just say we were NOT roughing it at all!

Charlotte and I had been to hunt with Duncan on four other occasions. We have been blessed with collecting the Red

Stag with rifle, and I had also previously collected a beautiful Red Stag with a bow. Charlotte was going to challenge herself with a bow on this trip and as always, we were not disappointed with the adventure and challenge of hunting in New Zealand's Southern Alps.

After the long journey to New Zealand we were met with a beautiful suite to live in for the week while in camp. That bed was a welcomed sight. From there we started our days early in the mountain tops and finished off the days late in the bottoms of canyons and creek beds. The views in New Zealand NEVER get old. It is one of the most beautiful places on earth. On day two during one of our descents toward a bedded Reg Stag, our plans were slightly altered when Charlotte lost her footing and literally did a 360-degree

flip down the mountain and miraculously landed on her feet! She stuck the landing like a gymnast jumping off the balance beam; but her bow was strapped to the back of her pack absorbing much of the fall. A quick look at the bow didn't reveal any real problems, so we continued on. However, like many stalks with a bow, it didn't work out. The Stag scampered off without a shot opportunity. At this point we went back to camp and Charlotte thought she should shoot the bow just to make sure... GOOD IDEA! The arrow completely missed the target and upon further investigation the Trijicon sight was bent and the range-adjustment capability was in-operable. Well without a sporting goods store or other equipment options, we were able to permanently secure the sight without range adjustment and re-sight the bow for 30 yards. From there





Charlotte would have to do a "hold over" for longer range shots. Basically, back to the old days of one fixed pin sight. That's how it goes hunting in the back country with a bow.

The next morning our guide, Brett Collins, spotted a Stag bedded in a perfect location for a stalk. Only problem is we were at the bottom of the mountain and the Stag was 3/4 of the way to the top. Brett convinced Charlotte that if we climbed slow and steady, at her pace, we could be above the Stag within a couple hours and this Stag was attainable. We all followed Brett's lead and it's a good thing we did! As we made our way above the Stag and peeked over, he was still in a good position but now standing up and feeding. Brett took Charlotte in on a final approach where the Stag presented a quick shot opportunity as they crested the top. Charlotte's first arrow was a little far back from being perfect but they were able to do a second approach on the wounded Stag for Charlotte to get a perfectly placed follow-up shot. What a great accomplishment to take one of these majestic animals with a bow.

During the time Charlotte and I were hunting Stag, our friends were also hunting Stag, Tahr and Chamois. The days were filled with adventure and our evenings with great food, fellowship and drinks. What a great hunt with amazing friends! Thank you, Venator Cardrona Safaris, for THE EXPERIENCE! And thank you Ron & Mary Browning, and Guy & Sue Gorney for the great memories.

Goats at 55?

If Anyone Else Can Do It.... You Can Do It Too!

by Bob Blazer

I've been blessed to have been on many quality hunts over the past several years. Even so, it's easy to compare to others who have the means to hunt far more than I and fall into the jealous trap of feeling that I have not done enough. Often, hunts have become too expensive for a middle-class family to afford, and yet I've been on my fair share. So, if my days in the outdoors came to an end today, I couldn't rightfully complain.

Many passionate hunters struggle to explain their unquenchable desire to pursue game and spend the time and money it takes to be successful and satisfied in the field. Although my wife doesn't always agree with my "addiction", I am very fortunate that she has always been a great supporter and the reason I have had so many amazing hunting experiences. Her support was highlighted at the 2018 Mid-Michigan SCI Annual Banquet. At the age of 53, I had really begun thinking about the possibility of a goat or sheep hunt. Cost had always been a factor that kept me from pursuing such a lifetime hunt, but something else had now caused me to question if I would ever chase such a magnificent trophy...MY AGE!

I have always been athletic and have stayed in good shape because of hunting. But I have read enough articles written by hunters near the age of 50 to know that sheep and goat hunts are better suited for the younger outdoorsmen. Still, I knew I could do it if I just had the support of my wife. So, as the 2018 Mid-Michigan SCI banquet auction rolled around with a goat hunt on the agenda, I began to imagine

what a hunt like that would mean to me. The problem was that I couldn't bring myself to talk it over with her before the banquet. All I said was "Someday, I really want to do a goat hunt before I get too old".

The Mid-Michigan Chapter banquet began as usual with a stroll around the auditorium to check out the many outfitters and decide which silent auction items may require a closer look later in the evening. Dinner is always amazing and provides a relaxing time to catch up with some good hunting buddies. I was enjoying the conversations with friends and began to let the idea of a goat hunt slip away. I pay close attention to the auction items but had gotten so entertained by the sharing of stories that I lost track of what item was on the block. Quietly, Tammy leaned toward me and whispered "Hey hun, isn't this the hunt you were interested in?" Oh my! My hand flew into the air, almost involuntarily, as I had just received her "permission" to bid on this hunt. In an instant, I won the final bid with one raise of my hand. I couldn't believe it! I am rarely speechless, but literally could not think of what to say.

The hunt was scheduled for September of 2019, so I had a year and a half to prepare for this incredible opportunity. I'm not a fan of booking a hunt so far in advance, but I immediately began looking forward to meeting up with my outfitter at the banquet the following

year in order to solidify my plans and hear about his successes that hunting season. As the 2019 banquet approached, I had not yet spoken with my British Columbia goat outfitter. I entered the convention center on Friday night in anticipation of meeting up with him. I recognized his brother as walked in and quickly made my way over to express my enthusiasm about my upcoming trip. My first comment was "I'm so excited about hunting with [your brother] this fall!" He paused for just a moment (long enough for me to sense that something unpleasant was about to be disclosed) and said "I don't think so. He sold his outfit recently and is no longer in business".

Two things immediately came to mind. "This can't be. I've waited so long for this trip!" and "My trip is completely paid for. I'm going to lose a lot of money on this deal". My heart sank in disbelief, but I would not let the panic of the situation take over and cause me to react in a way that I wouldn't be proud of.

I had come to know several of the SCI Mid-Michigan board members and have grown to respect and appreciate



their efforts within the organization. My first plan had to be to inform them. Well, by the time I attempted to reach out to them, the word about my hunt had made its way around the event and they were already trying to find me. Inside, I was a nervous wreck about the thought of losing my hunt or having to make new connections for a goat hunt that may take another year or two to arrange. However, my concerns were quickly put to rest by the SCI board when I was assured that they would do whatever it took to ensure I was able to hunt goats in the fall as planned. In fact, by the end of the evening, they had made arrangements for me to hunt with one of the most accomplished outfitters in North America if I was unable to make satisfactory plans to hunt with the outfitter that had purchased the hunting rights to the territory I was to hunt.

Honestly, I had dreamed of hunting with this Alaskan legend, but always felt that he was “out of my league”. Knowing that I could have the opportunity to hunt with him was a dream come true. Part of me hoped that nothing would be worked out with the new Canadian

outfitter. But there was something deep inside of me that kept saying “give the new guys a chance”. My career is in economic development, and it’s in my nature to help the “new guy” out. So, I decided to attempt working with BC WildCountry once the funds from my original booking were returned.

Things quickly fell into place with Matt and Ryan who are the new owners of the British Columbia outfit. Their previous experience as guides was obvious and their dedication to make my experience a trip of a lifetime was evident. Within 7 months, I would be on my way to the biggest hunt of my life with two guys without a proven goat record. It turns out that I am so glad it all worked out that way!

A shoulder surgery in March, just six months before my scheduled hunt, had me questioning my ability to get into shape for a hunt that takes the physical ability of a younger person in his/her prime. I often expressed my concern to my wife only to hear “If anyone else can do it...you can do it, too!” Walking, tread-climbing, jogging, lifting, biking and hiking became my daily objective. Hunting in the western states on many occasions taught me that there is no replacement for climbing steep inclines at high altitudes. But I live in very flat country and would have to make the most of the training conditions I have. Each day, I would work hard to condition my tired body. And each day, as I sweat it

out, lost weight, and began feeling better about my abilities, this thought came to mind: “Are you mental?” It may have been a subconscious questioning of my sanity, but I wanted to know that I was mentally prepared for such a trip. The answer to myself was always “Not yet, but I’ll get there”. As much as I worked my body, I had to work my mind. I needed to know I could endure pain, rain, bugs, tiredness, fear, doubt, danger, and the many other things that can cause one’s mind to ruin a hunt.

For some time, it felt as though my hunt would never come. It’s almost as if time stood still for months. Then, at about a month out, the feeling of needing more time to prepare set in. How did the time come already? I had to trust that my months of preparation would be enough! Ready or not, the big day arrived.

As I stepped off the plane in the small town of Smithers, I was greeted by the incredible mountains the region is known for. My heart skipped a few beats knowing that the goat I hoped to harvest would be at the top of a similar mountain. I knew it would take all I had to give in order to hunt such terrain. I had to trust myself and had to place my faith in the ones I would spend the next week in the remote mountains of northwest BC. Flying over the unforgiving mountain



range I would hunt for the coming week left me speechless. We saw very few goats over the hour spent in the air and the realization that this was going to be a difficult hunt set in. We landed on a very small lake just big enough to get us into our hunting territory. There was no chance to fly out with any weight on board, so we knew a full days hike was in store to get to a lake below tree line that was just big enough to allow us a relatively safe flight out. But that hike would have to wait for several days depending upon the success we had over the week.

My outfitter, Matt, his helper, Keith and I began setting up camp along a beautiful river that swiftly flowed from our lake. The area is known for holding many grizzly bears and Matt had a couple of dangerous encounters with them over the summer in nearby ranges. As we admired the beauty of the water, mountains and dozens of small glaciers visible from camp, we remained cautious and on guard in the event a bruin had the idea of checking us out.

Once camp was set, I drew a deep breath and acknowledged my insignificance in such a giant land. A mandatory wait following a flight left me with nothing to do but admire the unending beauty that had been carved through the landscape for my enjoyment. With no plans to hunt that day, the three of us gathered sticks for a fire that evening. Matt has guided for years and learned that there is

always time to do some glassing while completing camp chores. I'm not sure his binoculars even made it to his eyes before proclaiming "There's a goat!" From a mile away, we could see it was a decent billy, but not likely one we wanted to pursue. Rather than stay at camp for the remainder of the day, we decided to stretch our legs and give me the chance to acclimate to my new



surroundings by taking a short climb to take a better look at the goat. I thought my training had me prepared for the hike I saw before me, but it wasn't long, and my legs began to burn. Maybe more time spent in cardio training would have benefited me.

Nonetheless, I would press on. Matt is great at reading his client to know how hard to push. We had traveled further than anticipated and had to take regular breaks for me to catch my breath. By now, we had waited the mandatory no-hunt period and could chose to harvest an animal if the right opportunity was presented. Still, we had no intent to take this billy even if we could get within shooting distance. Having fed

over the back of the mountain we faced, the goat made it easy for us to decide to shed our packs, relax and savor the contentment of just seeing a legal animal on the first day.

Keith decided to put some time in behind the spotting scope while we took a break to refresh on some pure glacier stream water. Hydration is critical in high altitudes, especially during times of physical exertion. I promised myself to stay hydrated on this trip in hopes of maximizing my climbing abilities. Distance and the ruggedness of the terrain are so deceiving in huge mountain country, so I wrongly assumed that I could see any goat on our mountain with my naked eye. Through his scope, Keith caught a glimpse of another feeding goat that quickly made its way over the back of the peak we had been glassing. Matt quickly got a look at him and thought it may be worth another look. Again, we had no intentions of taking an animal on the first day, but Matt hesitantly asked if I thought I could make it up and over the top of this range before nightfall. "Of course, I can. It may just take me a few breaks before we get there" was my overly-confident reply. Every step is calculated in steep shale country that is riddled with sharp rocks, slippery weeds and challenging creek crossings. It's absolutely draining on your body, but if anyone else can do it, I was determined to do it and make my new friends proud.

I was relieved and proud to have reached the summit. The view was amazing and opened what appeared to be a whole new world. But where were the billy goats we had seen an hour earlier? In the far distance, I spotted a family of goats that had a couple of juvenile males. Surely not the ones we were looking for. Matt made his way to a vantage point that exposed a pocket that wrapped around the back of the mountain. He motioned for Keith and me to crawl his way while signaling he had three goats at 350 yards. All



three were mature billys which had us considering whether to attempt a shot. Matt figured all three had nearly eight inch horns and the bodies were large. Maybe the horns were longer, but this was our first day and Matt suggested we “put these in our back pockets” and hunt a new ridge the next day. I agreed by saying “I’m very guidable. I’m good with that if that’s what you feel is best. I don’t hunt for record-book animals, so you make the call.” Darkness would come in an hour. We could spend the next two hours getting back to camp in time for a good night sleep before a strenuous day ahead of us. But something resonated within Matt’s thoughts. Severe upcoming weather or an injury could change our plans in a hurry. Maybe he doubted if this 55-year-old would last for the next few days. He glassed the bedded goats one last time and whispered “I think the one on the left is the best one. He’s got good length and a little more mass. If you want to, let’s take a shot.” On que, the billys stood to begin feeding.

Matt laid his pack on the rugged rocks to rest my 300 Remington Ultra Mag custom loaded with ammo tipped by a 200 grain Nosler Accubond bullet. “338 yards” he whispered. I’ve taught Hunter Safety in Michigan for over 15 years now and imagined telling my students “Take a deep breath. Exhale half of it slowly. Slow, steady squeeze.” The recoil of the shot took the goat out of the field of view in my scope. Matt confirmed the hit but immediately requested a follow-up shot. A little panic set in as I cautiously waited to make absolutely sure that I



got back on the right animal. There he was! He had not moved a foot but was now facing the opposite direction. This time, the shot was less calculated, but was very steady and right on target. The goat toppled on impact.

Matt was first to arrive at my trophy, well ahead of me. Keith and I videotaped our hike which allowed me to catch my breath a couple of times before we caught up to Matt. I knew I would be thrilled with whatever laid before me. When Keith noticed Matt’s reaction and commented “Matt looks really happy with your goat!” I became even more excited. When I got there, Matt greeted me with a high-five, a big man-hug and a statement of affirmation that made my day. He said, “Good on ya’ Bob! Most 40-year-olds won’t attempt this hunt. You did awesome and just took a real trophy!”

An hour of skinning and two hours of packing back to camp got us in at 1 o’clock in the morning. I was totally drained. Despite the risk of grizzly encounters, I slept like a rock the entire night. The next few days were spent boning out the goat, salting the hide

and hiking for parts of two days to get to a lake where our float plane would meet us. I had come to push my physical limits and draw from what youthfulness I have left. I endured freezing rain and sideways winds. I watched as a fox made off with a large portion of my goat meat. Wolf tracks inside grizzly tracks reminded me that danger lurked right around every corner.

In one of our camps, I cautiously watched a grizzly feed in the valley just below our tents as another large boar fed only 300 yards from us in the opposite direction. I thought back to the comforts of home and the many miles I spent preparing for this trip. As I sat on the gravel shore waiting for the float plane to arrive and take us out, I remember asking myself “Are you mental?” It could have been a question of my sanity, but at this time, I had to answer “Yes. Yes, I am!” I had become more mentally prepared for the discomforts of a hunt than I had been since my mid-30’s. I reminded myself once more that “If anyone else could do it, I could do it, too.”

I praise God for the beauty of this amazing hunt. I thank my wife for her support of my spending the time and money it took for a hunt of this magnitude. I’m grateful to the Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI for their commitment to the sport of hunting and for their assistance that made my hunt possible. Finally, I want to express my deepest gratitude to Matt, Keith and the BC WildCountry team for their total dedication to making this dream hunt an incredible experience.



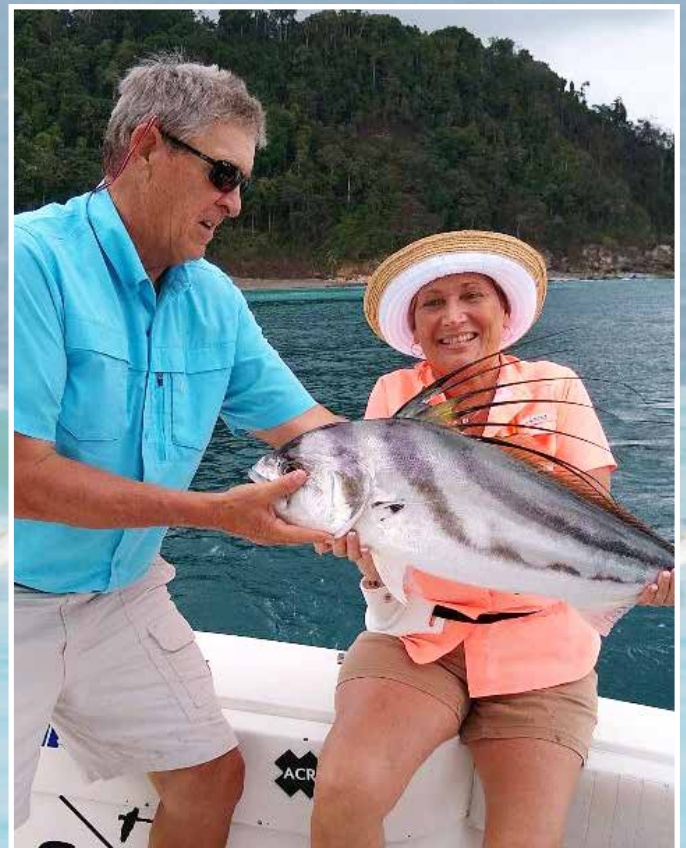


Last Minute Trophy

by Roger Card

About a year ago my wife Margo, my brother Jack and his wife Kimberly decided to book a trip to Costa Rica for fishing. Jack and Kim have always wanted hard fishing Rooster Fish and Margo wanted some kind of Sail Fish. I had already taken these trophies and they are on display at the Card Wildlife Education Center at Ferris State University, so I was to be their mate in the boat.

Crocodile Bay had an advertisement in Safari Magazine with a lot of details. We picked the last week in January 2020 as our trip date. Jack and Kim flew from Tampa, Florida and Margo and I from Puerto Vallarta, Mexico our winter homes, to San Jose, Costa Rica. We were met at the airport and taken to our overnight hotel The DoubleTree by Hilton for a stay prior to the local Sansa Airline 50 minute flight to Puerto Jimenez



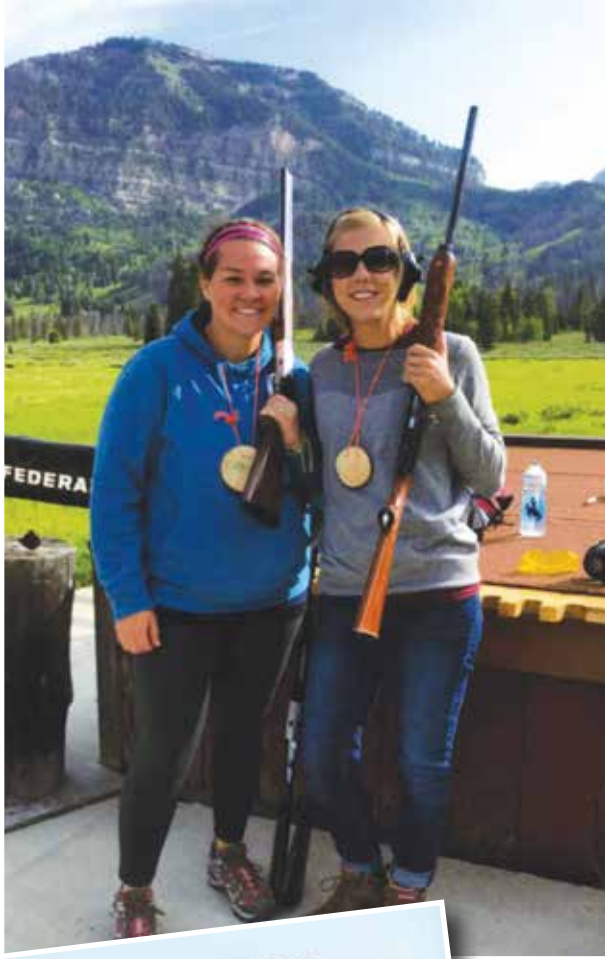
on the OSA Peninsula, where the rainforest meets the sea.

Again the agents from Crocodile Bay met us at the hotel took us to the Sansa Airlines gate for boarding and again our landing on the peninsula, for a 10 minute drive to the lodge. This place was amazing, rooms, meals from a full menu every day; maids, staff, boat captain and first mate, spa people and Eco tour guides were all friendly and fantastic!

The trip consisted of three full days of fishing, from 6:30 am to 4:00 pm each day. We had our choice of in shore or off shore trolling. In shore is in the huge OSA Bay approximately 10 miles wide and 40 miles long. The off shore was in the Pacific Ocean. The 33' boats with lots of rods, tackle and a big Yeti Cooler full of our beers, water and food for our enjoyment was great.

We would troll for hours hoping our fish of choice would bite, Jack and Kim both caught their Rooster fish, and Margo missed five more because they lost the bait. The second day was a downpour, a real rain forest drenching very unusual this time of year, we decided to stay at the resort, bar hopping and eating. The third day we went off shore for the big fish. It was a stormy day and the fish were not biting very much, we missed a couple. I asked Margo if she wanted to call it a day with 30 minutes before quitting time? She said I am not stopping until the time is up. What a good call - with less than 5 minutes left a great Sail Fish exploded from the deepest of the sea with her bait in its mouth. What a sight! She fought that monster for a long time and finally brought it to the boat for pictures; the new laws do not allow to board the fish on the boat, only take photos alongside the boat with the fish still in the sea. What a great accomplishment to conclude our Safari! We enjoyed a wonderful Eco Tour, the last day with lots of monkeys, beautiful birds and flowers, lots of pictures were taken. We would definitely recommend this trip!



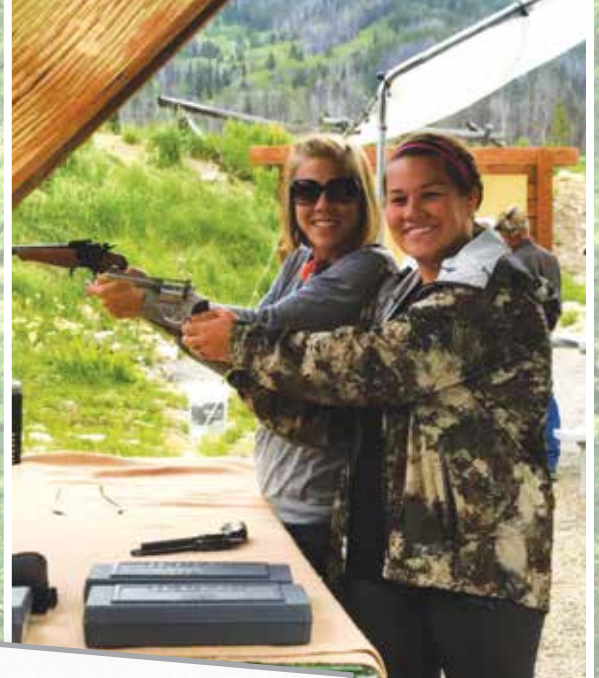
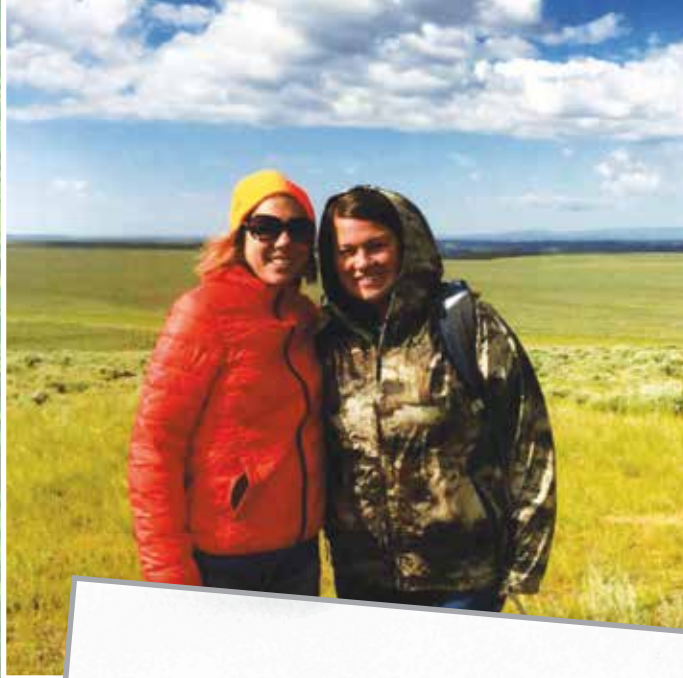


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Dear Mid-Michigan SCI Chapter,

We would like to send deep gratitude to your chapter for the amazing opportunity to attend the America Wilderness Leadership School. This program was extremely valuable to us as educators and also as individuals. We gained an in-depth knowledge not only of conservation but ecology, geology, and outdoorsmanship. We feel that we now have a great responsibility to educate our students at school and children at home about these concepts and how they can take action to support and participate in the outdoors. The program came with many resources and experiences that will support our efforts going forward, including curriculum materials and human resources that will grow connections for years to come; we also came home as certified archery instructors. The staff was amazing and the program is very well planned. With a very sincere thank you for our opportunity, we encourage you to continue to sponsor educators on this once in a lifetime experience as we believe it will truly impact conservation efforts of the future. Some highlights from our trip include...

- Presentation from Harlan Kredit- Educator for 50 years and Yellow Stone Park Ranger for 40 years.
- Trip to the Green River Valley Basin and presentation from local Pinedale Wildlife Biologist, Dean Clause.
- Learning to tie flies from world renowned fly fisherman, Jay Buchner
- Staff member Gary Gearhart (Alaska SCI Chapter director) and the knowledge and experiences he shared throughout the week.
- Whitewater rafting trip on the Snake River
- On a fun note, Katrina won the rifle shooting competition and Sarah won a golden clay pigeon for her efforts on the skeet shooting range.

Again, we cannot thank you enough for your generosity in sponsoring us.

Sincerely,

Katrina Spry & Sarah Westervelt

K. Spry

Sarah Westervelt





GRAND SLAM

by Tim Torpey

The road to my Grand Slam was not as easy as many that you may read about in these pages. My first ram toward the slam was a Dall Sheep taken in Alaska with Mike Colpo. This ram was collected on day seven of a fourteen-day hunt. I thought, "Well, that was easy".

Next up was the Stone Sheep that took three hunts totaling 46 days before connecting on a beautiful ram with Gundahoo River Outfitters and guide, A.J. Wamsteeker. My thoughts now were, "Maybe this was not so easy after all".

Next was the Desert Sheep in Sonora, Mexico. The outfitter that I used for this hunt had a late season leftover tag, so I booked it. Upon arriving in Mexico, it was clear to me that the outfitter was not truthful about very many things. After five days hunting, I was able to collect a representative ram. The experience that I had on this hunt made me lose the desire to finish the Grand Slam.

A year or so later I started thinking more about trying to hunt the Bighorn Sheep and finish the slam. At the time, I did not know that this would start the longest and hardest collection of any animal I have hunted.

The 2016 season started and I was in British Columbia hunting with Riley Leuenberger of Baldy Mountain Outfitters. We spent 14 days covering every foot of their area to never see a legal ram. Several sheep were seen but not the right one. In 2018, I headed to Alberta to hunt with Scott Carter. The weather was terrible and the sheep sighting was not much better. This was more a game of survival than a hunt. Another 15 days go by with no sheep.

In 2019, I headed back to Alberta, this time with Scalp Creek Outfitters. My guide would be the owner, Rob Erickson. We saw rams about every day but finding the right one was the challenge.

Midway through the hunt, Rob found what we



were looking for in a group of 14 rams, one that was legal. They were 685 yards away so we waited for them to get up. The only legal ram moved to 384 yards into a perfect place for a shot. I moved forward to get into position for a prone shot and as I was closing the bolt on my rifle, it fired! The sheep were off and running and within seconds they were 1,000 yards away. All the days of hard hunting, all the dollars spent, and all the hours working out to be in sheep shape came down to that moment, and I messed it up! I have never felt so low; it was like I was in a bad dream.



Sheep again. In a few days the weather was getting a little better with some blue sky and sun.

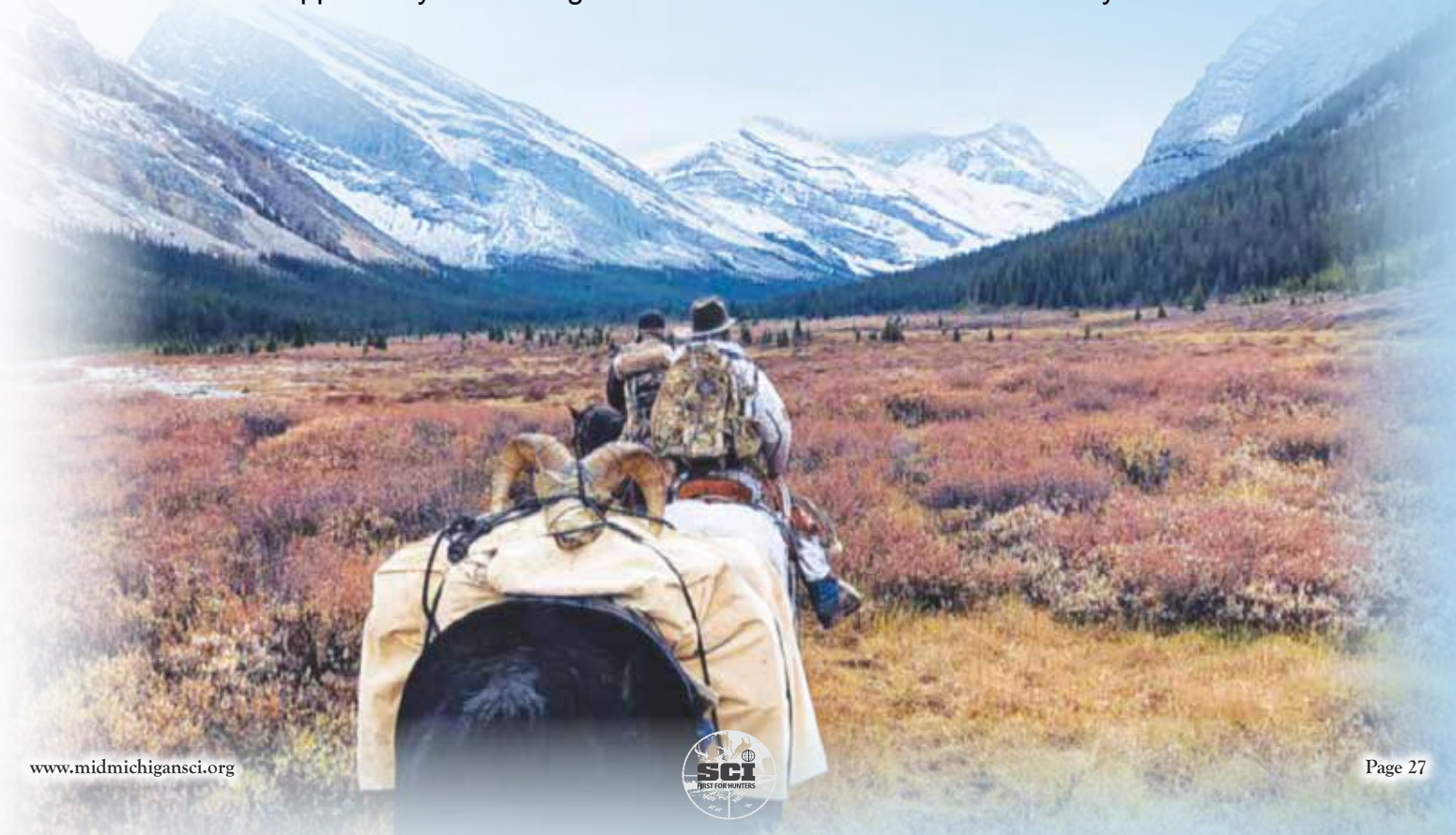
Hunting with Rob, we found a group of rams that were too far away to see detail and with light fading Rob suggested that we ride the horse right up to them and it worked! Two small rams got up and moved off but the main group of eleven never saw us. We closed the distance to 500 yards where Rob got the spotting scope out to get a good look. This time I made sure that everything was right with my gun. After a bit of looking, Rob gave me the go ahead on the only legal ram

After the hunt, Rob offered me a chance to come back for the last two weeks of the season. I went home for a week and got over my previous mess up and got ready to go back and give it another try.

in the bunch. At 6:00 p.m. my dream of a Grand Slam became a reality.

When I arrived in Alberta, I was greeted by snow and cold temperatures. It was good to be back and have another opportunity to hunt Bighorn

I know that this is not the oldest or highest scoring trophy in these pages, but he is to me. The things that come the hardest we appreciate the most. Special thanks to everyone who has made this Grand Slam dream a reality.



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