

FRONT SIGHT



Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

July-Sept 2021, Issue 55



Janis Ransom with her mountain goat taken on a recent hunt to Alaska.

AWARDED CHAPTER OF THE YEAR – 200+ membership category

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Standing Committees

Chairmen are listed first

- Chapter Record Book - Autumn Gonda
- Conservation/Govt. Affairs - Autumn Gonda
- Dispute Resolution - Abbe Mulders, Joe Mulders, Jon Zieman
- Matching Grants - Jon Zieman
- Front Sight Publication/Advertising - Josh Christensen, Mary Harter
- Education - Doug Chapin
- Membership - Janis Ransom
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- Programs for Membership Meetings - Doug Chapin
- Big Buck Night - Mike Strobe, Scott Holmes
- Annual Awards Banquet/Fundraiser - Abbe and Joe Mulders,
and all board members
- Outfitter Donations - Roger Froling, Mike Strobe, Scott Holmes,
Joe Mulders, Dan Catlin, Doug Chapin
- Raffles - Doug Chapin
- Public Relations and Marketing - Kevin Chamberlain
- Shooting Sports - Brandon Jurries
- Humanitarian Services - Mike Strobe
- Sportsman Against Hunger - Mike Strobe
- Pathfinder Hunts - Brandon Jurries
- Youth - Disabled Veterans - Blue Bags, etc.



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

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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. In order to receive the lock combination you will need to contact Lance Norris at either (989) 621-2794 or ruter11b@cmich.edu to take a safety training/orientation to familiarize yourself with the club. When visiting the Sportsman's Club please carry membership identification on you.



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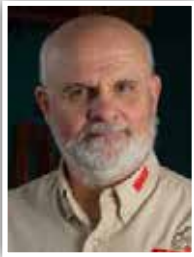


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President's Message


Our Chapter Annual Convention went well on Friday, April 30th and Saturday, May 1st, 2021 at Soaring Eagle. The new format was enthusiastically received. The members and outfitters appreciation on Friday was a big hit! Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. It will be even better next year. I have received multiple positive comments on the food quality and use of a time window instead of a sit-down buffet dinner. A nice menu of walk around food likely will be part of the next Convention Saturday event along with plenty of sit-down tables. Check out the Sportsmen Against Hunger story in this issue for where some of the money we raised is used.

I attended the SCI virtual Board Meeting on May 8th. Both SCI and SCIF have streamlined operations and are continuing to implement their missions. SCI is working on membership recruitment and retention in these challenging times. The lock down situation has affected many other organizations that rely on large conventions. However, SCI's financial situation is stable due to the convention cancellation insurance. The initial insurance payment has been received. Social Media engagement and reach are growing with influence increasing. A Chapter upload interface module is being deployed to allow each Chapter to input their membership information to SCI. This streamlines the process by removing the intermediate manual steps and should reduce errors. Additionally, corrections should be easily and rapidly done. Joe Pedersen from Michigan Chapter was named a SCI Presidential Award winner for 2021. Joe, who many of us know from his being active in our Chapter as well, is now the new SCI Region 19 Representative.

The 50th SCI Annual Convention is scheduled in Las Vegas for January 19th to 22nd, 2022. It will be very interesting and exciting. This would be the Annual Convention to not miss! It will be moving to Nashville for the next three years after that. This will make it much more convenient for travel.

Please schedule in the Membership Meetings coming up in June, August, and September. Highlight and plan to attend the Golf Outing in August as well.

Keep those stories and recipes rolling into the Front Sight. Please let us know your suggestions for improvements and activities for the Chapter. Make sure to get those tag and point applications into the various states. Firm up those fall hunts plans.


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

Editor's Message

I hope everyone who participated in turkey hunting this year had a successful season. My season was one for the ages. I started off by traveling to Oklahoma and successfully hunted two Rio Grande turkeys (you will be able to read about my experience in the next issue of our Front Sight magazine). Although hunting Rio's in Oklahoma was very memorable it was not my best turkey memory from this season. That would have to go to my experience with my 9-year-old son as he was able to bag his first turkey. You can read all about it in his story in this issue.

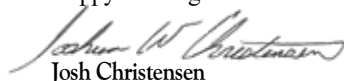


Two happy hunters after my younger son Ivan connected on his first turkey.

You will also notice pictures and information about our annual fundraiser. Although we didn't hold the event in February, like we normally do, we had a good turnout. Not only was our outfitter/member celebration a big hit, but overall our auction and raffles provided us with one of our most profitable years over the past ten years. Look at page seven to see where some of the money we made will go to benefit others. We are already planning for next year's fundraiser on February 25th and 26th so mark your calendars.

We are always looking for articles to publish in our magazine. There are many different ways to tell us about your adventure. In the past few issues we've had pictorial essays and in this issue we have a great story told through journal entries (which many of us do on our hunting trips). We all take pleasure in going on hunts, but there's nothing like sharing your stories in print for all to enjoy. Please consider sharing with us.

Happy Hunting!

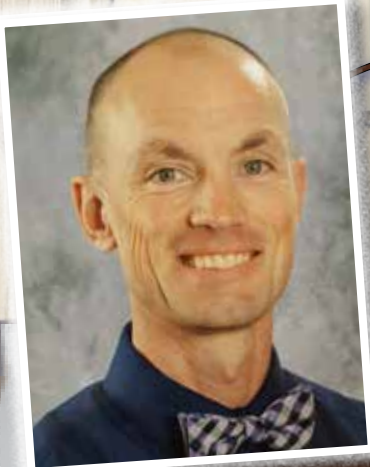

 Josh Christensen
 Co-Editor
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SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Meeting Type	Time	Location
July 12, 2021	Board Meeting	5:00pm	Harter's
Aug 2, 2021	Board/Membership Meeting	4:30/6:00/6:45	Comfort Inn
Aug 10, 2021	Golf Outing	7:30am Registration 9:00am Tee off	Mt. Pleasant Country Club
Sept 13, 2021	Board/Membership Meeting	4:30/6:00/6:45	Comfort Inn
Sept 24-27, 2021	Tails-A-Waggin' Veterans Hunt	8:00am	Tails-A-Waggin'

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



Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: ADVENTURES IN RUGGED PLACES

Copyright: 2016

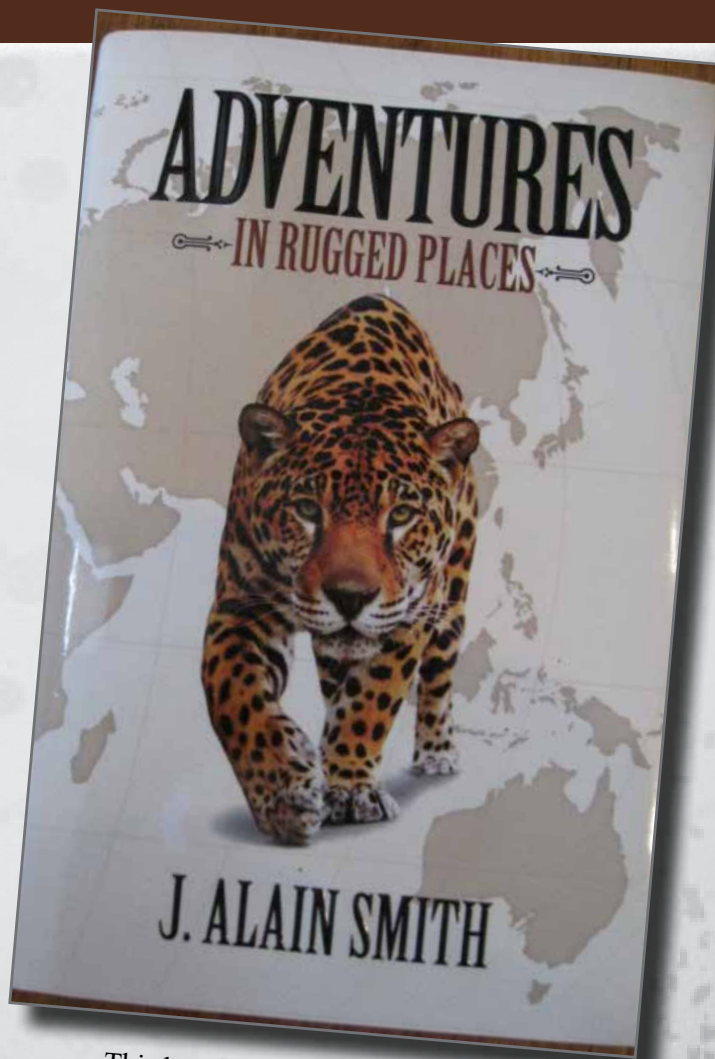
Author: J. Alain Smith

List Price: \$27.95

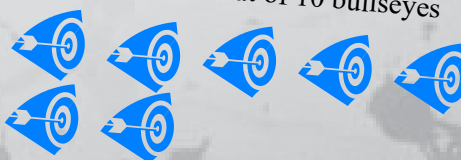
Adventures in Rugged Places is the latest installment of tails told by the accomplished hunter, writer and host of Rugged Expeditions, J. Alain Smith. Once again, Smith takes his readers through many adventures around the world, including an exciting Asiatic Water buffalo hunt in Australia, where he tries and succeeds in calling a large buff to within 30 yards.

Although this book authored by J. Alain is another enjoyable read, it is unlike his other books. He seems to concentrate more on the adventure of the hunt rather than the apex of taking the animal he is pursuing and in several stories his hunts, even though successful from his experiences, end without harvesting an animal. With all of this being said I enjoyed his previous three books more than this one.

Along the way Smith explains how and why his television show, Rugged Expeditions, came to be. And he speaks on the difficulty of trying to put a successful hunting show together, from travel arrangements to spending so much time away from home.



This book gets 7 out of 10 bullseyes



BUY, SELL, or TRADE

The following are the terms and conditions for the Buy, Sell or Trade section of our magazine.

- It is **FREE** to all members of our Mid-Michigan SCI Chapter.
- One photo per item will be used in this section. This photo will be displayed in a small size (about 2"x2").
- You may have up to four ads per issue. (You must renew each ad each issue.)
- Beyond the description of the item, each ad will need your name, e-mail and/or phone number
- Each ad should be limited to 25 words plus your name and e-mail and/or phone number.
- **The Mid-Michigan Chapter is not responsible for items sold.**

Send listings and questions to Josh Christensen at jchappyfish@gmail.com

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MID-MICHIGAN CHAPTER SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL

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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

WHY JOIN MID-MICHIGAN SCI

- Membership meeting with outfitters and conservation representatives
- Quarterly Issue of **FRONT SIGHT MAGAZINE**
- Online Record Book
- Michigan conservation efforts (example: chronic wasting disease)
- Protect Michigan hunting rights

WHY JOIN SCI INTERNATIONAL

- Bi-monthly issue of SCI's **SAFARI Magazine**
- Monthly issue of **SAFARI TIMES Newspaper**
- Access to SCI First for Hunters Website and SCI online Record Book
- Representation in Washington D.C. for hunters' rights issues and conservation
- Eligible to attend SCI's Members-only Annual Hunters' Convention

- 1 year Membership new or renewal \$90 (\$65 National, \$25 Local)
- 3 year Membership new or renewal \$225 (\$150 National, \$75 Local)
- Life Membership \$1800 (\$1500 National, \$300 Local)
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"Tough times never last, but tough people do." - Robert H. Schuller



Mid-Michigan Chapter donates monies

Part 3 of 4

By Josh Christensen

Over the course of any given year our Mid-Michigan SCI chapter contributes to many causes, with the proceeds from our membership dues and annual fundraiser. In total our chapter donates between \$20,000 and \$30,000 per year to programs under the following categories; education, conservation, pathfinders and humanitarian.

In our last two issues we have already spotlighted seven programs we, as a chapter, donated to. These were The American Wilderness Leadership School (AWLS), scholarships to graduate students pursuing advanced degrees in wildlife related fields, sportsmen against hunger, walleyes for warriors, shooting sports programs, the predator prey project, and the disabled youth hunt. Here are three additional programs our Mid-Michigan chapter supports through donations



Education:

Card Wildlife Conservation and Wildlife Education Center – We contribute to this museum annually. The wildlife center is a 5,000 square foot facility located on the ground floor of the Arts and Sciences Commons building (Room 011) on the Ferris State University campus in Big Rapids, Michigan. The primary function of the Card/Riley Conservation and Wildlife Education Center is to serve as an educational resource for Ferris State University students, K-12 school children, and members of the greater Michigan community.

Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) Camp for Kids – We contribute to the camp and also sponsor campers to attend the camp. MUCC Camp for Kids has an emphasis placed on engaging youth in the outdoors and connecting them to the environment. They pride

themselves on their curriculum that teaches outdoor skills such as conservation and environmental sciences, target shooting, hunter safety, backpacking, wilderness survival, forest management, watercraft safety and much more.



MICHIGAN UNITED CONSERVATION CLUBS Since 1937

Humanitarian:

Blue Bags – Our Mid-Michigan chapter contributes to filling Blue Bags. The contents may include medical, educational, and other relief supplies, or clothing and toys. The Blue Bags are then taken to remote areas of the world by hunters who have planned hunts in these regions. The supplies are delivered directly to villages, clinics, orphanages and schools, doctors, caretakers and teachers to use with people in need.



BEAL CITY

BIG BUCK NIGHT

On January 23rd Tim's Barber Shop, in Beal City, hosted their ninth annual Big Buck night. Tim's Barber Shop is owned by Tim Martin. All entries had to be legally taken in the 2020 whitetail hunting season and harvested with a gun, bow, muzzleloader, handgun, or crossbow.



Phil Stress
1st place adult
10 point



Fussman Family - Right to left:
Dave Fussman (Dad), Jacob Fussman, 16, 7 point and
Addison Fussman, 10, 8 point.



Mason Weber
1st place youth
11 years old, 8 point



Other successful hunters in attendance.



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MY FIRST TURKEY

By Ivan Christensen

I got a 20 gauge for my ninth birthday. My dad put a black stock on it. I liked the pistol grip and that it was all blacked out. Next, we put a Tru-Glo open dot sight on the shotgun. After that we practiced shooting at a turkey target.

Before season we put a pop-up blind near the corn field next to the woods on our property where the turkeys take dust baths. We usually see them a lot in that field. We would see a flock of about ten turkeys near where we put the blind every other day. In the group there were three toms

that liked to hang out together. I called them "The Three Amigos."

On the first morning of turkey season my dad went hunting with some friends. That afternoon he took me hunting around 3:30. When we got in the ground blind we set up our hunting stuff. We put up the shooting sticks and I practiced with my gun before any birds were around. Then we waited and waited. I told my dad, "I hope we see The Three Amigos today." He said, "I hope we do too."

Around 4:45 my dad said, "Birds! Get your gun ready." So I got my gun ready on the sticks and watched The Three Amigos come into the field. Two of them went to the right of the blind and the other one came in front of the blind. When the one coming in front of the blind was in a good spot to shoot, my dad made a turkey call so it would stop moving and pick its head up and that worked. Then I put the red dot at the base of the head and neck and shot.

The tom fell straight down, but after a minute began to flop around making the other turkeys gobble. We waited for the other toms to go back into the woods. After they did, we went up to my turkey and it was a big bird! Then we took it to some rocks and took pictures.



Mentorship: Young & Old

By Wess Brown

November 1st, 2019, 3:45 pm and the sun is just touching the tops of the trees as it gets ready to set the evening into the golden hour. I take another look around basking in the crisp Kentucky air, and at 45 yards there is a doe looking my direction. My heart skips a beat and I feel that tremble that happens every time that first deer of the day is spotted. She looks back a few times to make me think a buck is behind her. I don't have my bow or I would grab it, instead I look down to my left at Eric who's locked in on this doe studying her behavior.

Eric and I met in Colorado two years prior in a western guide school. We got along right away as he did 20 years in the Navy and recently retired and I recently retired from the Army myself. This guide school was the first step he took on his own, finding a purpose in the outdoors. Throughout the course I promised him I'd put him on a path to be a bowhunter, once explaining the standard steps to him he was all in. Fast forward a full season of guiding elk for him plus an additional six months and we reconnected via phone. We spoke of the Bowhunting and luckily enough for Eric I had a lot of experience setting up bows for people across the country without having them present. I put together the perfect set up for a beginning bowhunter and shipped it to him. Within the package he received I had put a thumb drive of 45 minutes of instruction on how to properly shoot the bow. I took it upon myself to do this video for him instead of sending him YouTube links of someone else, not because I don't trust others but I knew Eric and I felt I could portray the learning in a way he would best grasp.

November 1st 2019, 11am we both arrive at the cabin in Kentucky. We shared a big hug and caught up, it was short lived as we were heading to the stand at 2:30pm. We unloaded the trucks and got right to making sure his bow was still sighted in. Haven't been able to be by his side, I was unsure how he would shoot and before the first shot I doubted my training videos. He let the first five arrows fly, bullseyes. We moved back to 45 yards and he shot five more bullseyes. His form was spot on, follow through was without effort. It was as if I was with a man who'd shot a bow for years. He smiled and said "Couldn't have done it without you."

Approximately 3:50 I had a chance to tell Eric that the doe may be looking behind her at a buck on her tail since we are at the last days right before the rut really kicks off. So, he slowly stood up, grabbed his bow and was ready for a shot if there was indeed a buck behind her. She began to feed and looked quickly again behind her. I notice Eric's arrow is shaking and out stepped.....another doe. This was a great first evening seeing 14 does and being locked down a number of times by all the eyes in the field. It was a learning experience to say the least. For the next two days Eric experienced a lifetime of hunting lessons, missing two does, clipping a doe to only find hair and sinew on the arrow, being blown at by a doe catching his movement, and let's not forget my fatherly scolding about movement and quietness. I couldn't have been more proud of a man that after all of the short falls he was up and ready the morning of the 4th as if it was the first day of the hunt. His motivation was high and it was as

if he evolved from a novice hunter to a seasoned one. He was quiet walking to the ground blind we were hunting, he spoke softer, moved slower, and even gave me a look of frustration when I dropped the camera battery. That morning brought in several bucks to which the biggest one, approximately 125", he passed up knowing there are bigger bucks in the area. He headed back to the cabin after the morning hunt with high hopes although I was worried since that evening was the last hunt of the trip.

It was a quiet afternoon in the cabin. We only talked of the wind and where the best place to hunt was, along with looking back on trail cams and wind directions when the big guys were in the area. We set our sights on a spot we had not hunted yet and thought it was the best last-ditch effort to get on a mature buck. We got in the stand at about 2pm. It was the last day of colder temps reaching 42 degrees that afternoon. We were tucked in the deep timber close to a nice travel corridor, we set up and quietly bumped fists and smiled. We did not hear or see but one squirrel all evening and then that golden hour hit. We had about 45 minutes of good shooting light left. He looked at me and said "What do you think?" I paused for a second before responding knowing the importance of my reaction to that question with how the evening was shaping out to be and said "Stand up, get your bow and just be ready for anything." I said this even though my Hope was fading like the shooting light but that's not the attitude I wanted to portray to this new hunter.

35 minutes of good shooting light and I heard a heavy crunch in the leaves to my 9 o'clock. I looked through my binos and saw a deer's body. I tapped Eric's shoulder and pointed it out but from his vantage point he could not see yet. I looked again and the deer took three steps and paused. It lifted its head into low hanging branches and there it was, a buck. I let Eric know and he got his release on the loop and positioned his feet. The buck started to head our way and I could easily tell this was a mature buck and was a solid 130". I told Eric, "Shooter buck! Shooter buck!" in a cracked and excited voice. The buck came right to 15 yards and paused to mill around and browse. Eric drew his bow and as he did his draw arm brushed his coat and the buck spotted him finishing his draw. Rewind back 36 hours and I mentioned to him that if he's drawing and a deer sees you, stay calm and never short hand your mantra in shooting your bow. Don't short change the shot, you have about 6 seconds to make the right shot before the deer is gone. Whether this was golden advice or not he took it. I heard Eric take the breath he takes before a shot and align all of his anchor points perfectly and released the arrow. The arrow struck 4 inches back to what I felt was a liver shot. The buck ran through



the brush and then we heard nothing.

All we could do was look at each other for about five seconds until our shaking almost took us out of the tree. We fist bumped at least 25 times and all I saw on him was a smile from ear to ear. All I could say was, "You just shot a buck of a lifetime!" After a little celebration in the tree we got down and headed right back to the truck since this was a possible liver shot I wasn't taking any chances of bumping this buck. Being able to explain this process to Eric was a perfect ending lesson to his first archery hunting trip. We watched the footage and agreed we made the right decision to move out and track in the morning. Up bright and early we got on small drops of blood that was tough to find at times. 75 yards trailing blood and there he lay, a buck of a lifetime. Eric was speechless as was I and we sat petting the buck as if it was to contain our incredible excitement. After taking countless field grip and grin photos and processing the deer we were able to sit



and enjoy a beer and recap the hunt. Eric turned to me and said a few things from "This truly has changed my life.", "I want to be so good at shooting my bow that I never want to doubt my shot again.", "If it wasn't for you I would have never picked up a bow.", "Bowhunting is really all I want to do." and finally "Do you think I could get my son to do this?"

Mentoring isn't just for an adult to get a child out hunting. Although it's one of the best ways we can grow our outdoor traditions, let's not let adults fall to the weigh side of mentorship. Mentor an adult not only on one hunt but on a journey or path to hunting. Mentoring an adult successfully means that adult can mentor another adult or mentor their own children and family, creating a legacy. Too many kids' parents don't hunt, which is their choice and not necessarily a bad thing, but some studies would say the kid may enjoy that time on the lake or in a blind but it may get lost if their parents aren't into that same thing. It is much more likely that if getting an adult the proper mentoring and a positive adventure that they will pass that knowledge and new passion to their kids and family and create the legacy and tradition that hunting and fishing is losing so quickly each year.



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"Some days you're the bug. Some days you're the windshield." - Price Cobb



We support

SPORTSMEN AGAINST HUNGER

By Jon Zieman



Thank you Mid Michigan Chapter SCI Sportsmen Against Hunger Program
 380 pounds of meat were donated to His Helping Hands of Clare County by the Sportsman Against Hunger program. Along with the meat, we received a gift card from Gordon's Food Service for \$200. We have used the gift cards in different ways throughout the years. We will use it for paper products and detergent for our clients. These types of items can not be purchased with their bridge cards.
 We were able to divide the gift of meat between three pantries, the Gathering Pantry in Harrison, the Nazarene Church Pantry in Clare, and the Church of Christ Pantry in Farwell. When people call His Helping Hands for food we direct them to one of the pantries closes to them. Your generous donation enables the pantries to provide good protein to families in Clare County.
 We thank SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter for this donation and the hunters who donate to them. Your donation is making a difference in Clare County.
 His Helping Hands is a non profit Christian organization that helps people in need throughout Clare County. We give out beds and donated furniture and other household items. We also help with transportation, laundry and other needs depending on our volunteers.
 We are a call in center, open 10-2pm, Mon-Thurs, 989-539-2064.

The MidMichigan Chapter of Safari Club International is a proud sponsor of the Sportsmen Against Hunger program in our local communities. The Chapter works with several partners and helps support six organizations. Significant amounts of meat are provided to assist the area groups in their efforts. The Chapter partners with NAC Taxidermy, Isabella County Conservation District and Burch Tank and Truck to publicize the program. Shagena Meat Processing in Clare offers significantly reduced rate to process meat. 1,540 pounds of meat were distributed to four organizations, Women's Aid Service, Inc., the Isabella Community Soup Kitchen, God's Helping Hand of Mecosta County, and His Helping Hand of Clare County which supports three food pantries. We also donated a

SAH Distribution Over Last Eight Years

FY	Meat Pounds to Orgs	Food Pounds to Orgs	\$ to Orgs	# of Orgs
2014	700		N/A	2
2015	600		\$450	3
2016	1,250		\$1,400	4
2017	1,120		\$1,000	4
2018	2075		\$1,350	5
2019	2495		\$1,396	5
2020	2290	4500	\$1,450	5
2021	1540		\$800	6
8 Year Total	12,070	4,500	\$7,846	5

Store gift card to the organizations for other needs after the meat donations were completed. In consultation with the organizations, it was determined that it was most cost effective to make bulk meat purchases and donate that meat as well. Gordon's Food Service became a good partner by providing a significant discounted bulk price to Chapter.

The program is successful and well received by the organizations and communities. Mike Strobe once again did an excellent job as the program director for the Chapter. Let us all thank him for his efforts and continued success.



February 5, 2021

Dear Mid Michigan Chapter SCI Sportsmen Against Hunger Program:

On behalf of the Isabella Community Soup Kitchen, we wish to acknowledge and thank you for your donation of:

400lbs of Meat and a Gordon's Food gift card in the amount of \$ 200.00

We are registered as 501c3 non-profit organization. The full amount/value of the contribution to the ICSK is tax deductible, with no portion being payment for personal goods or services.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Sarah Adkins

Sarah Adkins
 Executive Director



PO Box 743
 Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0743

Phone: (989) 773-0078
 Fax: (989) 773-9470

February 4, 2021

Mid Michigan Chapter SCI Sportsmen Against Hunger
 1100 Bollman Dr.
 Mt. Pleasant MI 48858

Dear Members of Mid Michigan Chapter SCI Sportsmen Against Hunger,

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of R.I.S.E., thank you for your in-kind donations per the attached list. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. This assistance is especially appreciated during the current social and financial climate our communities face due to impacts of COVID-19.

Your generosity is important not only to us but also to the resilient survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault we serve. One in 3 women and 1 in 4 men are survivors of intimate partner violence, while 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men experience sexual violence in their lifetime. Your support helps R.I.S.E. operate our 24-hour crisis line and provide emergency shelter, advocacy, counseling, and outreach services to survivors in Isabella, Clare and Gratiot Counties.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Page

Jennifer Page
 Executive Director

GOD'S HELPING HANDS OF MECOSTA COUNTY

January 30, 2021

God's Helping Hands of Mecosta County (GHHMC)
 PO Box 118
 Remus, MI 49340

Mike Strobe
 1100 Bollman Drive
 Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

Donated Beef / Gift Card

Dear Mike and Associates,

God's Helping Hands of Mecosta County (GHHMC) is once again in your debt for your recent gracious and generous donation of 380 pounds of meat and the gift card to GFS for \$200.00.

We here at GHHMC are very thankful for your thoughtful and benevolent partnering with us in this vital way.

Thank you Mike and thank you to all those who participated with you through the Mid-Michigan Chapter SCI Sportsman Against Hunger!

GHHMC exists by the will of God and the kind generosity of organizations, churches, and individuals in our community at large.

We could not do what we have been blessed to do for those in great need without your help! Again, thank you very much and May God bless you each one!

Working together,
Pastor Randy Platt
 Executive Program Director of GHHMC



Journaling an Alaskan Adventure

By Janis Ransom

It all started at the Mid-Michigan Chapter fundraiser event in February, 2020. Ken and I were looking at the various outfitters. We stopped at Sam Fejes' booth. He was talking with some other people, so we started looking at his literature. I spied a combo hunt for moose and mountain goat – two of my “bucket list” animals! I got very excited and we spoke with Sam quite a while about the hunt. Ken said he'd like to have the option to shoot a moose and/or goat as an add on. We worked out the details, and Sam had a hunt open for the fall of THIS YEAR (2020)! We made the leap and booked the hunt. Thankfully, even though everything ended up being shut down for most of 2020, we were still able to take this hunt. We just had to do pre-trip Covid testing.

October 12 – 13

Flight from Traverse City (TC) to Seattle and then Seattle to Anchorage to Cordova. Flight from TC to Seattle on American Airlines was packed! Flights the following day on Alaska Airlines were better – they left the middle seat open and the flight from Anchorage to Cordova only had 30 people on board (112 capacity). A shuttle took four of us to the Reluctant Fisherman to stay overnight. All of us will be hunting with Sam's outfit. We had takeout from the restaurant at the motel. As travelers, we could only get takeout.

Wednesday, October 14

Sam picked us up at the Reluctant Fisherman about 10:30 – Ken, me and Jerry (also from Michigan). The fourth guy got word that his daughter was delivering her first baby early, so he headed out this morning. We flew to camp on the “big” plane and arrived around noon. The scenery during the flight was amazing!



Ken and Janis with her moose

Copper River Delta, glaciers and icebergs, and lots of wilderness.

When we arrived, we were introduced to everyone, and had a great lunch of moose meat grinders and moose barley soup – delicious! After lunch, we met our guide, Jake. We went through our gear with him and then took our guns out to sight them in. We met two additional guys in camp – Matt & Steve from Utah. Jerry is bow hunting for moose and brown bear. Steve is hunting for moose and Matt for brown bear.

We were told we'd be heading out this afternoon for our goat hunts. We got all of our gear together and on the porch of the lodge and then we waited... and waited. Steve headed out with his guide and then Jerry and then Matt. We had our gear loaded into a plane, waiting to hear from Sam that he could get us into an area that he wanted to set us up in. Then we would be flown to the beach together and flown one at a time to the mountain camp. We finally heard about 5:30 that he couldn't get us into that spot, so we unloaded the plane and the pilot headed home. About 6:00 we were told to grab our gear and our waders as we were going to a spot to moose hunt! After a short flight we got set up in the rain, which thankfully quit, and we're going moose hunting tomorrow!!

Thursday, October 15

We had a propane heater in our small tent to keep the

chill off. It was cold overnight and I woke around 2:00 am, but waited until 4:00 to turn the heater on and warm up the tent. We were up at 6:00 and had instant oatmeal and coffee (hot chocolate for me). We headed out to the beach at 7:00. We didn't get very far down the beach before my right wader boot fell apart! Ken ran back to camp for duct tape, and Jake taped up both of my boots. The right boot wasn't great, but at least it was held together! We spent the day tromping around through brush, swamp and water. Jake could hear the moose walking around (although we didn't hear them). We also spent time waiting around when Jake climbed a tree to scope out where the moose were heading or hanging out. There were a couple of cows and at least one bull. We chased them around all day. Finally, a little before 5:00, Jake came down the tree and said that the moose were headed our way. We were in a wooded area with an open area about 150 yards away. Ken set up the shooting sticks for me. I had a very small window where I could shoot if the moose came through there. Ken said he could see the moose and then I could see his paddles in my "window". He stopped right there and moved his head back and forth. I could sort of make out his head, but couldn't see his body because of all the tall brush. It seemed like forever (although I'm sure it was only a few seconds) as I tried to figure out where his body was in relation to his paddles. Should I even take the shot? Could I make a good shot? If I didn't shoot, would I have another opportunity?



As all of this was going through my head at warp speed, I put the cross hairs where I thought the shot should be and took the shot! All I saw next was his paddles moving forward out of my window.

Both Ken and Jake said they thought the moose was down. There wasn't any noise, and they both said that they saw the paddles head down. I followed Jake out of the woods and into the scrub brush where the moose was. Suddenly, he stood up – what a HUGE animal. He was only about 25 yards away. Ken threw the shooting sticks up (with a small pine tree between me and the moose!) and quickly re-set them so I could shoot. I took two more shots as he was facing me and down he went for good – "nose up". I had my moose!!

Casey, one of the packers, came out and helped Jake skin and process the moose to pack it out. It turned out, as the guys were processing the moose, that my first shot was right in the lungs! A truly lucky shot! We didn't get back to camp until 9:00. My feet were frozen and my wading boots were a wreck, but I was one happy hunter.

Friday, October 16

This morning we packed up our gear and went down to the beach to be flown back to the lodge. Sam took me back, and Ty, the other pilot, took Ken. Jake, Casey and another packer, Carl, were packing out the rest of the meat, hide and head today. **HARD WORK!!**

We got back to the lodge and took hot showers – it felt great! Sam said that the winds were right, so he might get us up on the mountain for goats today. We re-packed our gear and got ready for the call. It ended up not happening, so we were able to enjoy more great cooking from Diane, the cook and her assistant, Taylor. A couple of guys were out fishing and brought back some nice looking fish. They are also moose hunting. I asked Jake how wide he figured my moose is and he said probably 69", and maybe 70".

WOW – bigger than I thought! (NOTE: final measurement on the moose antlers was 71")

Saturday, October 17

Ken had an opportunity to go fishing with some of the other hunters. They only fish for a few hours in the morning, and we won't be heading out to goat camp until later in the afternoon. He said he had a great time and caught about ten fish (catch & release). There was a bear on the opposite side of the river they were fishing in, but he stayed on his side.

I was relaxing in our cabin when Taylor came in and told me that Sam was on his way and I needed to be ready to head out in 15 minutes! I quickly pulled everything together and put on several layers of clothes. It was a much longer plane ride to mountain goat camp than it was for moose. The scenery was amazing and we saw quite a few goats as we got closer to where we would be hunting. We had to fly between two peaks to get to the landing strip. I arrived just before 2:00 pm. Ken arrived about an hour later.

After we hauled everything up to our camp, in a saddle between two peaks, we did some glassing. We saw a nanny with a kid and another goat on the peaks across the landing strip. Then we walked up the side of the ridge on one side of camp and checked out a billy on the other ridge. He had a beautiful coat and Jake said his horns could be 9". A very nice goat, and so close to camp!! We are planning on trying for him tomorrow morning.

Sunday, October 18

We got up and headed out about 8:00 am to see if we could find the goat we'd seen yesterday. We worked our way up and around the peak next to camp. Jake found him down below on a ridge about 200 yards away. I got set up and he started moving along at a pretty good clip, so I waited for him to stop (or at least slow down). I took a shot and Jake said it was a good shot – he humped up from the impact. I shot two more times, but I don't know if I hit him. Then he slowed down and stopped for a bit. Jake said to wait, he was likely going to head down the slope and we would wait until he got to a less steep area. That way, he wouldn't fall down the rocky bit and maybe break a horn or break up the hair on his coat. He moved a bit and we kept a close eye on him. He got up one more time and was now in a better spot, so Jake had me shoot him one more time. He went down and didn't move again.

We went down to him and took a few pictures while



Moose antlers and big plane

Jake headed back to camp to get some hot water for coffee and hot chocolate, and some breakfast. We ate on the slope overlooking an amazing view. We saw a coyote moving back and forth below us. Then Jake saw another goat on a peak further out, heading down the slope. He checked it out using Ken's scope because he had taken his spotting scope back to camp. He said it was a very nice billy and he thought it might work its way closer to us. We watched him for an hour or two as he ambled down the slope toward us. Jake said my goat might be acting as a decoy to bring him closer. He moved down into a crevice out of sight for a while (there was a large stream with boulders down there), but didn't cross the stream and came up the other side. Finally, he reappeared heading back up the way he came.

Jake said he probably winded us. Ken only had 2 shells for his gun, so he took my gun with him as well. They moved a bit closer and Ken made a good shot with his gun (the goat was over 300 yards away), then the goat fell back into the crevice. Jake and Ken went closer to see if he was still alive, and Ken finished him off with my gun.

Two goats before noon! WOW. We took pictures with both goats, then Jake (with help from Ken) skinned and cut up Ken's goat. It took a couple of hours to do. I headed back to camp as they were finishing up and packing out some of the meat. After a rest at camp for a bit, Ken and Jake went back up to skin my goat. They will get the meat from my goat tomorrow.

Monday, October 19

We packed up camp this morning and took everything down to the landing strip. I was watching two groups

of goats while waiting for Sam. He took me and my gear, along with most of the meat from Ken's goat and my goat's hide and head. He dropped me off at the beach and Ty brought me the rest of the way back to the lodge. Ty took me over an area that had a BUNCH of moose. It was very open and very wet. I don't see how those moose could be hunted.

When we got back to the lodge, Ken said he was interested in moose hunting if it could be arranged. Since I don't have any good shoes to wear with my waders, he would have to hunt without me, if he is able to hunt. Steve came back to the lodge today after shooting a brown bear earlier today. He told us the story over dinner. He saw a lot of bears out there, and finally got this 9 foot bear today. The photos are amazing – it is a HUGE bear!

Tuesday, October 20

Sam took Ken's goat head into Anchorage to a wildlife biologist to have it aged. The biologist said the goat was 11 years old. His hooves were in pretty bad shape, so we figured either he was old, or had injured the hooves.

We just hung out at the lodge for the rest of the week. We had great meals, including halibut steaks, moose ribs, salmon steaks, moose chili and moose hot dogs.

Thursday, October 22

I took a walk with one of the guides in camp (Alex, from Michigan). They have wonderful trails and we had a great time talking and taking in the scenery. Ken wasn't able to moose hunt, but he did go up in one of the planes with Sam late this afternoon and saw over 15 bull moose, mostly young ones. One group of five were gathered around in a circle, apparently comparing antlers!

We took a bunch of photos of my moose antlers today.

Friday, October 23

Ken wanted to go fishing today, so I said I'd go out with him. Kyle was his fishing "master". It was very cold down at the river, but the short flight out and back from the lodge with Ty was great. I saw quite a few moose



and SO MANY bald eagles. All of the trees were filled with white dots of their heads!

Sunday, October 25

Sam flew us back to Cordova for one last night at the Reluctant Fisherman before we head home. We are taking as much meat from the moose and our goats as we can – backstraps and tenderloins – as checked baggage. We got a fish box from the supermarket in town and packed 50 lbs in that, with the rest going in our checked suitcase. We are taking about 70 lbs of meat back with us.

We were able to store it in the freezer at the RF, and then at the hotel freezer in Seattle, so it made it home still frozen.

What an amazing adventure and some amazing animals and photos to remember it by!

**Editor's note: Thank you Janis for submitting your journal to share with us. If any of you are planning a trip in the future please consider journaling your adventure and sharing it with our members through the Front Sight magazine.*

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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES



Elk poaching tipsters split \$1,000 reward

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Contact: Sgt. Mark DePew 989-732-3541

Two anonymous tipsters were awarded \$500 each, splitting a \$1,000 reward, for information they gave Department of Natural Resources conservation officers that led to the arrest and conviction of three northern Michigan relatives who poached three cow elk in the Pigeon River Country State Forest near Gaylord.

Since 2019, the Safari Club International - Michigan Involvement Committee has offered a \$1,000 cash award to anyone providing information leading to the arrest and conviction of an individual or individuals illegally killing an elk or moose in Michigan.

"We are very grateful to the individuals who stepped up and helped provide officers with the information they needed to move this case through to completion," said Bob Taylor, SCI Michigan Involvement Committee president. "All of Michigan's citizens have a voice in conservation and should speak up if they see wrongdoing occurring."

The investigation into this poaching case began in late 2019 with a tip called in to the DNR's Report All Poaching hotline. Sentencing of the three men took place in March 2021.

Anyone with information regarding poaching incidents should call or text the Report All Poaching Hotline line at 800-292-7800. Information can be left anonymously.

Michigan conservation officers are fully commissioned state peace officers who provide natural resources protection, ensure recreational safety and protect citizens by providing general law enforcement duties and lifesaving operations in the communities they serve.

Learn more about Michigan conservation officers at Michigan.gov/ConservationOfficers.



Conservation

Compiled and Submitted by Mary Browning

Spring has sprung and we all are excited about being outside but remember humans are not the only living creatures that live in the great State of Michigan. Here are some tips from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to help us all live in harmony in our great state.

Be black bear SMART from start of spring

Bear observations and encounters are more likely to occur during the spring and summer months, while bears forage for food. Most wild animals are generally fearful of humans and will leave if they are aware of your presence.

If you encounter a bear in your yard or on a trail, remain calm and be bear

SMART:

- S - Stand your ground. Do not run or play dead.
- M - Make loud noises and back away slowly.
- A - Always provide a clear, unobstructed escape route for the bear.
- R - Rarely do bears attack, if they do, fight back.
- T - Treat bears with respect and observe them from a distance.

Reduce the risk of encountering a bear by removing food sources from your property and enjoying the outdoors responsibly in areas where bears are found. Despite the abundance of natural food available in the spring and summer, human-provided food sources are often an easy meal for these opportunistic feeders.

"Every year we receive numerous reports of bears eating from bird feeders, garbage cans, grills and camp sites," said Cody Norton, Michigan Department of Natural Resources large carnivore specialist. "Leaving food accessible to bears is problematic for the bear and the community. Once a bear has found a food source, it will continue to return in search of meal,

CONSERVATION CORNER



Affairs

and while you may enjoy seeing the bear, your neighbor may not. Bears that rely on human food sources often encounter people, causing them to lose their natural fear of humans."

"Removing food sources and knowing what to do in a bear encounter is the best way to avoid conflict and coexist with bears," said Norton. "Those of us who live and recreate in the bear range share the responsibility of avoiding activities that create potential bear problems."

For more information on how to handle conflicts with wildlife, visit Michigan.gov/Wildlife

Taking Care of our Deer Friends

This spring and summer, we need your help to keep deer from browsing on the birdseed in your feeders and on the ground beneath. Food sources like bird feeders congregate deer, raising the risk of deer passing diseases to the other deer gathered there.

Baiting and recreational feeding of deer remains illegal throughout the Lower Peninsula and the Core CWD Area in the Upper Peninsula. The ban is in place to lower the risk of spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD) and bovine tuberculosis. Both diseases are spread through saliva and other bodily fluids that can be present at shared feeding sites.

You can help keep deer away from your feeders with these bird feeding tips:

- Use feeders that are difficult for deer to access, like tube or hopper feeders or suet cages.
- Use birdseed that is less attractive to deer, like thistle, suet and hummingbird nectar.
- Only put out the amount of seed that birds will eat in a day. Deer tend to visit feeders in the evening and if they find empty feeders, they will move on.
- Hang your feeders high – 6 feet off the ground or higher – to keep deer from accessing seed.
- Hang your feeders close to the house, as deer may be less likely to approach a dwelling.

- Keep the ground under your feeders clean to prevent deer browsing. Use mess-free seed or rake the area regularly.

- Securely install 4-foot or taller woven-wire fencing around all your feeders to prevent deer from reaching over or through to feed.

- Fence your yard with woven-wire fencing that is at least 10 feet tall to prevent deer from entering.

Taking these steps can help slow the spread of deer disease in Michigan. We appreciate your help.

Questions? Contact us at 517-284-9453 (WILD)

See a baby wild animal? Observe from a distance

Each spring brings a new generation of wildlife, and while you're enjoying the sights of the season be sure to give wildlife plenty of space to raise their young while you watch from a distance. Young animals are often left alone, but the parents are never far. This is especially true for rabbits and fawns. "One survival strategy wild mammal moms use is hiding their young while they are elsewhere, but don't worry, they will return periodically to nurse and care for the babies," said Hannah Schauer, wildlife communications coordinator with the DNR. "This tactic helps young animals stay safer from predators while mom goes elsewhere to avoid drawing attention to where they're hidden."

Eventually, the youngsters will be strong

and fast enough to venture out on their own or accompany their mother.

"As we get later into spring and into the summer you might see fledgling birds hopping around on the ground, and this is completely normal." said Schauer.

"These fluffy youngsters are getting old enough to start trying to fly and need more space than the nest has. Their parents aren't far and will continue to feed and care for them."

Never remove an animal from the wild. Young animals are rarely abandoned and their best chance for survival is to remain in the wild.

Only licensed wildlife rehabilitators may possess abandoned or injured wildlife. Unless a person is licensed, it is illegal to possess a live wild animal in Michigan. Learn more about what to do if you find a baby animal and get a list of licenses wildlife rehabilitator at Michigan.gov/Wildlife or contact the DNR Wildlife Division at 517-284-9453.

Living with Coyotes

For your safety, NEVER intentionally feed or try to tame coyotes. It is critical that they retain their natural fear of people.

- Eliminate outside food sources.
 - Garbage or pet food left out may draw their attention.
 - Coyotes may also take advantage of the small mammals and birds that bird feeders and gardens often attract.
 - Clear out brush piles that provide hiding places for small mammals and birds.
- Keep small pets indoors or accompany them outside and keep them on a leash.
- If you see a coyote in your area, try to scare it off by yelling, clapping or making other loud noises. Most coyotes are naturally afraid of people and will leave if you frighten them.
- Coyotes, like any wild animal, can act unpredictably and should be treated with respect and enjoyed from a distance. If coyote depredation becomes a problem, please contact your local DNR office:
 - DNR Customer Service Centers or 800-292-7800 after business hours



Our New Pond

by Mary Harter

Several years ago, Mike Harris, owner of Mid-Michigan Ponds came to our Mid-Michigan SCI Convention and had a booth. Both Don and I talked to him about digging a pond on an 80-acre piece of property we own to hunt on. Don plants many crops there to help attract the deer and other game but we thought a pond would be a great addition.

Now, a few years later, we receive a phone call from Mike, asking us if we were still interested. Mike had just finished a job at Central Michigan University and was going to the Houghton Lake area to do another job but they weren't quite ready so they could dig our pond in between. Wow!! And he could start the next week. This pond had been a dream of ours and now it was going to become a reality, not just put on a list for a later date, but to be dug the next week.

We met with Mike and toured our property with him and appreciated all of his suggestions. We had pictured just a round pond in a swampy area for wildlife, but he saw a better spot for an irregular shaped pond with high ground all around it. Mike explained how the irregular shaped shoreline with varying depths would add more habitat diversity and be more beneficial to the ponds ecosystem and the wildlife. We checked it out several times and even looked (and dreamed) from a tree stand in an oak tree on the edge of where the pond would be dug.

That weekend, equipment was brought to our property. We have a trail camera which sends pictures to our phones that

we set up so we could watch the progress. We went over every afternoon during the digging process to check out the results.

Mike has great equipment. The Cat Hydro Hoe can reach 60 feet and they moved it to four different locations to dig around the pond. They had a huge Volvo six wheel drive off-road dump truck that hauled 30 yards per load of the very fertile dirt from the pond to some of the sandy areas in our fields. From there his wide track bulldozer was used to spread it out. Paul, Mike's son, ran the dump truck. Mike and Joe did the digging and dozing.

The pond ended up being about an acre in size with a depth of 14 feet at the deepest. They hit springs while digging and had to pump out water to continue. The pond has filled up nicely to about $\frac{3}{4}$ in just three days and the deer are already checking out the new improvements.

Most of the soil dug out was placed on what we call "The Hilly Field" and the rest was placed out in the front of the property in an open field. They



Welcome Banner





have to wait for it to dry out some more before leveling it enough for Don to plant it but the soil looks very rich and ready for some really luscious crops. They also smoothed out all the places they disturbed around the pond, giving it a very natural looking shoreline.

Don is also having Mike install a solar powered aeration system in the pond. This will not only improve the water quality in the pond and help it support fish, but will also keep some of the pond open all winter to provide plenty of water for the wildlife.

If anyone is interested in having a pond dug, we would certainly recommend Mike Harris, owner of Mid-Michigan Ponds from Bath, Michigan. You can check him out at www.midmichiganponds.com, mike@midmichiganponds.com, 517-927-4830, 6500 Howe Road, Bath, MI 48808. He is a fisheries biologist and specializes in pond construction and pond management.



The Light Will Overcome Darkness

By Michael L. Ritchie D.C

As part of the Mid-Michigan chapter of SCI, we can bless people in a way that will change their lives. From children to adults and in some cases to American Heroes, SCI has a commitment to be "First for Hunters". In the process, we get to meet some incredible people. One such person is Captain Jon Turnbull.

Last year as part of SCI and through Veteran's Afield Foundation/Smoldering Lake Outfitters, I was able to help a friend who is a disabled Viet Nam Veteran experience a hunt of a lifetime in Maine for moose. The amazing care that Dave Hentosh and his wife Keri showed the Veterans was beyond the call of duty. Before my eyes I saw healing take place in the lives of those who were struggling with disabilities from their time in military service.

I was sharing this story with one of my patients in my Chiropractic office and the patient responded with the Story of John Turnbull. "Jon and his dad love to hunt together and I am sure Jon would love to do something like this," the patient said. He continued to tell Jon's story which only pulled at my heart strings more.

Here is Jon's story as it was told to me: Jon grew up in Northern Michigan and immediately following high school he was recommended by our State Representative to attend The United States Military Academy at West Point, NY. He was married after graduation from the Academy and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Jon had many overseas deployments in Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria. "My last overseas mission was in Syria", Captain Turnbull related, "and we were there to legitimize the local government and delegitimize the rule of ISIS in the region." Because of his and his teammates efforts, electrical power



Army Captain Jon Turnbull kneels while visiting the graves of Shannon Kent and Jonathan Farmer at Arlington National Cemetery.

was restored to 400,000 people and 4000 young women and girls were able to go back to school after 7 years of ISIS prohibition. They also helped to get healthcare back up and running.

Here is where the story goes south. Because of the success of their operation, an ISIS suicide bomber was sent to take out Jon and his team. On January 16, 2019, the explosion critically injured Jon and killed three of his teammates.

The details of his story will be published in a book called "Zero percent Chance," which Jon hopes to have in bookstores everywhere by this July.

After 22 surgeries and much rehab Jon can return to uniform and perform his duties as an officer with one serious challenge. He has lost the use of his eyes which were taken out in the explosion.

From what I have come to understand Jon spent most of his time during his

rehab helping other wounded soldiers find hope in their troubles. He has been working with various veterans' organizations in and out of the military to benefit his fellow American Heroes.

With the help of Veteran's Afield Foundation/ Kicking Bear and Sponsors like Safari Club Mid-Michigan, the Roscommon-Higgins Lake Lions Clubs, Jays Sporting Goods, Johnny and Kelly Tow and many private and anonymous donors we have been able to secure a moose hunt for Jon who will be accompanied by his father Mike. We have raised enough money to pay transportation, hotel, and meals for the trip. We only lack the funds to pay for the taxidermy bill if Jon shoots a bull. One Taxidermist has offered to mount a bull for his cost significantly reducing the amount needed.

The Bible says in John 1:5 The light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.

Certainly, Jon will not let his vision challenge keep him from harvesting the animal of his dreams. Mike and John have been practicing with Jon's M1 fitted with a scope that has a video screen. Dad will direct Jon when the crosshairs are on the vitals and Jon will close the deal.

Next week Jon is being promoted to Major and will continue to be in uniform until retirement in the future. The light is overcoming the darkness once again! I feel privileged to have had a little part in helping Jon and his father go on this hunt and to honor him for his service to this country. I feel proud to be a part of a great organization like Safari Club International that helped make it possible.

Thank You Major Jon Turnbull for your Service.

Humanitarian Donors in 2021

At our recent Mid-Michigan SCI fundraiser our Chapter started our new humanitarian initiative where people in attendance could donate to help our humanitarian efforts.

As you have been reading in the past several issues of the Front Sight magazine our humanitarian efforts help many different people. Some of the programs we assist are Sportsmen Against Hunger, Walleyes for Warriors, Disabled Youth Hunt, Veterans Pheasant Hunt and the Blue Bags program. We would like to recognize the following individuals for donating towards this cause and look forward to adding many more people to this list at our next fundraiser. In all our Chapter collected over \$1,500 this year with a goal to more than double that number next year.

Joe and Abbe Mulders

Nick Giuliani

Roger and Sherri Froling

Josh and Sara Christensen

Joe and Debbie Pederson

Mike Leonard

Jay and Stacey Platz

Keith Davis

Brandon and Tracy Jurries

Poem - Africa Calls, from Rege Podraza

"Where Elephants Go To Die"

Ancient land of claw and thorn
Thunderous hooves and spiraled horn
Sweltering days and frigid nights
Poisonous snakes and insect bites
A land of adventure, pain and sorrow
Long nights and short tomorrows
Feast and famine, drought and rain
Endless pleasure, eternal pain
Like a moth to the flame
Africa calls . . . no, shouts my name!

42nd Anniversary Gala 2021 Hunting Convention



MID-MICHIGAN SCI



Thank You Outfitters & Vendors



42nd Anniversary Gala 2021 Hunting Convention Awards





Mike Strobe reading about the recipient of the Larry and Joanne Witte Award



Jon Zieman presenting the Larry & Joanne Witte Award to Lori Card

2021 Major Award Winners Mid-Michigan Chapter SCI

ANIMAL

Africa

1. Blue Wildebeest
2. Common Nyala
3. Southern Bush Duiker

North America

1. American Mountain Goat
2. Rocky Mountain Elk
3. Polar Bear

HUNTER

- Brandon Jurries
Brandon Jurries
Brandon Jurries

- Bob Balzer
David Petrella
Tim Torpey

ANIMAL

North America Introduced

1. European Fallow Deer
2. Hybrid Sheep
3. Hybrid Sheep

South Pacific

1. Himalayayn Tahr
2. Arapawa Ram

HUNTER

- Larry Smith
Randy Raymond
Randy Raymond

- Ronald Browning
Mary Browning

Bow Hunter Method of the Year - Matt Esch

Muzzleloader Hunter Method of the Year - Tim Torpey

Men's Top Hunter of the Year - Branden Jurries

Youth Hunters of the Year

Konnor Wilson • Eastern Turkey
Konnor Wilson • Northeastern white tailed deer (2)

Thank You to our Fund Raising Supporters

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Reponses to: What is your favorite optics brand and why?

☛ I can't really say I have one favorite brand of optics. I seem to lean toward Leupold for the scopes for my rifles. For binoculars and spotting scopes I tend to think Zeiss, Leica and Swarovski have some of the clearest optics out there. I truly enjoy the Zeiss binoculars I purchased at our annual fundraiser almost eight years ago. They have accompanied me on multiple hunts and have been a great asset on all of them. – **Josh Christensen**

☛ In 1984 I bought a pair of Zeiss, 10 x 40 Binoculars at the SCI convention in Las Vegas. They have traveled the world with me and spotted many trophy animals. They still go with me to Deer camp and sit on my dining room table for bird watching and glassing deer. I also take them to all CMU football games.

Twice, in the 37 years I have sent them to Zeiss for adjustment and repairs. They have never charged me for the repairs. They're like a kid's teddy bear, I'm never without them. – **W. Sidney Smith**

☛ My favorite Brand of optics is the Trijicon! Most know that I served in both the US Army and the Mt. Pleasant City Police Department. Throughout my career I used Trijicon to protect myself and others. Now in the hunting industry it's an easy choice based on the quality of glass they use along with them being manufactured locally here in Michigan. Check them out!!! – **Dan Catlin**

☛ I'm not sure I can say I have a favorite brand, as all I have ever owned is Leupold, but I do love my binoculars and my rifle sight. The one thing I definitely love about the Leupold brand is their lifetime guarantee, no questions asked. When on a hunt with my husband in New Mexico, my binoculars got broken somehow. I'm sure it was my fault. I packaged them up and sent them in to the company. A little while later, I received brand new binoculars - no charge, no questions asked! I also like that they are an American company. – **Janis Ransom**

☛ If I had to pick a favorite optics brand, I would first establish the criteria of what makes it stand out. When it comes to optics, I believe there are 4 qualities that are of great importance. First, an optic needs reliability. This is mostly a factor for rifle scopes and for me is characterized by its ability to hold its zero (it's important to note that the mounting system is also very important here). Being able to hold a perfect zero is something that many people overlook, not just when stored in a safe for the off season, but also when bouncing around in a pack on the side of a mountain, or in a scabbard on a long horse ride up into base camp. If I can't rely on my zero remaining perfect, I can't trust a scope. I have scopes on rifles that have been there for 3 years now (and I shoot them a LOT) that have never needed the zero adjusted, this is paramount in my opinion. Second, image quality. On the same level of importance to holding zero, image quality of an optic makes all of the difference in the world. After all, the whole reason we use optics is to enhance our natural vision and improve our ability to see. As someone who spends a lot of time behind optics every year, and often many hours in one day, image clarity is the difference between being comfortable and getting the job done, or being extremely frustrated and getting headaches from straining your eyes (I've been there). A big part of image quality is being able to properly adjust the focus. This has been standard on binoculars and spotting scopes for decades, but more and more rifle scopes are adding this ability and I won't own a scope without it, except for very close-range applications. Third, I need accurate, precise, and reliable adjustments. For longer distance hunting use, and in all other long range shooting disciplines, the ability to put in exact adjustments to account for all of the first and second order ballistic effects that the bullet experiences while traveling down range is a deciding factor on critical first round hits. Last but not least, durability and product support. I group these together because I feel they go hand in hand. Optics are tools, and any tool that sees a lot of heavy use is going to wear. Your optics need to last a long time, but eventually you may need to have them serviced. For all of these reasons above, there are two companies that I currently use for pretty much all of my optics. For my scopes, I almost exclusively run Nightforce. I've been around a lot of different scope brands, and for the money, the Nightforce scopes are nothing short of incredible. In my line of work, we shoot tens of thousands of heavy recoil rifle rounds a year, all with Nightforce scopes. To date, only one has had to be sent in for repair after a very long service life, and it wasn't because it stopped working, a few parts on the eye piece came loose and we sent it in as a precautionary measure. The zeros simply do not change on a well-built rifle, with quality mounts, and we've never seen the adjustments have all tested out at over 99% accurate. For my spotting scopes, binoculars and rangefinder (and a few rifle scopes), I use Vortex. Vortex's Razor lines are great optics and have proven to be quite durable, but where Vortex really stands out is that no matter what happens to your optic (short of theft or loss), they will repair or replace it. I've toured Vortex's facility, and it is very impressive! They have a large department dedicated to customer support and repairing optics. There are many other great brands out there, and I've used many of them, but for me it's easier to just stick with what I know works and gets the job done.

– **Mitchell Fitzpatrick**

Mechanical/Aerospace Engineer at Applied Ballistics LLC

Extreme Long Range Competitive Shooter, Team Applied Ballistics.

Former Member of the US Rifle Team for the 2017 F-Class World Championship Cycle.

With summer upon us, the question for this issue turns to fishing. Maybe you enjoy deep sea fishing, fishing on the bay, or just trolling around any of our inland lakes. At any rate,

What species of fish do you find yourself pursuing over and over and why?

Write in and let us know. Submit your answer to jchappyfish@gmail.com and look for it in our next issue of the Front Sight magazine.

NEW QUESTION!



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"The trouble with the future is that it usually arrives before we're ready for it." - Arnold H. Glasgow

Looking Ahead

In Our Next Issue



A RIO GOOD HUNT
by Josh Christensen



MEXICO HUNT
by Mary Harter



**MORE ARTICLES
AND RECIPES
YET TO BE
SUBMITTED**



**FAVORITE
ANIMAL
TO HUNT**
by
Bob Balzer



Sharing Some Good Cookin'!

SCI CHEFS

GROUSE DIP

From: Chad Donahue

INGREDIENTS

- 2 smoked grouse breasts
- 1 pack cream cheese (let sit out at room temperature to soften)
- ½ cup sour cream
- 2 squirts of mayonnaise (some do ¼ cup and some don't use any at all)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce
- Pinch of fresh dill or green onions

DIRECTIONS

Mix the cream cheese, sour cream, and mayo first. Next add the shredded (by hand) grouse breasts and mix. Then add the lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce (mix). And finally top it off with the fresh dill or green onions and let it sit in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Serve with crackers.



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