

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

January - March 2023, Issue 61









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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 Rd. just east of Winn Rd. In order to receive the lock combination you will need to contact Lance Norris at either (989) 621-2794 or ruter1lb@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.

## MID-MICHIGAN SCI 2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

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

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

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2018 - 2022

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#### President's Message

Welcome to our January 2023 Issue!

At this point in the year, we are heavily focused on two key things – the Michigan Whitetail Deer Season and the Upcoming 2023 Mid-Michigan SCI Fundraiser Gala! The Event this year moves ahead one weekend in February (February 17th and 18th) due to the National SCI Convention being held in Nashville, Tennessee February



23rd thru the 25th. We are hoping for a HUGE turnout at our Fundraiser as all of the Pandemic restrictions are gone and life is slowly getting back to "Normal" (whatever that was)! We have a terrific weekend lined up, so PLAN ahead; get your tickets EARLY (the early bird catches the worm as the saying goes) and make your hotel reservations!!! Our fliers are going out in the mail this week as I write this, so be looking for them in your mailboxes.

As we are looking in the rear-view mirror of the 2022 Midterm elections, whether you are elated or frustrated with the results, the entire SCI organization & Chapters are continuing in our mission of conservation, protecting the rights of Hunters everywhere, and keeping ahead of legislation which would have a negative effort on our hunting passions. Membership in the SCI ecosystem provides you, the hunter, with many benefits and advantages that are worth studying and getting involved in. We in the Mid-Michigan Chapter continue to discuss different ways to bring this information to you in a format that you will take advantage of. We are looking to our membership to get involved and bring your ideas and energy into our meetings and events!!

Please check out our improved website midmichigansci.org or visit our Facebook Page https://www.facebook.com/MidMichiganSCI/ (Mid-Michigan Safari Club International). We have some 'fun' ideas planned for our Facebook audience coming in the new year – so stay tuned!!!

Have a great Holiday Season

Obbe M. Mulders
Abbe Mulders
President

(989) 450-8744 • abbemulders@gmail.com

#### Editor's Message

By the time you are reading this deer season will be over. I hope you had an enjoyable time in the woods in your pursuit of a deer. You will still have

serval months to continue your time in the woods after small game so I wish you luck with that.

This fall has been a busy one for me and my family with both of my boys participating in cross-country. I wasn't able to get out into the woods nearly as much as I would like, but for those of you with kids this age, or those of you who have already gone through this stage with your



Our family after one of the boy's cross-country meets.

kids, you know how enjoyable it is to cheer them and their teams on.

We have many enjoyable events coming up in 2023 that you will want to mark on your calendars. First is our annual fundraiser. I hope to see all of you at the Soaring Eagle and Resort on February 17th and 18th. It is always a good time.

We will also have five membership meetings this year. These are great opportunities to gather with other members and friends to enjoy the different programs put together by our chapter. The meeting dates for 2023 are April 3rd, May 1st, July 31st, September 11th and October 2nd. Mark your calendars now and invite a friend or two to come along.

As always, we would love for you to share your outdoor experiences with us. We currently have three formats in which we put stories to print. We have the traditional written article, the journal entry format (you only need to submit your journal entries along with pictures) and we have our pictorial essay format (this is like a Facebook post with a short description of your adventure, followed by pictures with captions). We all take pleasure in going on adventures, but there's nothing like sharing your stories in print for all to enjoy. Please consider submitting one of your experiences with us.

Happy Hunting!

Josh Christense

Editor

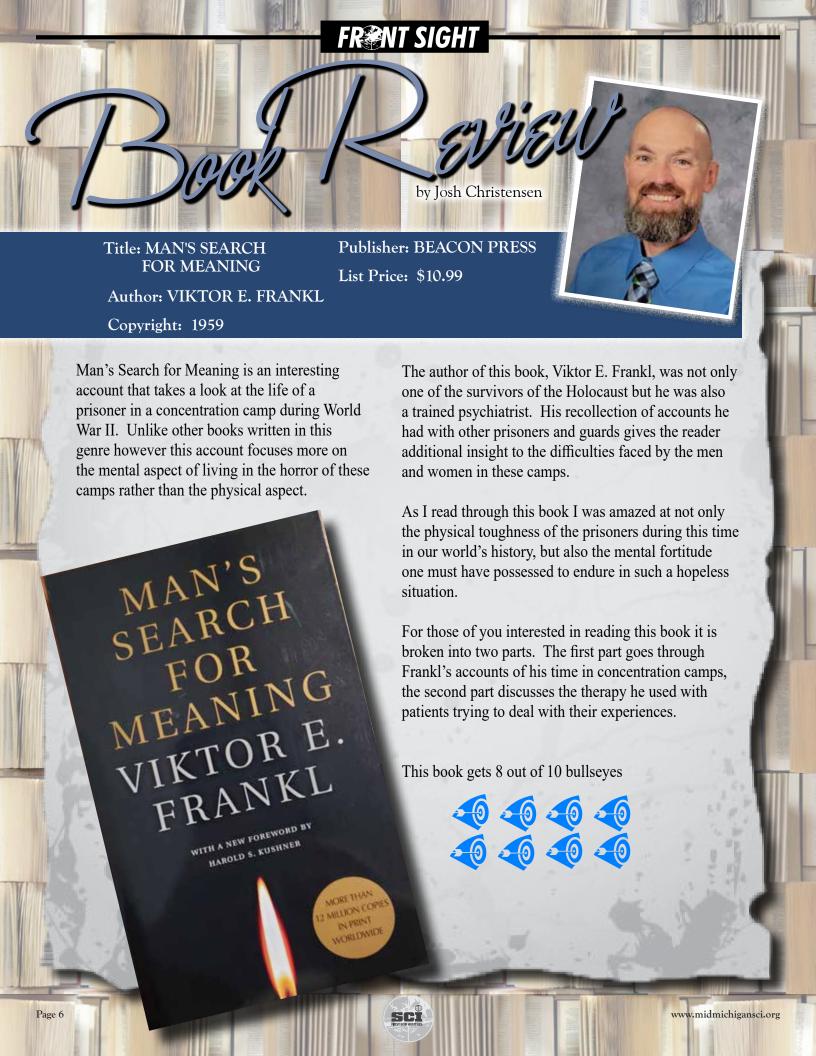
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## SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

	* OLUNDOTT TO OLUNDOT		
Date	* SUBJECT TO CHANGE	<u>Time</u>	Location
Jan. 14, 2023	BIG BUCK NIGHT	4:00 Reg./5:00 pm	Comfort Inn
Feb. 17 & 18, 2023	MID-MI ANNUAL FUNDRAISER	TBA	Soaring Eagle
Feb. 22-25, 2023	NATIONAL CONVENTION	TBA	Nashville, TN
April 3, 2023	Board/Membership Meeting	6:00 pm	TBA
May 1, 2023	Board/Membership Meeting	6:00 pm	TBA

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



# BUY, SELL, or TRADE

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

- It is <u>FREE</u> 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 unless otherwise discussed with the editor.
- The Mid-Michigan Chapter is not responsible for items sold.

Send listings and questions to Josh Christensen at <a href="mailto:jchappyfish@gmail.com">jchappyfish@gmail.com</a>



**WEATHERBY VANGUARD .270 WIN** with Banner 3x9 Scope \$600.00. If interested contact Ken Ransom 231-947-1554.



**STOEGER 12 GAUGE O/U** "Ducks Unlimited" banquet. Never fired with original box. \$500.00. If interested contact Ken Ransom 231-947-1554.



**7.62X54 MOSIN NAGANT RUSSIAN MILITARY RIFLE** with Bayonet & 80 Rounds ammo. \$200.00. If interested contact Ken Ransom 231-947-1554.



**28 NOSLER WITH 5.5X22X56 NIGHTFORCE SCOPE** 1,000+ yard Custom Rifle by Pierce Engineering. Come ups have been calculated/field tested and taped to stock. Weighs about 12 1/2 lbs fully loaded with Harris Bi-Pod. 985 CCI Magnum Large Rifle Primers. Almost 2lbs of Hodgdon H1000 Powder. Fired almost 75 rounds. 3 1/2 boxes of Nosler AccuBond 160gr Factory Ammo. 15 rounds of 175 Nosler LR handloaded ammo. 3 Boxes of once fired brass. \$7,000.00 If interested contact Ken Ransom 231-947-1554.



FOR SALE - ELEPHANT TUSKS REPRODUCTIONS ZW99 Serial #25007. 31.75 kg and 32.8 kg With base's- pd \$2523.50. Will take best offer. If interested please call or text Dave Edel at 231-690-2855.



Mid-Michigan Safari Club's 44th Annual

# CHUNTER'S CONVENTION

Friday and Saturday



February 17th & 18th, 2023

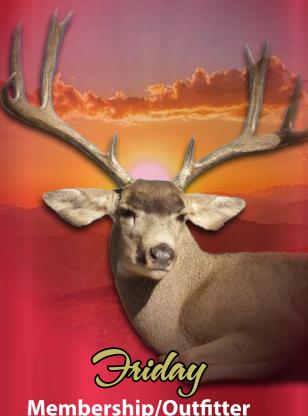


6800 Soaring Eagle Blvd. Mt. Pleasant, MI

## Join us in the Entertainment Hall

This event will feature American and International hunting trips, wildlife displays, meet outfitters, raffle and door prizes, shopping for fur coats and jewelry, along with the lastest in hunting equipment.





## Membership/Outfitter Celebration Night

- Doors Open @ 5pm
  - \$10 Cover Charge per person Under 12 Free
  - · Cash Bar
  - Membership Sign-Up
  - Members Only Raffle
     Mexico Mule Deer Hunt
  - Raffles
  - Entertainment
     by Kevin Chamberlain
     and the Greez Monkeez

# Saturday Open to Public

Noon - 4pm • \$5.00 at the Door

## **Saturday Evening Reception**

Begins at 4pm (Ticket Only)

- Evening Buffet Dinner
- Cash Bar
- Raffles and Drawings
- Silent Auction
- Special Awards / Recognition Award
- LIVE Auction begins at 7pm

## Outfitters & Vendors

**Tentative List** 

- Balam Outfitters
- Baldy Mountain Outfitters
- Baranof Expeditions LLC.
- •Bell Wildlife Specialties
- Carter Outfitting LTD.
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- Fejes Guide Service, LTD.
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- Hells Half Acre Outfitters
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- International Adventures Unlimited
- •JL Bar Ranch
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- Kenetrek
- •L-4 Ranch
- •Lazy CK Hunting LLC.
- Leupold
- Lost Arrow Ranch
- Low's Trophy Whitetails

- •Marupa Safaris
- Medicine Man Charters
- Mighty Sharp Cuts
- NAC Taxidermy
- New Zealand Hunting Safaris
- Numzaan Safaris
- Paradise Trophy Ranch
- Reel Respect Charters
- Reel Rumors Sport Fishing Charters
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## SCI MIC AWARDS \$9,250 IN GRAD GRANTS TO FOUR GRAD STUDENTS AT MICHIGAN UNIVERSITIES

By Joe Konwinski SCI MIC Treasurer

On September 15, 2022 Safari Club Internal Michigan Involvement Committee (aka SCI MIC), a 501-C3 tax exempt non-profit organization composed of a representative from each of the ten Michigan-based SCI Chapters, awarded a total of \$9,250 in grad grants to four grad students attending universities located in Michigan. One of the missions of SCI MIC is to enhance wildlife education in Michigan by awarding grants to graduate students pursuing advanced degrees in wildlife-related curricula at Michigan-based universities. The dollar amount and number of grad grants awarded each year by SCI MIC is determined by the total amount of funds donated by the SCI MIC member chapters and the number of qualified applicants for the grants. The rest of this article provides information on each the four grad students that received an award.



Megan Casler is a master of science student in conservation biology at Central Michigan University scheduled to complete her degree in August 2023. Megan's thesis research project is: Determining community

and ecosystem components for identifying habitat and population trends for rail species (Rallidae family) in the Great Lakes coastal wetlands. The rail species are important indicators of the quality and condition of wetlands. Megan was awarded a \$2,250 grad grant.



Joseph Goergen is a master of science student in wildlife ecology and management in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University scheduled to complete his degree in August 2023. Joseph's thesis research project is: The effects of environmental and social factors on the economic benefits to

local communities of Namibia's successful community-based natural resource management program, and the benefits afforded through hunting. Joseph was awarded a \$2,500 grad grant. While Joseph Goergen is pursuing his master's degree at Michigan State University, he is also employed full time in Washington D.C. as the Conservation Manager for Safari Club International Foundation.

Samantha Courtney is a master of science student in the department of fisheries and wildlife at Michigan State University scheduled to complete her degree in May 2023. Samantha's thesis research project is: Group size, Bioaccumulation and Baiting: Quantifying Factors Affecting Chronic Wasting Disease Transmission Among Deer in the five counties around



Lansing, Michigan. Samantha was awarded a \$2,250 grad grant. Samantha Is a repeat recipient, as she was previously awarded a \$2,000 SCI MIC grad grant in August 2021.

Steven Gurney is a master of science student in wildlife ecology and management in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University scheduled to complete his degree in May 2023. Steven's thesis research project is: Evaluation of white-tailed deer population parameter estimates and implications for chronic



wasting disease management. Steven was awarded a \$2,250 grad grant. Steven is a repeat recipient, as he was previously awarded a \$2,000 SCI MIC grad grant in August 2021.

SCI MIC congratulates these grad grant recipients and wishes them the best in their wildlife career endeavors.



Have you ever had a moment in life where you wish you could go back and change it? Maybe you look back and wish you would have decided to play a different sport in high school, or go out for the high school play. Maybe you wish you could go back and buy a different car or put money in a different investment. Maybe you wish you could go back and do a different career. This story is an example of one of those instances where I wish I could get a moment back. When the opportunity came knocking, I unfortunately wasn't able to answer. This is the story of my almost Gould's turkey.

As many of you may know from several of my previous articles, I have begun to try to get the turkey slam. Not only the grand slam but the world slam. The next turkey hunt on my list was to travel to northwestern Mexico and attempt to collect a Gould's. What started off as the easiest turkey hunt I've ever been on quickly turned into the hardest.

On May 4th I departed the Grand Rapids airport en route to Tucson Arizona. Once in Tucson I was picked

up from my hotel on the 5th by my outfitter and we made the six-hour drive to a cattle ranch in Mexico. The last hour and a half of this drive was on dirt roads. To say we were off the grid would be an understatement!

Once we arrived at the camp house (the hacienda) we unloaded our gear and began to prepare for our hunt. There would be three hunters in camp; myself, Jack and Robert both from North Carolina. The three of us rode together to the ranch so we got to know each other along the way.

The temperatures forecasted for the four days we would be there were not good for any type of hunting, with highs in the mid-90's during the day and lows in the upper-60's at night.

Around 3:30 that afternoon the four of us, Jack, Robert, myself and our guide Kirk jumped in the camp vehicle, a 1998 Jeep Grand Cherokee, and followed the owner of the ranch, Mario, to the top of the mountain on his property.

The ranch we were hunting was 16,000 acres of land with mountains, canyons and dried out river bottoms throughout. This part of Mexico is very dry with many different kinds of desert vegetation. The places we planned to hunt, where the turkeys historically were located, were high up on the mountain between 4,000 and 5,700 feet.

As we started our ascent up the mountain the temperatures were stifling! Over 90 degrees, but "it's a dry heat" they say. I still argue 90 is hot no matter



The old hacienda we used as our base during the hunt.

what the humidity level, not to mention the added elevation which can also dehydrate a person and make climbs more difficult.

Not only can the heat affect animals, but it can also affect vehicles and that is exactly what happened with our camp vehicle. About a third of the way up the mountain the Jeep stalled out and wouldn't start back up. It had overheated and we were at quite an angle on one of the many switch backs to the top. This road to the top was one you wouldn't tell your mother about, with many places having a sheer cliff into a deep canyon on one side and a rock face on the other.

The Jeep just so happened to stall out at one of these spots, although we did have about ten feet until the steep drop into the canyon. The four of us looked under the hood of the Grand Cherokee and waited for Mario to find a place to turn around and come back to help us out. Our assessment of the vehicle was it needed coolant and had overheated.

Mario was a character of his own. This 74-year-old man had to be the happiest person I have ever met. From the time he woke up in the morning to the time he went to bed he was either humming or laughing. Not only was he always happy he was one heck of a cook! The authentic Mexican food we had was unbelievable.

Once Mario found the turn around and came back down the mountain towards us he got out of his "well worn" Ford King Ranch, just a smiling and humming. At this point I was thinking, "How in the heck are we getting out of here?" The vehicles were

#### Cowboys stopping at the ranch for a late lunch.





### Kirk and my bedroom for the trip.

on a 30-degree slope, nose to nose and there was no way the truck could get around the Jeep.

Mario started to look the Jeep over and jumped right into the driver's seat and placed the Jeep in neutral to allow the vehicle to roll down the hill to the next switch back about 50 yards from its current location where it could be over far enough to get the truck around it. We cautioned Mario that without power the breaks wouldn't work properly and he would need to use the emergency break. To this he replied with a soft laugh, a smile and an "Okay."

As he rolled down the hill he was humming along while we tried to help direct him to the new resting place for the Jeep. Once the Jeep was out of the way we all piled into the truck, went down the road until we found a place to do a 17-point turn and headed back up the mountain.

At 4,200 feet we stopped at a fork in the road and went to scout a place known as Los Pinos. This was an area with a large flat pasture and many pines the turkeys would use as roosting trees. We were all together for this and just getting the lay on the land. Jack and Robert were more experienced turkey hunters and were planning to go off on their own once they got an understanding of the property.

We called a few times, but didn't get any answers. When looking the area over we found lots of sign, so we figured one person would be dropped off there in the morning. Next, we went to the top of the mountain. At 5,600 feet there was an area known as the pond in a canyon on the south side of the ridge.

The four of us left Mario and the truck to investigate around the pond. It was about a half mile of walking down a rocky two-track to the bottom, where we took a well-worn cattle trail to the water. When we got there two ducks flew from the surface of the pond and several cattle sauntered off.

On the way down into the canyon and at the bottom we called several times, but got no response. Once at the bottom we started our way up the north face of the mountain. We made it up about 200 yards before stopping for a few minutes and calling. This is where Jack and Robert were going to peel off and work this canyon bottom before heading back to the truck. Kirk and I were going to head north straight out of canyon to the ridge line and call into the next canyon over.

Kirk and Jack talked about where Kirk and I were headed and what we would be doing and Jack told Kirk his plan for a route back to the truck. Jack and Robert planned to stay in the canyon for a while, then go northeast back to the truck.

We said our good lucks and Kirk and I were off up the canyon wall. Although it was fairly steep we made it up to the ridge rather quickly. Once at the top, we called a little. With no response we headed west along the road on the ridge and called from different locations. As a novice turkey hunter still trying to learn the ins and outs I was grateful that Kirk gave me insight as to what we were doing and why. Something I learned that makes total sense but I never thought about was every time before Kirk would call he would scan the area to be sure there was a good spot within a few steps to set up before he called.

After traveling down the road to the west about a quarter of a mile we turned around and went back to the east to an area that looked good to stop and sit for a while to allow it to get a little cooler.

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When we found a decent shaded area Kirk called. There was no response, so we started quietly talking about the plans for the next few days. Five minutes into our conversation we decided we might as well sit on a fallen log nearby. Once Kirk sat down I thought I heard a faint gobble off in the distance. When I told Kirk, he said he hadn't heard it, so I thought it was just my brain wishing to hear a bird.

I sat down next to Kirk and he asked to see my shotgun. I handed it over to him and about thirty seconds later we both definitely heard a gobble from the direction I thought I heard one before I sat. Kirk quickly handed my shotgun back to me and had me sit at the base of a tree while he sat at a tree behind me. From there he called and almost immediately the bird called back. The hunt was on!

About five minutes later Kirk called again and the bird once again sounded off closer. Then we heard a hen call from down the ridge a bit and Kirk immediately thought it was Robert and Jack. The next time Kirk called the bird answered but he was further to our west so we quickly got up and advanced toward the bird setting up near the two-track on the road.

With our next call the bird answered again, but then another hen call came in. Kirk was sure the hen was the other two hunters. As we waited, there was silence. Then around 70 yards away through the vegetation I saw the top of a fan move from my right to my left.

Then I heard another hen call from down on the other side of the bird. Just as we were about to get up and advance toward the bird I saw the bird trotting up the two track in our direction. He was moving up hill and as I tried to get set up on him I had a small green bush obstructing my view of the bird. At about 20 yards the bird turned and started heading from in front of me to my right.

As I looked through my truglo sight I found it difficult to see with a glare in the sight due to the setting sun, I was facing west. This had never happened to me before and I began to get even more nervous than I usually do when hunting. As the bird moved further behind some scrub trees I was able





Coues deer sheds collected on the ranch.

to swing the shotgun to a spot the sun wasn't glaring through the reticle. Just as I was about to pull the trigger I heard Kirk telling me to make sure it was a tom. At this, I pulled my attention from the shot to make sure the bird had a beard. When I could clearly see a beard I quickly pulled the trigger, shooting right over the top of the bird and missing my opportunity at the fine animal.

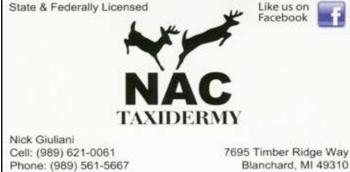
After missing we did find out the other hen was Robert and the reason the bird stopped answering and strutting was because he saw Jack, who didn't know the bird was there, walking toward Robert. When the bird saw Jack he beat feat up the two-track towards us.

Kirk and I hunted that area for two more days, hearing the tom gobble from down in the canyon, but he never came to our calls again. We even snuck down into the canyon one morning and had a good set up about 175 yards from his roosting tree, but when he flew down he went away from us. That bird got an education on hunting that he won't soon forget.

Over the rest of my time on this hunt we scoured the mountain in search of birds averaging eight miles of walking per day, with our highest mileage day coming in and eleven and a half miles, but in the end the only bird I saw or heard was the one I missed on the first afternoon of the hunt.

Jack did end up getting a bird down in a driedout creek bottom, where he heard several others. We tried our luck in that creek bottom on two sits and didn't hear a bird.

Needless to say, I have replayed that moment over and over again, wishing I could get it back to make the shot. But in the end, it will be a learning experience for me too.





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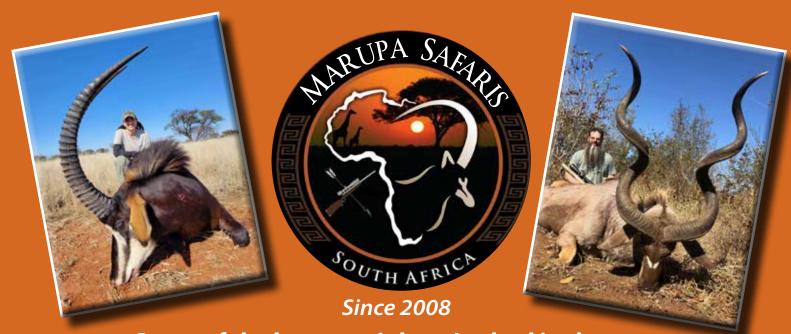
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> 89% SCI Record Book Trophies Harvested



**CONTACT PIETER AT** 

pieterviv@gmail.com or Whatsapp + 27 82 872 0230





## **Conservation Affairs**

Compiled and submitted by Autumn Gonda



## If you think you have caught an invasive carp or found juvenile invasive carp in your bait, report it immediately.

#### **Threat to the Great Lakes**

Bighead, silver and black carp are spreading throughout streams, rivers and lakes in the Mississippi River and Midwest region. Where established, their populations have been increasing with the fastest expansions occurring in the Missouri and Illinois rivers.

The most recent data indicate invasive carp are just 10 miles from the three electric barriers installed in the Chicago Area Waterway System to prevent invasive species movement.

In June 2017, a commercial fisher caught a silver carp below T.J. O'Brien Lock and Dam, approximately nine miles from Lake Michigan and on the Lake Michigan side of the electric barriers designed to stop invasive carp.

This is the second time a bighead or silver carp has been found above the electric dispersal barriers. A bighead carp was found in Lake Calumet in 2010, just 6 miles away from Lake Michigan.

Recently, a black carp was captured at mile 137 of the Illinois River, 110 miles closer to Lake Michigan than previous captures.

Grass carp have been found in low numbers in all the Great Lakes except for Lake Superior (most often in Lake Erie), since the mid-1980s. In some Great Lakes states, grass carp have been introduced into waterways for aquatic nuisance plant control since the 1970's. Currently only sterile grass carp are allowed to be stocked in some Great Lakes states, but Michigan prohibits any live possession of the species. Why be concerned?

While bighead and silver carps are not established in any of the Great Lakes, invasive carp are well-suited to the climate of the Great Lakes region, which is similar to that of their native range in Asia. According to a recent U.S. Geological Survey study, if introduced to the Great Lakes these fish are expected to flourish in the near shore areas and large river tributaries.

While we believe all invasive carp pose a significant threat to the natural ecosystems and recreational opportunities, we are

especially concerned about bighead and silver carp.

Reduced fishing opportunities

Researchers predict bighead and silver carp, due to their large size and high reproductive rates, will disrupt the food chain that supports the native fish of the Great Lakes, such as walleye, yellow perch and lake whitefish and may result in reduced recreational and commercial fishing opportunities in the region.

#### Threat to human health

Silver carp pose a direct threat to human health because they leap high out of the water when disturbed by vibrations like those from boat motors. Boaters can and have been injured when hit by leaping fish weighing up to 40 pounds. Michigan's recreational economy could be affected if people are afraid of injury from silver carp and choose not to go boating in areas



where silver carp are present.

The Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant has published a flyer outlining safety measures for boaters to avoid injury from flying silver carp. Recommendations include keeping passengers in the middle of the boat, installing netting or shields to deflect fish and avoiding water skiing, tubing or jet skiing in infested waters.

#### **Changing ecosystems**

In other states where bighead and silver carp have become established, they have changed river and lake ecosystems. In the Chicago Area Waterway System, more than 85% of the fish population is made up of invasive carp. According to the Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee, "between 1994 and 1997, commercial catch of bighead carp in the Mississippi River increased from 5.5 tons to 55 tons. Today, commercial fishers in the Illinois River regularly catch up to 25,000 pounds of bighead and silver carp per day."



In early May 2017, a massive silver carp die-off in Kentucky and Barkley lakes in Tennessee left thousands of rotting fish along the shoreline, making fishing and recreation nearly unbearabe.

#### Michigan takes action

Preventing invasive carp in the Great Lakes is a priority in Michigan. The state is working with regional partners, including state, provincial and federal agencies on prevention and monitoring efforts around the Great Lakes.

#### **Partnerships**

In January 2018, Governor Snyder announced the formation of the Great Lakes Basin Partnership to Block Asian Carp. This growing coalition of states and provinces is committed to supporting the \$8 million annual cost of operations and maintenance for the Army Corps of Engineers' Tentatively Selected Plan to reduce the risk of invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes at the Brandon Road Lock & Dam in Joliet, Illinois.

Michigan has prepared thorough response exercises to address invasive carp should we find them in the state's waters of the Great Lakes and we have a Mutual Aid Agreement for Aquatic Invasive Species Response, signed by Governor Snyder, with the other states and provinces that will allow them to help us or for us to help them if needed.

The Michigan DNR has trained with the Illinois DNR in invasive carp population reduction and monitoring exercises in the Illinois River and continues to conduct field exercises and eDNA surveillance in Lake Erie and tributaries of Lake Michigan in partnership with other Great Lakes states and provinces and the federal government.

Michigan is a part of the Invasive Carp Regional Coordinating Committee, jointly chaired by the EPA and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which aims to prevent bighead, silver and black carp from entering the Great Lakes and colonizing.

#### Crowdsourcing

The Great Lakes Invasive Carp Challenge used a global crowdsourcing competition to find 10 innovative solutions to prevent invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes. These new ideas have been shared with leading researchers in invasive carp management across the U.S.

#### Monitoring

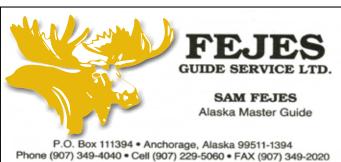
Michigan is actively monitoring key locations where invasive carp would congregate if they make their way into the Great Lakes, including the St. Joseph and Kalamazoo Rivers. Results of regular environmental DNA (eDNA) monitoring are posted on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries website.

#### **Planning**

A management plan for invasive carp outlining the actions to be taken if invasive carp are found in Michigan's waters has been developed.

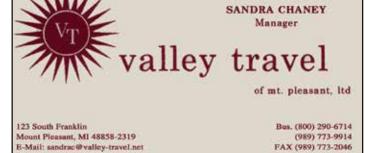
Though grass carp pose a less significant threat of harm, Michigan is taking a proactive approach with regulations, enforcement, and using a scientific approach to increase the effectiveness of control efforts.





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"Never give up on a dream just because of the time it will take to accomplish it. The time will pass anyway." – **Earl Nightingale** 



www.midmichigansci.org

# Gaber Membership



By Josh Christensen

On October 3rd we hosted our last membership meeting of the year at Bucks Run Golf Course in Mount Pleasant. The meeting was attended by over 50 people of all ages and was an enjoyable evening for all with raffles, door prizes a regular 50/50 and a new version/game for a 50/50. The meal for the evening was pork with potatoes and vegetables.

Our guest speaker was Denny Geurink. Denny is from Michigan, but spent much of his life as an outfitter in Russia. He was the first American to hunt in Russia after/during the fall of the USSR. He explained in his presentation as an editor for Field & Stream he was asked to hunt there to show the world it was a good place for hunting. After his trip, and the many connections he made there, Denny decided to start an outfitting business to help others experience the adventure of hunting in Russia for big bear and moose.

Denny's presentation and explanation of his time in Russia was intriguing and exciting as he relived his close calls with bears and the KGB. Denny is the author of In the *Land of the Bear*, a 23 chapter book of his different adventures in Russia.

After the excellent presentation the youth gun and door prizes were

















awarded. Winning the youth gun, a Winchester Wildcat .22, was Leo Haney. As you can see from the pictures Leo and all of our door prize and 50/50 winners were excited about their prizes.

We will be hosting five membership meetings in 2023, April 3rd, May 4th, July 31st, September 11th and October 2nd. Mark them on your calendar now and join us as we celebrate our passion for the great outdoors.





# CHRISTENSEN FAMILY AFRICAN HUNTING VACATION

## Part One of a Four Part Series

by Josh Christensen

This family vacation started in February of 2019 at our annual Mid-Michigan fundraiser. Eight months before the show I had taken my older son Elijah to Africa on an amazing hunt with Marupa Safaris. At the annual fundraiser my wife Sara and I got to discussing the possibility of doing the same sort of trip when our younger son Ivan was eleven, the same age Elijah was on the 2018 trip. By the end of the fundraiser a contract was written and signed and a deposit was applied to our hunt. Our dates would be during June and July of 2022.



Family vacation, South Africa style.

Between February 2019 and June 2022 a lot happened in the world. The most obvious disruption to the world was Covid-19. But through it all our plans to fly to South Africa never changed. By November of 2020 our dates were set. Over that time Marupa Safaris and all African outfitters weren't able to get any clients from the United States due to travel restrictions. Finally, in May of 2021 the restrictions began to lift and by the time we traveled in late June of 2022 all restrictions were lifted in both the United States and South Africa.

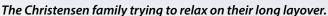
Months before we left for our Safari our family tried to get prepared for the adventure. The main focus of our preparation was getting comfortable shooting from shooting sticks. In South Africa the majority of the shots are taken from the standing position on shooting sticks. The reason for this is the vegetation is too high to get into the prone position and it is very difficult to use any tree or bush for assistance in steading your rifle because they are sparse in places and they all have thorns that will tear you up. The saying goes everything in Africa either has horns, thorns, teeth or claws.

Once the end of June arrived we all felt confident shooting from sticks and were excited about our adventure. Our travel to South Africa was fairly uneventful, besides our first flight from Grand Rapids to Newark getting canceled a week before our departure. The airline company wanted to book us on the same flight time the following day, but I wasn't going to lose a day of our safari, so I was able to get us on an earlier flight on our original departure date. The only problem was now instead of a two-hour layover in Newark we would have a thirteen-hour layover. Not ideal, but we made it work.

When we arrived, after our fifteen-hour flight, in Johannesburg we cleared customs relatively quickly and were met by Reinardt, our PH for the hunt. Elijah and I knew Reinardt from our trip in 2018. We knew he was an energetic guy that loved hunting and being out in the bush. I was excited to hunt with him and looked forward to the memories our family would make with him along the way.

That first night we stayed just outside of Johannesburg. Reinardt explained the country of South Africa was load sharing. This is the processes of certain areas being without power for several hours at a time, and it just so happened the city, minus the airport was out of power for the time being. When we arrived at our bed and breakfast type lodge the power was out. We quickly settled in and we all fell asleep fairly









Bar and dining area in the main lodge.

quickly. Around 10:00 pm the electricity came back on and several lights the room were on. After quickly turning them off I was back to sleep.

We arose around 4:30 the next morning to the power being out again and a frost on the vehicles and grass. We drove from Johannesburg to the Northwest Province where I would be hunting lion, but that is another story...literally.

After completing my lion hunt we drove to the Northern Cape, near Kimberley, for our plains game hunting. We arrived and got settled into the amazing facilities Marupa Safaris have. The lodge was newly constructed in 2019 and everything about it was fantastic. From the spacious rooms to the amazing showers, this place was top notch. We had a great meal and then Pieter, the owner of Marupa Safaris, and Reinardt asked if we wanted to do some night hunting. Of course I was ready to go, but Elijah and Ivan were still a bit tired from all of our traveling so they stayed behind.

Sara and I, along with Reinardt jumped into the back of Reinardt's Land Cruiser while Pieter drove us around. Our intended target that night would be jackal, I brought an electronic game call to entice them to show themselves. But along the way to a good area for jackal we were also looking for duiker and steenbok. Wouldn't you know it, before getting to the area to call for jackal we spotted a very nice duiker. This was one of the animals in our package so I made quick work of the small antelope and had my first animal in the Northern Cape down. Our jackal efforts didn't produce anything so we started our way back to the lodge. Spotting a nice steenbok, we stopped and Sara bagged her first animal of the Safari as well.



Sitting area in the main lodge.



 $\label{lem:continuous} Another \, angle \, of \, the \, dining \, area \, in \, the \, main \, lodge.$ 

Below: The springbok hair on full display.

A highlight for us this evening was watching Reinardt catch a springhare with his bare hands! As we were driving we noticed the small kangaroo type animals hopping around in certain places. Reinardt had Pieter stop the truck and shine the spotlight on one of the small creatures. He then snuck up towards the back of the springhare. I figured he would ease his way toward the big eared, rabbit like African animal, but I was wrong. When Reinardt was about ten yards from the motionless animal he sprinted and jumped with both hands reaching for it. He had caught the springhare! He walked it over to us so we could see. The powerful back legs, making it difficult to hold at times, proved to be a good defense. After we saw the creature and Reinardt let it go we could observe a large scratch on Reinardt's hand from the hind feet claws of the springhare.



The next morning was chilly, a theme we would have to get used to as every morning in the Northern Cape was in the upper 30's to lower 40's. The wind was blowing a bit harder this day, as we made our way to an area known to hold black wildebeest. These are an interesting animal for sure. It is said that when the gods made the animals of Africa they used the left over pieces for the black wildebeest, with its' long blond tail, forward sweeping horns and big tuft of hair on its' nose.

When we located the herd, they were three to four hundred yards away. We stopped the truck behind a thick group of bushes and Ivan and I followed Reinardt in through the bush toward the animals. As we came out the other side Reinardt set up the shooting sticks and asked who was shooting first. When I looked at the distance of the shot I told him I would be up first. The

Elijah and his duiker.



Elijah with his springbok.



Josh with his duiker.



Josh with his wildebeest.

animals were over 200 yards away and there was a big herd of them. I was hoping Ivan's first African animal would be a bit closer and in a smaller group to identify easier.

As I settled in on the sticks I knew with the wind and distance this wasn't going to be a chip shot. Reinardt did an excellent job of getting me on the right animal. Both the male and female black wildebeest have horns and for someone like me, who doesn't see them often, I would have extreme difficulty determining the difference. Once I was on the right animal and he was standing without any other member of the herd in my shot path I sent a bullet flying. By his reaction it appeared to be a good shot, but he ran off with the herd. As we watched them we saw he didn't separate from the herd which usually isn't a good sign.

We pursued the herd and I was able to get another shot at the bull. This one appeared to be a better shot because as the herd took off he separated from them, but I still had to shoot him again before it was all over. If you don't want to be humbled by hunting an animal you might want to steer clear of the black wildebeest. As I found out, this large animal has a small vitals zone for its size and is beyond tough. At any rate, I was able to harvest a very nice old bull with huge bases and gorgeous sweeping horns.

After lunch our plan was to try to get Ivan on a hartebeest or a gemsbok. The first group of animals we came across were hartebeest, but unfortunately for us, fortunately for them, they spotted us as we were attempting to stalk them and took off. Once back at the truck Reinardt took us to a different part of the 5,000 acre property. We drove to the base of a koppie (these are decent sized hills made of tons of rocks in the otherwise flat lands of the Northern Cape). Reinardt got out of the truck and asked if we wanted to climb to the top. Of course we were in, and Ivan and I followed him to the top. This is where Reinardt was able to instruct Ivan to make an excellent shot on a beautiful gemsbok bull. But if you want more detail on this story you will need to read Ivan's article on pages 22 and 23.

After loading Ivan's gemsbok in the truck, we started driving towards the skinners shack. Within the first mile of the drive I spotted a duiker in some thick bush. I quickly notified Reinardt and after assessing the small animals' horns, Elijah was up. Reinardt and Elijah put a short stalk on the animal and then the sticks were set up. One shot later the duiker was riding along with us to the skinning shack with Ivan's gemsbok.

We dropped the animals off at the skinning shack and as we were heading back to the lodge we spotted a group of springbok. Reinardt stopped the truck to assess them and quickly found a male worth taking.



Sara with her steenbok.

Elijah set up for the 220 yard shot. At the report of the rifle we could see the animal was hit as the herd took off but the springbok Elijah shot didn't go with them. Elijah had his second animal of the trip and his second animal of the day. After pictures were taken we drove back to the skinners shack and dropped it off.

An interesting side not with Elijah's springbok was when we got to his animal the white hairs on its back towards its hind quarters started to stand up. This happens sometimes with springbok. It was truly an amazing sight and we were able to take several pictures of Elijah and his ram with the hair on full display. Reinardt also encouraged us to smell the yellow area in the middle of the white plume on hair. At first I was hesitant thinking it was some sort of joke played on clients, but he assured me it was no joke. When I smelled the area I was taken back. It smelled just like cotton candy.

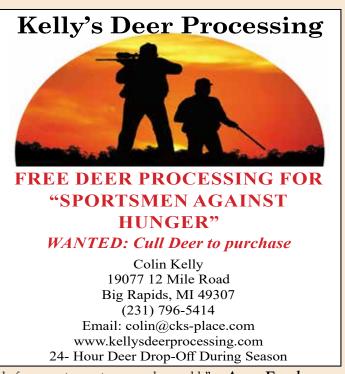
That evening's meal, like most meals we had, consisted of animals we had taken on the trip. This night was gemsbok and black wildebeest back straps. We were never lacking exceptional food during our safari and getting to eat animals we harvested was an additional treat for our family. We were always excited to see whose animal we would be trying each day.









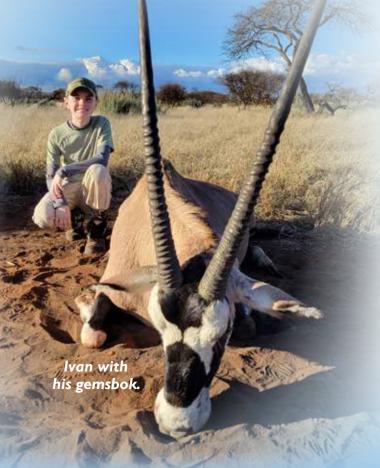


"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." - Anne Frank

# AFRICAN ANIMA

I knew I was going to Africa for a while. To get ready, we shot plastic water bottles that were full of water behind our house. We shot almost every day using our .22. We practiced shooting off shooting sticks because in Africa my dad told me that you shoot off sticks most of the time. It was difficult shooting off sticks at the beginning but the more I practiced I shot

better.



We left for Africa in June. My eleventh birthday was June 21st and we left for Africa June 28th. It was a short plane ride from Grand Rapids to Newark and a very long flight from Newark to Johannesburg. We were on the Newark to Johannesburg plane for fifteen hours. I watched movies, played games and slept until we were there.

I had to wait a couple days to start hunting, because we went to a place where my dad was going to hunt a lion. After the lion hunt we went to a different lodge where everyone was going to hunt. The first day we were there I almost could have shot a hartebeest, but they saw us and ran away. Then Reinardt, our PH, drove to a different place and suggested we went up a hill with a lot of thorns. My dad and Reinardt came with me up the hill. The hill was big and had a lot of bushes with thorns. Also a lot of rocks that I almost fell on.

By Ivan Christensen

When we got to the top of the hill. We looked down the opposite side and Reinardt and my dad saw a gemsbok. It took me a while to see it. Then Reinardt set up the shooting sticks and I sat on a rock as my dad put the gun on the sticks. Then I got ready to shoot. I looked through the scope to find the gemsbok. He was facing towards us. He was between 125 and 150 yards away. Then he moved a little bit giving me a quartering shot. Reinardt told me to shoot at his shoulder. I breathed in, held it and squeezed the trigger.

The gun went off and the gemsbok jumped and ran away from us. It only ran about 100 yards, then fell down. Then Reinardt and I went down to find the gemsbok. My dad stayed up on the hill and helped us with directions because the hill was steep and we couldn't see the gemsbok when we got off the hill because all the trees and bushes were in the way.

When we found the gemsbok he was dead. Then my dad came down and congratulated me on my first African animal. Reinardt went and got the truck with mom and Elijah in it and came to us. After that we took pictures. We took some with my family and Reinardt. I was very happy that I got a gemsbok for my first African animal.

Ivan and Reinardt with his gemsbok.



Family with gemsbok.



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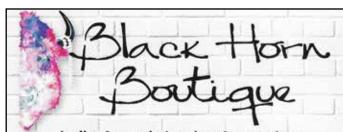
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"Tough times never last, but tough people do."

- Robert H. Schuller





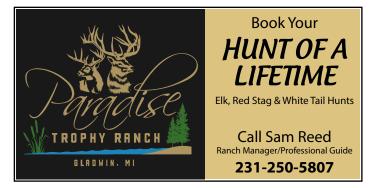


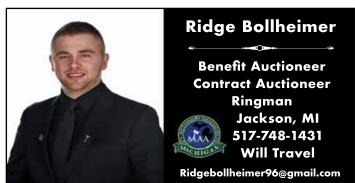


































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## **MID-MICHIGAN CHAPTER**

# Pathinders Recap 2021-2022

### **By Jon Zieman**

This Chapter has traditionally supported Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF) Pathfinder activities. Deer and pheasant hunts have been the traditional emphasis. Recently, The Chapter also has helped sponsor the Walleyes for Warriors. The Chapter works with other groups as well to honor and actively support veterans and disabled youths. Readers of this magazine are familiar with our Pathfinder stories. Here are some recent events supported.



Free Veterans' Raffle for the Big Frig Chapter Cooler



Low's Trophy Whitetail Ranch again donated a disabled youth hunt (http://www.lowstrophywhitetails.com/). The Chapter appreciates Leon Low for this full donation that provided a rich experience to Dylin Polzin. Dylin, his father Duane along with Chapter Director Autumn Rose made the trip to the Low's Ranch. They had a rewarding experience and Dylin harvested a nice deer November 11th, 2021 (see Front Sight Issue #60). Dylin and Duane attended the Chapter Annual Convention in February and regaled the audience with the hunt story. This outfitter has supported the Chapter's Pathfinders program for multiple years and is a partner with our disabled veterans' effort for fall of 2022.

Youth Hunt at Low's Trophy Whitetails on November 11th, 2021. (Duane, Autumn, Dylin, Leon)

The Chapter has partnered with Chuck Connell of Tails-A-Waggin Acres for many years. He is an excellent outfitter and has been a long-term organizer of veterans' hunts (http://preservehunt.com/ and http://www.veteranshunt.org/). New for 2021 was the formation of a 501 (c3) organization to run and support the pheasant hunt thus lightening the load on Chuck.

Approximately 290 veterans attended the pheasant hunt on September 24th to 27th, 2021. The hunt was another success!





Tails-A-Waggin' Veterans' Pheasant Hunt



The Chapter supported the 6th Annual Veterans Pheasant Hunt at Crooked Foot Upland Bird & Game Hunting Club (www. CrookedFootHuntClub.com). The Detroit and Lansing Area SCI Chapters also sponsor this event. Three SCI Chapters together provide strong SCI presence which increases veterans' outreach and generates good will. Almost 100 veterans participated in





SCI Chapters' Sponsor Banner for the Crooked Foot Veterans Hunt

this November 7th, 2021 event. The event kicked off with the National Anthem followed by a veterans' raffle of donated items including several shotguns. A safety briefing was conducted, and the group broke down in teams for the several European Hunt towers. I took the opportunity to talk to many of the veterans by posting our Chapter Banner at one of the tower water stations. Smaller teams were formed after a delicious lunch to head out on walk up hunts (see Front Sight Issue #58, Page 22-23).

The Mid Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International again supported the **Walleyes for Warrior** program after a two-year hiatus (http://www.walleyesforwarriors.org/). Due to the COVID-19 situation, the support for 2022 was sent in August of 2021 to help ensure the event would be held. It was a great success while celebrating its tenth year! (https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/walleyes-for-warriors-celebrate-10-years/ar-AAYnLQq & https://www.wnem.com/video/2022/06/13/walleyes-warriors-celebrates-years/)





Veterans' Wyoming Mule deer Hunt



The Chapter took an opportunity to partially support a group of veterans on a mule deer hunt. LJ Planer, himself a former SCI Pathfinder of the Year, helped arrange the hunt through the Kniestedt Foundation (https://kniestedt.org/). This included all-expense paid mule deer hunt for four disabled veterans to trophy area G with Wyoming's Salt River Range

Outfitters and Owners Matthew and Dee Harbach (http://saltriverrangeoutfitters.com/) in September 2021. Our Chapter gladly provided partial support to medically retired Army Ranger Jimmy Alan Eason for this hunt!



Fishing on Saginaw Bay with Walleyes for Warriors

The Chapter is proud of its successful Pathfinders Program. Chapter members volunteer hundreds of hours along with travel to the events. The volunteers network with outfitters, youth and veterans' groups form the ability to offer these opportunities. The Chapter includes and welcomes the youths and veterans at Chapter activities such as Big Buck Night, Annual Convention, and Member Meetings. The Chapter often hosts their attendance at these events. The veterans' Big Frig cooler free raffle at the Annual Convention is always a big hit! The Chapter logo and the US flag are embossed on the wheeled cooler. The Mid-Michigan Chapter efforts generates significant good will among participants, veterans' and youth groups, and the public.

Brandon Jurries is the Point of Contact for the Chapter's Pathfinder efforts.





### CHRISTMAS CREATION

by Sara Christensen

#### **Ingredients**

<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup orange juice

3 cups each; wheat chex, rice chex, corn chex, cheerios, small pretzel knots.

2 cups honey roasted peanuts

2 cups plain M&M's (Red and Green Christmas edition)

6 ounces vanilla chips

2 pounds white almond bark

Melt vanilla chips and almond bark on medium/low stirring occasionally (double boiler or use a thick sauce pan).

Mix with the rest of the ingredients and spread on wax paper.

Cool 2 hours and break apart.



## MID-MICHIGAN CHAPTER SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL

www.midmichigansci.org

## 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

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## 5th Annual Mid-Michigan SCI

# GOLF TOURNAMENT August 9th, 2022

















# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

## Reponses to: Besides your weapon of choice and optics, what is your go to, or must have item when hunting?

- - For deer hunting A sweater I've worn opening day for over 50 years. *Michael Critchfield*
- f If I'm going out west, my mystery ranch Metcalf pack. Jamie Sugar
  - \*\*I'd have to go with my Rapid River knife for gutting and skinning...and toilet paper for those emergencies. \*\*Brent James\*\*
  - ✓ Must have items are always subjective to what you are hunting. The environment you are hunting it in, and the temps that are expecting to be hunting in. When blind hunting deer I have to have a nice pad to sit on for my back side. When spot and stalk hunting it's all about the comfort and support of my boots. I choose the MUST have item based on what I'm going after. Dan Catlin
  - I always carry a good head lamp and Black Diamond makes some great ones.

I'm pretty picky on my knives. I haven't given into the replacement blades like Havalon. I know they're practical. However, I always thought that there was room for craftsmanship in a well made knife and enjoy a knife that is hand sharpened. All my knives are American made and I pride myself on keeping them sharp. Pictured are some of my favorites. Four of these knives were custom made in Michigan and the heavy skinner on left is from Knives of Alaska. Two of these knives were bought at our fundraiser. One over 20 years ago. – **Doug Chapin** 

★ When I'm upland bird hunting it's my Buddy dog! -Brian Stroik

- - Besides my weapon and optics I always bring my journal along with me on my hunts. I enjoy writing about each day's experiences at the conclusion of the day. Sometimes I stay up much too late writing my recap, but I know it is worth it because years later I can relive that adventure by turning the pages of my journal. If you haven't journaled any of your hunting adventures I encourage you to try on your next trip. You may find it helps make the experience even more enjoyable. Josh Christensen
  - ← A good sharp knife that will handle gutting, caping, quartering and deboning. R.B. Sandberg of Michigty Sharp Cuts
    - What I always have to have with me while hunting is my camo blanket and something warm to drink. Autumn Gonda

**←** - Doug Chapin





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#### Editor's Note: In issue 59 the question was posed as to which caliber was your favorite and why. We received many excellent responses and published them in issue 60, however this response from Roger Froling was an all-encompassing answer that I felt could be an article of its own.

## FAVORITE CALIBERS

By Roger Froling

For wood chucks, prairie dogs, coyotes and crows the 22-250 is my choice. It's a flat shooting, long range small caliber, with plenty of power, it is hard to beat.

The Remington 1100 Semi auto 12 gauge is great for pheasants, ducks, geese and rabbits. It's also a fine trap gun.

The 7MM with the 6 to 18 power Sheppard Scope is my favorite caliber for deer, antelope, caribou and sheep. The 7MM has great knock down power at long ranges. The Sheppard scope is a fine American made long range scope with no batteries. This combination has never failed me. I have some nice trophies with this Caliber and scope.

When it comes to bigger animals like the brown bear, grizzly, moose and elk the 300 Mag and the 338 Mag are my choices. They have the knock down power you want and need to ensure your safety and a good clean shot.

In Africa the 30-06 is a good gun for most of the plains game. The Big five require a lot more punch, so for the elephant, cape buffalo, lion, hippo and leopard, the 416 and the 458 Bolt actions are my favorites with plenty of stopping power. Great for stopping the animals in their tracks.













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**MOOSE HUNT IN SACKATCHEWAN** by Mary Harter



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