

FRONT SIGHT



Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

January - March 2024, Issue 65



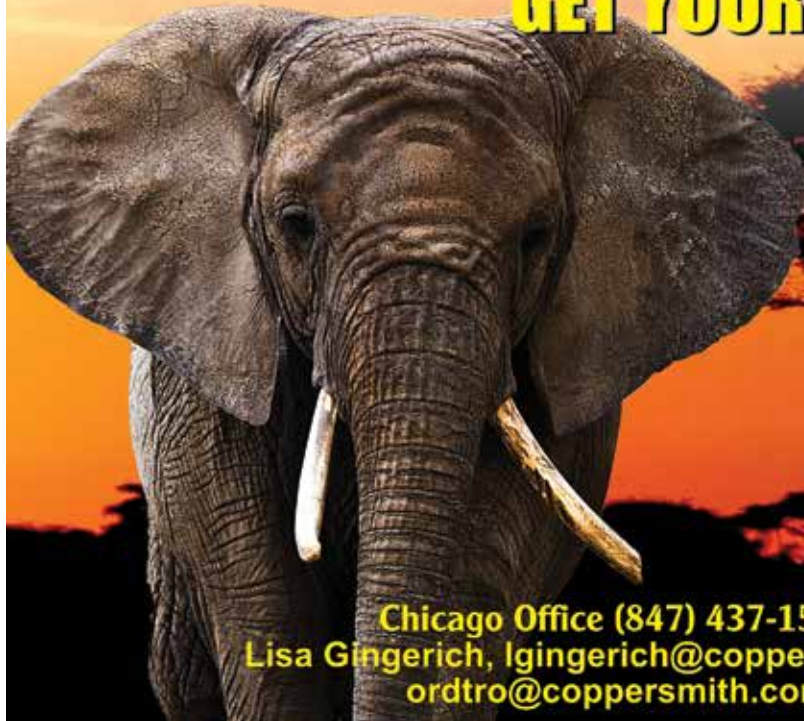
Grouse in the north woods
Photograph by Josh Christensen



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IN THIS ISSUE - January - March 2024

- 2 Chapter Officers and Board Members
- 3 President's Message
- 3 Editor's Message
- 3 Meeting and Events Schedule
- 4 BOOK REVIEW - by Josh Christensen
Never Quit by Jimmy Settle
- 5 BUY, SELL, or TRADE
- 6-8 Impala Madness - by Tony Roettger
- 9-12 The Life of a Professional Huntress
- by Andrea Potgieter
- 13 MARUPA SAFARIS ADVERTISEMENT
- 14-15 45th Annual Hunter's Convention Information
- 16-17 Fishing, Friendship, Fantastic - by Abbe Mulders
- 18-20 African Adventures and Blue Bag Delivery
- by Sue Cameron
- 21-23 Bobcat and Bear Hunt - Part 2 by Josh Christensen
- 24 Hunter's Embassy - by Mary Harter
- 25 HALIBUT CASSEROLE
- by Abbe Mulders via Bert Stromquist
- 25 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
- 26 BIG BUCK NIGHT
- 27-31 ADVERTISERS
- 32 LOOKING AHEAD


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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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Jon Zieman	2018 - 2022



Welcome to our January 2024 Issue!

At the time I am writing this we are heavily focused on two key things – the Michigan Whitetail Deer Season and our 2024 Upcoming Mid-Michigan SCI Fundraiser Gala! The Event this year marks our 45th year of hosting the GALA. We are planning a very Special Sapphire Year Extravaganza. We are adding some fun things to do while visiting us in the Entertainment Hall at the Soaring Eagle Casino and our list of Sponsors, Outfitters and Vendors continue to grow to help us welcome all of you to our Show!!! We will once again be adding a Friday Night Auction to our lineup, with more surprises that we'll be sharing over the next couple of months. How about taking the time NOW to put our event on your calendar and PLAN ahead; get your tickets EARLY (the early bird catches the worm as the saying goes) and make your hotel reservations!!!



This year we are also welcoming two new members to our Board of Directors – Ben Chapin and Ashley Leyder. Ben and Ashley have both been active as members in the Chapter and I welcome their time and talent coming onto the Board! As one of the leading SCI Chapters in Michigan, this board is committed to continue our mission of conservation, protecting the rights of Hunters everywhere, and providing hunting opportunities for people who are handicapped or disabled. Membership in Mid-Michigan's SCI chapter provides you, the hunter, with many benefits and advantages that are worth studying and getting involved in. We'd LOVE to have YOU get involved and join us in 2024 at our meetings and events!!! To that end, we will soon be sending out a survey to get more of YOUR thoughts for future planning!

Please check out our improved website midmichigansci.org or visit our Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/MidMichiganSCI/> (Mid-Michigan Safari Club International).

Have a great Holiday Season & I'll see you at our Sapphire Fundraiser Event,

Abbe M. Mulders
Abbe Mulders

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

What an awesome fall our family had! As most of you know, both of my son's participate in cross-country at school. This year was one for the books, the record books! Elijah and his team ran their way to their third consecutive conference championship, then they won the first regional title for Gladwin in over 20 years and finished the season as the fifth best team in division two. Along the way Elijah made his way up the record board at his high school and is currently the fourth fastest kid to ever run a 5k at Gladwin! Ivan competed in the middle school as a sixth grader this season. He ran very well and finished as a first team all-conference runner.



Our family at the MHSAA state cross-country meet at MIS.

As you are reading this our Michigan deer season will have concluded. I hope the season brought you multiple encounters with the deer you were targeting. If you were lucky enough to bag that big buck you should join us for Big Buck Night on January, 13th at the Comfort Inn in Mt. Pleasant.

We also have our 45th Annual Hunter Convention at the Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort on Friday, February 23rd and Saturday, February 24th. This will be a wonderful opportunity to talk with outfitters from around the world and bid on many hunts, fishing trips and hunting items in our live or silent auctions. And of course, we will have many raffles throughout the weekend.

As always, we are looking for articles to publish in our magazine. There are three formats we use, pictorial essays, journals, and written articles. The pictorial essay format is for those who don't necessarily want to write an entire story but still want to relive their adventure through pictures with captions (this is similar to a Facebook post format). The journal entry format is when people send me a copy of their journal along with pictures (if you don't usually keep a journal on your hunting trips I recommend you give it a try on your next adventure). And of course, we have the normal article format. 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 W. Christensen
Josh Christensen

Editor
(989) 329-4911 • jchappyfish@gmail.com

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Schedule of Events

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Event	Time	Location
Jan. 13, 2024	Big Buck Night	TBA	Comfort Inn
Jan. 31-Feb. 3, 2024	Annual National Convention	TBA	Nashville, Tennessee
Feb. 23 & 24	Mid-Michigan Convention/Fundraiser	TBA	Soaring Eagle Casino and Resort

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: *Never Quit*

Original Copyright: 2018

Author: Jimmy Settle

List Price: \$ 9.99

Publisher: St. Martin's Griffin

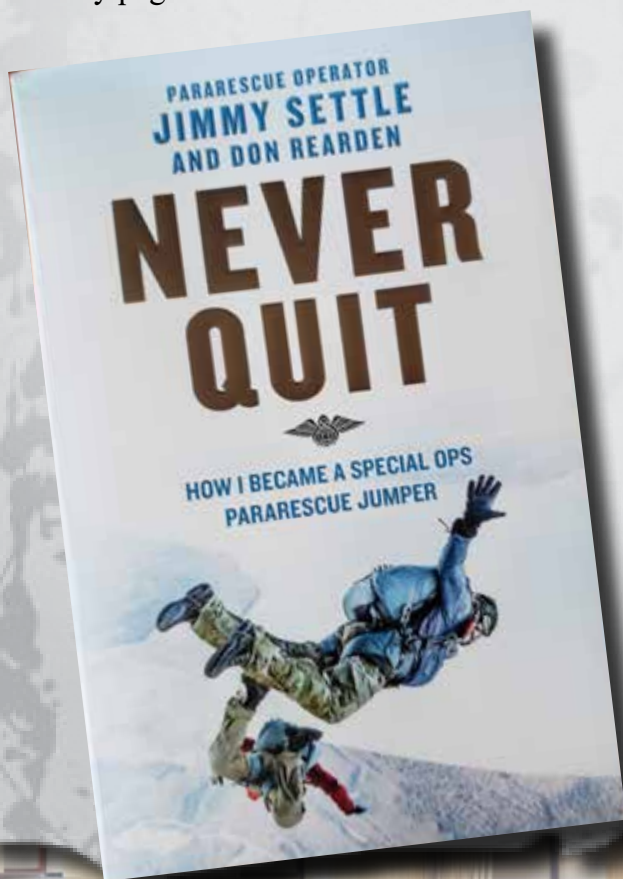
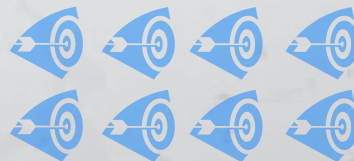
Like many other books written about tier one operators, *Never Quit* takes the reader into the life of a highly trained military soldier. If you've ever read a book about these super soldiers you have realized a large portion of the book is about the massive amount of difficult training they received. This book is no different, many pages are

dedicated to the intensive and long training Settle had to endure.

What set this book apart from others is the branch of special operators the book is written about. Most other books in this genre seem to be about the Navy's Seal Teams, or the Army's Special Forces, but this book focuses on the lesser known, but not less important Pararescue Jumpers (PJ's) of the Air Force. For this reason, I found reading *Never Quit* to be an interesting and informative journey. The only thing that could have made this book better would be if there were more stories about the operations the PJ's participated in.

If you've ever found our country's special military operators interesting and wanted to know more or are interested in reading about the Air Force's Pararescue Jumpers, this book might be for you.

This book gets 8 out of 10 bullseyes



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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 unless otherwise discussed with the editor.
- The Mid-Michigan Chapter is not responsible for items sold.

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By Tony Roettger

I talked him into going with me along with my mom in August of 2009. Dad even went out and bought a new PSE bow and practiced all spring and summer. While in Africa, dad went to the blind with me every day during that trip. He even let down his drawn bow on a warthog one evening while sitting a water hole. All he could say was, "Gray thing, gray thing!" in a whisper. I never saw the "gray thing" come in until he pointed it out because I was so excited for him to shoot that warthog. He was looking at gemsbok. He knew how badly I wanted to harvest one so he let down his draw so I could take the gemsbok.

All dad wanted to hunt was a warthog and an impala. Both animals were scarce on that trip with Limcroma Safaries; a few small warthog and no impala seen for 6 days but on the second to last day of the hunt in a new blind there was an impala spotted coming to drink. We waited for a while, birds pecking at the one way glass window, a group of mongoose came to drink as the sun warmed the morning air. Finally there they came, a group of impala. Three nice rams in the group. They did not drink but they did lick the salt.

After sauntering in, as impala tend to do, they began to just mill about. One of the rams with narrow tips, offered a good shot at 29 yards. A distance very doable for my dad. I was filming the hunt; dad drew his bow; settled the pin and "Thwack!" and the words "Oh shoot" fell from his mouth. Heartbreak...I saw the arrow go over that impalas back. Turned out dad couldn't see the pins due to the combination of blind angle and the position of the sun which blacked out his pins. He settled where he thought it should be, turned out it was not right. It broke my heart to watch and then sit in that uncomfortable silence.

The impala is the "McDonalds" of the bushveld. They even have

an "M" on their backsides you can see as they walk away. They are supposed to be easy to get I always thought! They are supposed to be all over the place! They are inexpensive animals to hunt and not something that becomes an obsession for a person. But they became an obsession for me that year. No way were these bottom of the food chain animals going to outsmart me again. I put them on the top of my hit list for the next time I went to Africa.

As it turned out, these snacks of the bushveld became a pain in my #\$% for years. When I say years, I am talking a decade! The second time I went to Africa I at least saw some impala. On day four of this trip the morning was turning to noon time when a very nice impala came into the water hole. Looking back I am not really sure how big it was but I would say around 25", maybe more, which in terms of Impala - you shoot those. They are big - not like a 200" whitetail but like a solid 170" whitetail for comparison. He finally came to drink and offered me a shot. I drew my bow, I tried to aim and "thwack!" Like a moron I hit the trigger and off the arrow sailed over the impalas back followed by the impala running off never to be seen again. I never saw another impala on that trip. That was 2011 and it added fuel for what would not be the end of the madness.

2015 came with a trip back to the Limpopo province of South Africa. A new outfitter - Marupa Safaris - a new adventure and new company joining me. This adventure however, came with nasty weather. Rain, cold, wind, sleet and overall horrible hunting. The rains came early and in small portions that year meaning they did not come later resulting in the aquafers drying for some years to follow. We harvested some animals, but I never saw an impala at a water hole. Strike three on impalas.

2017 came with a trip back to Limpopo and Marupa Safaries. The weather was great. The drought was still in affect but there



Arrow Flight - 1 - 2 - 3

were animals about and they were using the water available to them. I saw many impala and this is where the story really begins to hit bottom...rock bottom. My archery catapult into a massive slump and the realization I had to face and fix my horrible target panic that had been evolving at a horrible pace the last few years that I was only hiding, not overcoming. During this trip I shot at so many impala and botched shots I completely lost count at around seven. I did not wound any but I did shave some hair off and got close. I was a mess; I was as frustrated as one can imagine and had hit rock bottom with my bow. I could not draw and settle a pin without just rushing, punching the trigger and/or just getting stuck in a froze state with my movements and at times blacking out (sounds weird). I was having an overall brain melt. If you have ever suffered from this to the degree I had or even a little, you know what I am talking about.

Now, I do not blame the Impala as a species, but they did not

help. In many ways I should maybe thank the impala as they made me realize I had an issue that had to be fixed immediately. I had to face it and fix it most importantly and I was not sure how. The "how" will have to be another story as this is about the impala. I also did get my head marginally right to harvest a couple animals on the 2017 adventure but no impalas.

2019 came with a new, refreshed and complete change in my mental presence. This came with a lot of work and putting myself in uncomfortable positions to "fix" my problems. The damage done to my shooting was, to a certain degree, permanent. As I pulled out my bow in the African air, the same setting that completely crushed all confidence in my ability to shoot a bow left me feeling all the anxieties I had when I left 2 years prior. I had to "Get my mind right" as the warden said to Luke in Cool Hand Luke.

As luck would have it my first experience in the blind was with my PH Pieter, GC and my wife in the same blind I missed over seven impala at two years prior. I hate people watching me shoot my bow to start with, now I had three people in the blind watching me. When your thoughts are, "Please no animals come in because I do not want to screw up in front of these people!" – That is not a good start to a hunt! To top it off, an impala came in. A nice 23" impala. What happened? He did not give me a shot. I was relieved. That left me sad that I was still fighting my demons.

The next day there were some things going on in camp with a water pump burning out, Kate was heading to the school to visit kids and GC was the driver for her. Pieter asked if he could just drop me off in the blind with a cooler of drinks for the morning and get me at lunch time. I was totally accepting of this. If anyone was going to fix me, it had to be ME and what better way to do it but to be alone with my own thoughts and actions.

I sat for a while and had a few animals come in. Giraffe, wildebeest, gemsbok, eland and waterbuck. Then finally as the morning air warmed the impala showed. Many ewes and little ones but finally a decent impala showed himself. I felt the anxiety, I felt my breathing deepen and quicken, and here was my moment to shine or not. The impala made a few attempts to drink and as they do, they get skittish at water. Finally, he came all the way around in front of me and then to the left of me with only a frontal shot, which I won't take. But as he turned to his right, he was looking to the left, I drew my bow, heart pounding, trying to find my pins, the blackness overcame me and I punched that trigger. As I felt the overcoming of anxiety rushing over me and of course the shot and "thwack!" MISS! What an idiot I am! I did it again!



23 or 24 Impala

I sat down, disappointed in myself and sad. That sick feeling in my stomach and the thoughts in my mind were...well, I am sure you can imagine. As I sat, I made a pact with myself, I had to get over this thing and it had to be now; continuing with this issue any longer was going to end my bowhunting future. The animals were all gone now. I decided to walk out, find my arrow, and make sure no blood was on it; there was nothing, not even hair. I went back in the blind, nocked another arrow and waited while drinking a delicious South African Coca-Cola.

I sat for a good hour and then another group of impala came in. Similar as before the ewes came in first. Drank some water as did the little ones. Then I saw him, a nice impala, not a great one but a shooter impala. Heavy horned 22" or 23" long and just nice. He never came in to drink. He walked around and just never really wanted to drink. He milled about in the rear of the herd. I grabbed the range finder because I needed to make a play to harvest him and where he was, was not at the water. He was far left of the blind at a hard angle to shoot at. I waited a long time, and I was feeling different, better; like I had literally hit rock bottom and now only had one direction to go...up. Let's be honest, the worst thing that could happen is I miss another impala! At this point it was beyond sad; it was ridiculously funny.

The impala came in a little bit closer, then turned and started walking away. I immediately went into a zone. I drew my bow with confidence, I knew I could take a walking, quartering away shot and this ram wouldn't go far at all so that is exactly what I did! Drew, aimed for opposite shoulder, 24 yards and "Thwack!" I saw the arrow coming out the opposite shoulder; the ram ran off and within site of the blind he was down in a cloud of red dust.

I said a prayer in thank you to God that morning. I was reborn! As I finished my thank you prayer, I opened that cooler, grabbed another Coke and sat with the biggest smile on my face and enjoyed every second of the moment. I still see the shot, the arrow in flight and the impact.

No more animals came in that morning. At lunch the boys showed up – two of the PH's, Dolfe and Pieter along with my friend Chris Vitek. I told them I missed one and they had a look of, "oh man" as they all endured the slump with me on the last trip two years prior but then I told them to look out over there beyond that stump where a beautiful, red impala laid.

The next day was a trip up into the mountains to look for bushbuck and mountain reedbuck. The air was cool as it normally is in July. We saw a beautiful kudu bull and some kudu cows. Then a few impala came in, including a really nice, heavy horned impala that was just the type of impala you cannot pass on. Pieter said, "You must take that one!" so I drew and shot. The impala ran off and there we sat. Another great impala in the salt! We sat, had a Castle beer and chatted before we went and found him to take some photos.

That afternoon we sat enjoying our time in the field when we saw more impala, giraffe, kudu, rhino, and other animals. One group of impala had some nice rams in it but in the rear of the heard in the bush we saw a good impala along with

a giant impala. I asked Pieter, "Did you get a good look at that one behind it? I think it is giant." Pieter grabbed the binos and the look on his face was priceless. He was at a loss for words. He then asked me, "Have you ever seen one that big?" I had to chuckle as I am not the PH and my answer was a simple "No." This thing was so big it is hard to explain and there is no way anyone is going to believe us when we tell them. I wish we could have got pictures but we were so focused on finding a way to shoot it the pictures never happened. This impala easily would have been a top 10 but most likely a world record; no joke. It was over 30" long with heavy mass that carried through. It could hardly get through the bush it was so big. The horns looked like a meter or yard stick bent into the shape of impala horns. Unfortunately he was never seen again and we were unable to get a shot at him. The other PH's still do not believe us.

A couple of days later we built a new blind up in the mountains maybe 10 miles from where I harvested the second impala of the trip. As luck would have it we saw a lot more impala. One came in with no cares in the world and I was pretty positive it was over 25" to which Pieter agreed with me. I don't think Pieter thought I had any intention of shooting it but in my world you do not pass on 25" plus impala. As the shot sequence shows on the previous page, it was a good shot and a beautiful film job by Pieter. Note the arrow passing through and landing in the water. I was elated to say the least to have such a beautiful third impala.

To conclude this long story: I have overcome the impala curse. I feel very good that in the future I can actually make a clean shot on an impala. My confidence...for now, has been restored. The last impala ranks #46 for archery and #71 overall in the SCI record book. It was, in fact a very nice impala!

*Until next time,
Tony Roettger*



25 plus Impala

The Life of a Professional Huntress

By Andrea Potgieter

Editor's note: Andrea is one of a handful of female Professional Hunters in South Africa. She provided her PH services on several hunts with Marupa Safaris this past hunting season. This is Andrea's story...

What it is like to be a female Professional Huntress in South Africa?

It's been almost five years of being a professional huntress in South Africa with international and local clients, and what a journey it has been! I have travelled all around South Africa, from climbing, slipping, and crawling in the bush and mountains, living my passion. It's not for any woman but it is for me.

After lending my ears out to people in this industry that said it is not for women, I started working in the corporate world and it was toxic for me – and when retrenchments came, I was first in line to leave – and decided now was the time to do what I always wanted to do; be in the wild and hunt. I started from scratch. I sold my car, took my wedding money that my parents saved for me for someday, and bought a truck not knowing what the



next step was going to be. I knew it was going to be hard to start from nothing but with the passion I had in me I just knew that I would learn new skills and use the skills my dad taught me as a young girl hunting by his side.

In the year I started working as a PH I started a brand called Pink Impala that motivates and encourage women in the outdoors and hunting world to also hunt and live their passion.

The logo is the Impala and the Impala Lilly as a crown, a good combination for women that there is a place for us in this industry.

With a lot of marketing on social media, doing PH work for free (just working for my tips) for a few months to build my resume and references. I got fully booked in the new year and off I went on this new journey. With no clue that there was a world



pandemic waiting for us that year, the first hunt finished and just before the new clients arrived the lockdown was announced. I thought to myself maybe it would just be for a week or two but realised in the first week I had to do something now for an income to pay the bills and to live. My dad and I started selling meat, and I got to live my passion out through jewellery that is handmade with bullet casings. I called it Bullet to Beauty by Pink Impala. I also had a few opportunities with local clients that kept me going towards my goals in this industry.

Finally, the pandemic ended, and we could carry on and welcome hunters and tourist from all over the world again in South Africa.

I had to start from scratch again but that didn't stop me. I knew I would learn and grow throughout my struggles.

Once again, hunting season started the next year, I was stressed and worried about how to market myself to the outfitters. It was difficult to gain their trust as a professional huntress.

A Norwegian outfitter saw that there was an opportunity for me and gave me a chance and I got booked to PH for him that year. I will be forever thankful for him and another outfitter in Limpopo that saw my passion for hunting in the outdoors and gave me a chance.

The more you get involved in this industry and learn this industry you can see you can do a lot from hunting, entertainment, and shopping. Meeting new and interesting people and finding the beauty in the everyday life in nature, but most of all you get to learn yourself and sometimes you surprise yourself in doing a difficult or new task. You push yourself to the limit.

As a woman in a man's world, it can be tough!! Most outfitters would rather take a man as a PH than a



woman, so I needed to work extra hard and put in extra effort to get the job.

Going the extra mile and getting your hands dirty, getting full of dust, using dry shampoo more than shampoo, outgrown fingernails, and toe nails, going to bed late and waking up early! Getting stuck in sand and using your arms and hands to get the sand out from under the truck. It is all worth it for me and the real deal.

Being a female professional hunter, I promised myself to be feminine, well-groomed, and ladylike at all times! I still represent being a female, so I always wear a touch of makeup, because I feel if you look good you feel good and you are more confident in doing your job. I don't do it for anyone around me, I do it for myself!!!!

This is my passion and I live for it. I cannot imagine doing anything else. I love my job and do my best to satisfy the clients and do good business with the outfitters and have a good relationship with them. If something is your passion and you work hard you only can go forward in life. Doing what you like as a job is such a privilege.



You must be awake in this industry. Don't lend your ears out to too many people. Listen to those with experience and don't be afraid to ask for references and advice. Just like any other industry, you get people that want to steal from you. Don't let people build their empire with your bricks, build your own.

There is also beauty in the industry for me, helping each other out where needed. Getting sponsorships of products that I can use, and I can help the sponsorships in advertising on the farms and on social media.

To give someone a 'Bullet to Beauty' necklace and see how much they appreciate it. Sometimes it is the small things in life that matter most.

Most off all to be in Nature most of the time and do Conservation through hunting.

My Mom once asked me how I could kill an animal because I always care for pets and animals and want to save them all the time. I told her that once I look through the scope of a gun, everything changes, and it is then a different ball game. We save the animals in the long term through conservation.

It has been a busy & blessed 2023 year with a lot of experiences and challenges, decision making, etc. I'm looking forward to the years ahead in this industry and want to grow as much as I can. I want to meet new outfitters and clients to share the journey with me.

This year I noticed if women (non-hunters) came with their hunter husbands/partners to have a glimpse of their hunting experience, they were much more comfortable in camp knowing that there is another female present. Before you know it they wanted to hunt something with no pressure. Or they're planning a women's hunt at the lodge in the future.

It happened a couple of times this year on different farms.

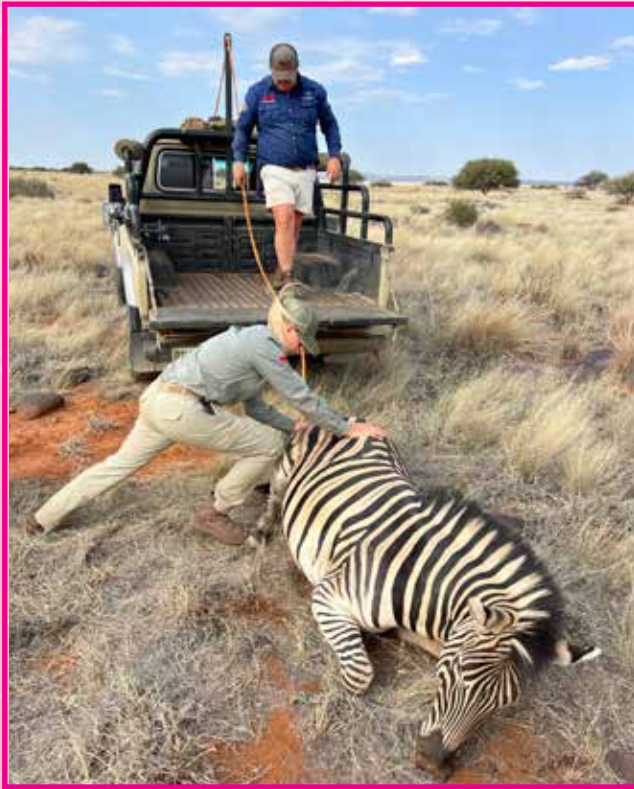


The outdoor world is wild and adventurous, just the way I like it. It can be dangerous, you can get hurt, you need to think out of the box and do the job. If you walk for two days and not see any animals, you need a new plan, even if it's to climb in trees or building your own hides.

The people that taught me the most this year are the trackers and skinners. They respect you and have respect for each other and are always willing to help you and each other when you are struggling with something. Learning from the people that grew up in the field and know it the most! You cannot ignore, but listen and learn. It is easy to become a PH but it takes a lot to be a Professional Hunter. Learning skills, taking every opportunity to learn something new. It can be messy and very hard work!

Sometimes it gets frustrating. Sometimes it doesn't work out or the plans for the day fall apart, or you walk for two days after animals





that just keep on running. For me that makes it more adventurous and the harvest after working so hard is priceless and so worth it. I remember one hunting trip in Limpopo where we walked for a few days not seeing anything in the mountains. We tried everything and when we felt like giving up, the client harvested a blue wildebeest as the sun was setting. The relief we felt was something else! The reward of making memories and having a story to tell was worth every step! And the best part was to see the client's reaction after harvesting the animal! So worth it.

As a result of Covid everything is behind in the hunting industry. It is slowly starting to pick up for us. Sometimes it feels so unfair as there was no help from anyone



in the hunting industry and we were all left out in the cold. But having a positive outlook on life and people that care, I held my head up high, and I will never give up on the adventure. I will take every opportunity that comes my way and give it my best shot.

"It is not just a hobby nor is it a job it is something in my blood and that is what keeps me going."

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45th Annual HUNTER'S CONVENTION Gala

Friday, February 23rd and
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You are invited!

Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International presents the 45th Hunter's Convention Gala at Soaring Eagle Convention Center. The event will feature American and International hunting adventures, wildlife displays, outfitters from around the world, raffle and door prizes, shopping for fur coats and jewelry, along with the latest in hunting equipment. Friday and Saturday will be open to the public with an admission fee. Friday events include a Youth Raffle, Auction Items, and a Members Only Raffle. Saturday events include a Special Awards Ceremony, SCI Banquet, and Live Auction!

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Friday

OPEN TO PUBLIC
Membership/Outfitter
Celebration Night

- **Doors Open @ 5pm**
- **\$10 Cover Charge** per person - without a Weekend Ticket - Under 12 Free
- **Cash Bar**
- Food for purchase
- **Membership Sign-Up**

NEW THIS YEAR -

Buy a Beer Mug - \$25 and Get FREE Refills for the evening

- **Auction Items**
- **Youth Deer Hunt Drawing**
- **Member Only Drawing**
Muskie Fishing Trip
- **Raffles**

Saturday

OPEN TO PUBLIC

11 am - 3pm • \$5.00 at the Door

Saturday Evening Reception

Begins at 4pm (Weekend Ticket Only)

- **Tropical Themed Buffet Dinner**
- **Cash Bar**
- **Raffles and Drawings**
- **Silent Auction**
- **VIP Speaker**
Kyle Green from Greenway Outdoors
- **4th Annual Witte Award Presentation**
- **LIVE Auction** begins at 7pm

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Fishing, Friendship, Fantastic

By Abbe Mulders

As I think back to my childhood, summers were always about being outside and lots of family activities. Being a Michigander, one of the more prominent memories was of fishing in the Saginaw Bay with my Dad, Mom and brother. When you reflect on memories, there is often a recurring theme that comes to mind – and mine is the fact that I was a jinx in that small fishing boat that we used to go out in. My Dad could take my brother and friends out on a morning trip and come back limited out on perch and bluegill. As soon as I would step foot in that boat, the whole 'luck' of the boat would change and we'd come back with a few fish – none of which I caught!!! With this mindset going into adulthood, you could probably guess that I wasn't into fishing very much, nor would I base a vacation planning a fishing trip!

Fast forward into my time participating in Mid-Michigan's SCI Chapter. As we plan and host the chapter's fundraiser year after year, and as I became the co-chairman of the event, I began to see more and more opportunities for fishing from different outfitters and members who attended our events. Still holding tightly onto my old 'superstitions', I would gladly accept the fishing charter donations, but never had too much interest UNTIL....I saw the fun and adventure of those who booked two specific donated charter trips year after year.

Bert & Clay Stromquist's trip was offered from a 72-foot luxury yacht that you stayed on and then went fishing on another boat that they have customized to meet the demands of Fishing in the ocean off the



2023 July - Alaska Fishing Group

shores of Sitka, Alaska. The pictures that the auction winners showed on Facebook and at our Fundraiser show were enticing – lots of smiling faces, lots of great fish being caught, and lots kudos to Clay and Bert for a terrific vacation.

My husband Joe and I began talking with Scott & Sherry Holmes (friends and another SCI board member) about trying to win this donated trip in one of our Fundraiser Auctions. We actually tried a couple of times but got outbid. We needed to get serious, so the next time the item came up for auction, we actually got it and worked to plan the trip 2 years out.

As we got to Sitka, Alaska and were preparing for the adventure, I began to get that nagging feeling of childhood back – what if I jinx everyone on the boat, what if we couldn't find the right species and size of fish, what if, what if....I think I even mentioned my 'unlucky streak' to our friends. The weather was typical for Sitka – a bit rainy, a bit sunny, mild temperatures, good fishing weather. As we left the docks the first of 5 days, it was sunny and nice.

Clay was our fishing captain and boy he sure knows a lot about fishing in the Alaskan waters for King Salmon, Halibut, Silver Salmon, Rockfish, and Ling Cod. There are specific places to go depending on the type of fish being sought, the weather conditions, and the condition of the people fishing. For instance, Clay was fantastic



about showing us a lot of interesting sightings of different species of birds flocking on rock formations in the ocean as we traveled to our fishing spot for the day. We also saw sea lions on rock formations, and urchins which were clinging to the rocks in the most spectacular colors of orange and purple like we had never seen before. We also had a few whale sightings over the course of the 5 days.

The fishing was fantastic the first couple of days, although there were some slow times in mid-afternoon when the fish weren't biting as fervently as in the morning and late afternoon. We were able to catch a lot of great silver salmon, a few rockfish, and limit out on Halibut. All of us caught our limit of King Salmon as well, which are larger than a silver salmon and great eating. We were also lucky enough to catch a couple of Ling Cod that were the exact right measurement to keep!

The second day of fishing was quite memorable, as Scott spent a great deal of time working to bring in a VERY large fish on his line. We were not quite certain what it was, but it challenged him a great deal. Luckily, after considerable time, and all of us watching and hoping he'd be able to get the fish to the side of the boat - There IT was - a HUGE halibut! Clay, with Scott & Joe's help, was masterful in landing that fish into the boat - That fish weighed over 180 lbs!!! We had also caught a bunch of silver salmon and smaller halibut that day - so our pictures of our haul were a cool arrangement on the bottom of the fishing boat.

Bert & Clay also had mesh pots that they baited with some of the carcasses of the fish we had caught in order to catch crab and shrimp. We dropped them down in a couple of coves not terribly far from where the yacht was anchored for the week. Each of the pots had either Joe or Scott's name on them. We left these pots down on the bottom of the ocean for a couple of days. At the end of our 3rd day of fishing, we went and retrieved the crab pots to check on our bounty. We only got a few crabs that were large enough to keep - a little disappointing. Bert expertly prepared the crabs for an appetizer that night and they were delicious! At the end of the next day's fishing, we moved on to the shrimp pots! The first shrimp trap had maybe about 50 shrimp in it (better than the crab anyway). The second shrimp pot however was loaded with shrimp - I think we counted upwards of 194 shrimp overall as we beheaded them for the ice chest.

The fishing on days four and five ended up being a much slower pace of catching fish. The weather had turned a bit rainy and windy, and we were catching ugly dogfish which we ended up throwing back in. Clay was still intent on trying to find more king salmon and Ling cod. In the end, we were happy with the four King Salmon and ended up sharing the two Ling Cod we had caught between the two families.

While Clay was our superb fishing Captain, Bert was our superb in-yacht Chef. He would get up every morning and make us a breakfast of champions along with Coffee & juice. He'd also make us our lunch to take out on the fishing boat. Bert also made fabulous dinners in the evenings, mainly from our catch of the week. One night he made this terrific recipe of Halibut casserole (not sure what the official name of the dish is). We all loved it and had never had a fish entree quite like it! It was so good that I'm including this recipe along with my story. I've actually made it a couple of times since we've been back for friends and family - it is a keeper! If you don't have halibut, I think you should be able to use any mild flavored white fish! THANK YOU, BERT! Other dinners included surf & turf, salmon, and shrimp scampi.

On shore, in the bay where the yacht was anchored, there was a Hot Tub that locals had built and continue to maintain, which is open to everyone. Scott, Sherry, Joe & I spent a late afternoon visiting the hot tub talking about our fishing adventures and sights we saw on this trip with Clay and Bert. In the evenings, the six of us spent the time sharing tales of adventures each of us have had over the years fishing, hunting and places we've visited. We had all known each other, but those evenings of sharing allowed our friendship to grow into special great friends. We're all hoping that we can charter another trip in the future - it is a trip to remember!

And by the way - my childhood stigma of 'unlucky' fishing trips - Well, they're behind me now. This trip has proven that I won't jinx the boat, the other fishermen, or myself!



African

By Sue Cameron



I never thought my husband Terry and I would ever make a trip to Africa, it wasn't even on our radar, but as fate would have it, we won a hunt with Marupa Safaris. We won the hunt before Covid so it took us a few years to get everything in order to go. During the

planning phase we learned some mutual friends (Jeff and Marcene) were also planning a trip with Marupa Safaris so we decided to take our trips together. This would be the first trip to Africa for Terry, Marcene and me, but Jeff's second trip to the continent. The following is a snap shot of our adventure.

Day 1 hunting

We had a beautiful morning at the Kalahari Lodge in the Northern Cape of South Africa as we headed to the lodge for a delicious breakfast. With breakfast over Terry, Marcene, Jeff, GC and I met at the truck ready to head out to the shooting range so the guys could get a couple of practice shots using the gun – a 6.5 x 55 they would be using. Target practice was successful so we set out in search for Springbok. GC said, "The Springbok will get you guys ready for the bigger game." The wind was not in our favor that morning. The Springbok were hanging out with a herd of bigger species making it harder to get a clear

shot. Finally, we were in position with the wind's favor and Jeff was able to take a shoulder shot downing the springbok quickly. Passing the gun to Terry, before the group ran off again Terry got a good shoulder shot on a second springbok – but it didn't fall. You could see it bleeding. It started to run off with the rest of the group and finally went down for the count. By 11:36 A. M. both Terry and Jeff had their first African trophies!

Returning to the lodge for lunch and a rest. The four of us headed out for the next hunt with Pieter, GC and Mike. This time we entered a different section of land owned by Marupa Safaris to look for a gemsbok for Terry. It was a sunny, late afternoon as we drove slowly through the area when Pieter spotted a group of Gemsbok – but they also spotted the truck. Immediately, Pieter turned the vehicle driving away from them while getting downwind from



them. Pulling the truck into the cover of brush Pieter, Terry and Mike exited to begin their stalk of the gemsbok. After about a half-hour of stalking they closed in on the animals. Some of the animals ran out of sight, but two stayed back. Pieter deployed the shooting sticks as the guys watched the two animals for a moment. As Pieter pointed out the one to shoot, it walked behind a large bush and remained there for what seemed like eternity. When it came out from behind the bush it was moving at a fast pace. Terry was on the shooting sticks. Pieter whistled – the Gemsbok stopped – only to have the sun fill the scope at that moment



Adventures



- not allowing Terry to see anything. As he repositioned the gun and sticks, the gemsbok started to walk again. This time Pieter hollered - it stopped - this time the scope was clear. The gemsbok was 145 yards away; Terry squeezed the trigger and the 6.5 x 55 roared to life! Pieter, Mike and Terry watched as the gemsbok took off. Pieter said nothing, only watching through his binoculars. He lowered the binoculars, after what seemed like a long time, with a smile on his face he pointed towards where the animal was laying. What a thrill it was to walk up onto such a beautiful animal! Terry and I were in awe at the size of the horns, color and markings on the animal - this was a nice male gemsbok! An exciting, successful day of hunting had come to an end. As we made our way back to the skinning shed we saw so many different species! Not just one or two of a species but large groups - sable, duiker, black wildebeest, impala, red hartebeest, steenbok, roan, nyala, kudu, blesbok and so much more.

Day 2 Hunting

Another crisp, sunny winter morning ushered in a promising second day of hunting in the Northern Cape at Marupa Safaris. At 7:30 AM Terry, Jeff, Marcene, GC, and I loaded up in the van to travel to a neighboring property. Pieter met us there with a hunting truck. On the second morning of the hunt the focus was on two of Terry's animals - the blue wildebeest and impala, Jeff was also looking to score an impala. With open ranges on both sides of the road we caught glimpses of wart hogs running along the road while passing occasional gates until we finally pulled up to the property. We were to wait here for the caretaker. Andre, a caretaker for the property soon arrived and we traded the van for a dual cab truck equipped for hunting. Andre riding shotgun with GC, Marcene and I in the back seat, and Pieter, Terry and Jeff in the open truck bed watchful on

our drive along the two track trail. The terrain in this area was much like the land around the Kalahari Lodge, flat, semi-arid savannah grassy areas and few trees. Soon we began to see different herds of animals grazing in the near distance. Then the terrain to our left turned rockier with hills or koppies and our first glimpse of a herd of blue wildebeest. Instantly Pieter and Terry were on alert and excitement of the hunt was mounting. The herd moved along the rocky ridge and out of sight. We continued in the direction they headed and soon came upon them again. This time we parked the truck and Pieter, Terry, rifle in hand, and Jeff with the shooting sticks quietly exited the truck and stalked the group of older bulls who had

broken away from the herd pursuing them along the rocky ridge for the perfect shot. Pieter got Terry in position with the hunting sticks set and the animal quartering towards them. Terry was waiting for the bull to turn broadside, but Pieter said "Take it!" At approximately 154 yards Terry took a kill shot to the base of the neck and upper shoulder area! The wildebeest took off running and the guys lost sight of him. Pieter said "Grab the sticks, let's go!" Moving in



the direction the animal went Pieter finally turned back to Terry and Jeff and pointed at the base of the rocky koppie - "Terry, there's your wildebeest!" he said. They cautiously approached the bull, which hadn't gone too far before dropping, making sure it was not still alive. The wildebeest was by best guess approximately 550 pounds with massive horns. What a great start to the morning hunt and it was only 9:30, we had one trophy animal down and were getting prepared to go to the skinning shed.

Once the blue wildebeest was on its way to the skinning shed we proceeded to travel down the two track road in search of impala. After what seemed like hours and many miles we came upon a large group of impalas. They were very skittish and took off running. We advanced slowly in the direction they had gone and came upon them again. This time they had split into two groups – the larger males went one way and the females and young went another direction. We focused on following the few large rams until we were within shooting range. GC, Jeff and Terry were in the back of truck – Terry had the gun in position on the shooting bags on the cab roof. GC was next to Terry glassing them with his binoculars, while Terry watched them in the scope. Terry spotted what he thought to be a nice impala. GC started to say “Shoot the one on the left, confirm?” “BOOM!” Terry’s confirmation came from the report of the 6.5 x 55. GC said “I hope you were on the correct animal.” Terry replied, “I’m sure it is because it is laying on the ground!”

A special thanks to Marupa Safaris for making our first trip to Africa an unforgettable experience from the moment we arrived until our departure for home. *LEBE Making Them Memories*



Grilling the evening meal at the Ponzi Lodge began with building a good bonfire on a cement slab. Once the coals were red hot, a shovel was used to transfer the coals to a grill where the chef cooked a large ring of sausage and chicken for our meal.



After the hunting portion of our trip with Marupa Safaris was completed we now looked forward to bringing our Bell Family Blue Bag filled with educational and dental supplies to a rural public school. Marcene, (a former 2nd grade teacher and Elementary principal) and I (Special Education, 6th grade Reading/Language Arts teacher) both being retired educators had anxiously looked forward to this part of our trip. GC, our Professional Hunter/guide, explained that Gravelotte Primary School in the Mopani East District of the Province of Limpopo was one of a few public schools that Marupa Safaris supports. The school is a Section 21 school meaning it is allocated finances by the department but is responsible for ordering stationery, textbooks, paying water and lights accounts and undertaking their own maintenance. Gravelotte’s fundamental principles aim to ensure that children acquire and apply knowledge and skills in ways

Blue Bag Delivery

that are meaningful to their own lives. The school curriculum promotes knowledge in local contexts, while being sensitive to global imperatives.

We arrived at the school in the early afternoon and were welcomed by the principal. He explained that the brick school was built in 1954 and currently provided classes for preschool (4 yr old) – 7th grade for 269 learners. At this time, they have no busses and therefore must rent two busses to transport the children to and from school on a daily basis.

The principal escorted us to a preschool classroom of 31 four year old African students, one teacher and an adult assistant. Students are required to wear school uniforms, most had knit beanie hats or other head covering and a couple children were barefoot. The young students were eager to have visitors and displayed good listening skills as the teacher organized the students for a group photo opportunity with us. The teacher humbly thanked us for all the donations found in the bag. The children couldn’t wait to examine the new things. (educational and dental supplies: notebook paper, pencils, colored pencils, prepackaged individual travel kits, toothbrushes, soccer balls, Frisbees, tote bags,

zipper pouches, foam airplane kits and Bit-O-Honey candy, etc.)

This rural African primary classroom was similar to our American preschool classrooms with walls displaying colorful educational concepts the children were focused on learning. Tables and chairs provided group seating and work area for the students. The teacher exhibited excellent classroom management skills while being warm and caring. It was obvious the respect these students had for their teacher. We assisted the teacher in putting the donated items in a storage area off the classroom. The teacher attempted to put some school supplies in her wooden desk. The top of the desk covered with a colorful cloth and various tools from the day’s lesson; she then attempted to put some of the donated supplies in her desk drawers. The bottoms of the drawers were literally falling apart – so she laid them on the top of her desk. Before we departed, the students then performed a song with motions for us in their native language. We soon recognized the familiar tune and body motions as “Toot-a-Tot”! Joining in with their voices we sang the song with them. Our Gladwin preschoolers also have performed this same song.



Bobcat & Bear Hunt

Part Two

By Josh Christensen

In 2022 I had accumulated enough points to draw a bear tag in the Amasa unit of Michigan's Upper Peninsula and was ready to finish my hunt with Wild Spirit Guide Service. Arrangements were made to partake in my bear hunt in the middle of September. As the date approached I became extremely excited to attempt to take a black bear in my home state using the Winchester 30-30 left to me by my grandfather when he passed away 17 years earlier. The lever action rifle was now over 70 years old with iron sights. I had never used this rifle for hunting, only target practice, and was hopeful I would get the opportunity to take a bear using it.

When talking to Dan, owner of Wild Spirit Guide Service, he told me I could either get a hotel room in the Iron River/Crystal Falls area or I could stay with him and his family as they camped out in the area we would be hunting. He told me he could have a tent set up for me if I wanted. I elected the tent option because I felt this would help me fully experience the adventure.

The day finally arrived where I would leave for camp in the U.P. I left straight after work on a Friday and drove the six hours to the Iron River area. In driving to the western part of the U.P. I traveled into the central time zone, gaining an hour. I still didn't arrive until after 10:00 pm local time, 11:00 pm eastern time. During the last two hours of my drive I drove through scattered rain storms, which were forecasted to continue in my hunting area until four or five in the morning.

When I arrived at camp there was a break in the rain, with only a slight drizzle coming down. Dan greeted me and we discussed how his hunting had been going up to this point. I was hunting the second season, all of his hunters in the first season were successful and three of his hunters in the second season had all had opportunities but passed, looking for bigger bears. He said if the weather would cooperate he was confident we would have some good opportunities over the next four days. He showed me to my



accommodations for my stay. The tent he set up for me was placed on a small flatbed trailer so I would stay dry if the rain did come. In the tent was a cot to help keep me comfortable. Before heading to bed, Dan told me we would be up at 4:30 to check the baits and hopefully run a bear with his dogs.

After a full day of work, followed by a six hour drive I had no problem falling asleep that night. It felt like I was out as soon as my head hit the pillow. The next thing I heard was my alarm going off at quarter after four. I was up and ready to start my bear hunting adventure.

Dan explained he had a line of eleven baits set over a 110 square mile area. Our routine for the morning was to check a bait to see if it had been hit during the night. With the rain from the night before, it was decided if the bait was hit he would then check the trail camera to see when the bear was at the bait and how big it was. If the bear was there after 3:00 am and was a good one, Dan would send the dogs out. The first bait we checked had been hit, however the trail camera showed the bear was there around 11:00 pm. Dan didn't send the dogs on this track.

As we continued driving from bait to bait we found some of the baits hadn't been hit and others had been hit by smaller bears. Around the sixth or seventh bait we stopped at we found a good bear had been in eating the bait around 3:00 am. Dan sent three dogs out on the trail, however after trying to trail the bear for about 10 minutes it was determined it must have rained after three in this area because the dogs were only finding scent under trees with a large canopy. Dan decided we would have better luck at other baits and we should move on.

The next bait we came to was also hit by a nice bear around 4:00 am, but the dogs would not be sent after this bear because eleven minutes before we showed up a wolf was captured on the trail cam as well. Dan, and most other bear hunters in the area, won't release their dogs on a bear if there are wolves around. Dan said this year had been one of the worst for wolves. He had had more encounters with wolves





this year than ever before. He also mentioned he worried about the moose population in the area because the previous year he saw multiple moose regularly and this year, he hadn't seen any and only crossed one track all season.

The second to last bait we came two had also been hit, but the trail camera somehow failed to work that night. With only one more bait to go Dan decided to let three dogs go after the scent. It didn't take them long to pick up the trail and the race was on. When the bear crossed a two-track Dan released two more hounds on the trail. After releasing the dogs Dan found a track of the bear on the trail and identified it as a small bear. Our plan now was to follow the dogs from the trucks using their GPS collars and try to get ahead of the bear to watch it cross another road and determine how big it was. If it was bigger than Dan thought we would let the dogs continue. If it was a smaller bear, like Dan thought it was, we would grab the dogs as they crossed the road in pursuit of the bear.

This was a great plan, however it didn't happen. Every time we felt we were positioned in a place to watch the bear cross a road it would turn and run back into the section it came out of. We drove around that block multiple times trying to see the bear cross a road, but it never did. After over an hour of following the dogs from one side of the block to the other they had treed the bear. We drove to within a 700 yards of the treed bear and began our walk in. I had the 30-30 in hand and we began to follow the line the GPS tracker had for us. We didn't have to walk too far into the thick woods before we started to hear the dogs barking. It



was amazing how loud the dogs were! The noise at the base of the tree was deafening as the dogs barked and howled while looking up at the bear. Around 40 feet up sat the bear looking down at us from its perch on a limb. As Dan had thought, the bear was a small one, so we gathered the dogs and made our way back to the trucks.

We checked the last bait to see if a bear hit it before we headed back to camp. Unfortunately, nothing had. It was now around 11:00 and we started back for camp. We arrived around 11:30. I ran into town to get a bite to eat and some gun oil. The ol' 30-30 got a bit wet walking through the thick woods. Everything



was covered with water from the previous night's rain. Before leaving for town I asked Dan was our plan would be for the rest of the day. He told me I could either wait for the next morning to check the baits again, or I could go sit in a stand over a bait at a different location about 20 miles south of where we were staying. I opted for the stand option. I figured if I was here to hunt I had better take advantage of every opportunity I had.

We left camp to drive south of Crystal Falls around 1:30. As we approached the piece of property I would be hunting, Dan told me a different hunter sat in that stand the night before, but left with an hour and a half of daylight left. When we arrived at the location we needed to walk a half mile back to the stand on a two track. As we walked down the trail there was an explosion of noise and movement to my right. Out of habit I

began to shoulder my firearm as a ruffed grouse evacuated the area.

After our walk to the blind I saw the set-up was a small grassy field, about 30 yards by 70 yards. There was a pop-up blind on one end of the field and a bait on the other. This was the 30 yard part of the field, a perfect close shot for the 30-30 if a bear came in.

I could see the bait had been hit the night before because the food was all gone and the three pieces of wood that held the bait was disassembled. The bait set up on this site was a cross section of a tree laid on the ground with a hollow tree stump laid on top of the cross section. It was topped with another cross section of a tree. It looked quite natural and I would guess if someone were to walk by it in the woods they wouldn't notice it because it just looked like a tree stump.

As I settled into the pop-up blind, Dan set the bait area back up and refilled the tree stump topping it with the cross section. Dan gave me some last minute guidance on what to look for in the size of a bear and then left me there to sit for the evening. I was settled in and ready by 3:00. It usually didn't get dark until after 7:00, so I knew I had some time. I practiced pulling up my 30-30 on the bait area several times to make sure I could do so quietly and without much movement. Then I settled in for a long sit.

I took several pictures from inside the blind and then got my journal out and started to record the events of the day. I even had one bar of service on my phone so I also texted my wife and some friends to let them know how things were going. The inside of the blind was stifling! The outside temperature was nearly 80 and the sun had just broke through the clouds turning the blind into an oven. But even as I sat there sweating I couldn't help but smile. I was in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, not one mile from the Wisconsin boarder sitting in the woods in hopes a bear would come in.

Around 3:30 something made me look up from my journal. It wasn't a twig snapping or any noise that I can recall, but something made me look toward the bait. When I did, my heart jumped. A bear was at the bait! I couldn't believe it. I had only been at the stand for 30 minutes. I tried to judge the size of the bear. I wasn't sure if it was big enough for my first bear. It looked like it had a big head to me, which was something I knew was a good sign,



but I also didn't want to end my hunt on the first evening. So I decided to watch the bear and take pictures. I figured I would let this bear go this evening and if I wasn't successful the next morning I would come back to this stand and probably take the bear then.

I practiced pulling the 30-30 up and placing the iron sights on the bear's vitals to ready myself for a future encounter with a bear. The bear would take some bait and eat it, then take some more and do the same. I was amazed at how quiet the bear was at only 30 yards away. It had

snuck right up to the bait without a sound. As the minutes ticked by I began to second guess my thought to pass on this bear. I thought about the other three second season hunters that passed on earlier opportunities and then went home empty handed. From the weather report I knew rain was a high possibility again this evening. I also thought about the old saying, "Don't pass up on the first day what you would harvest on the last day." I have pretty much lived my hunting life on this moto.

So a half hour after the bear first made its' appearance I decided I would attempt to harvest this bear and bring it home. I slowly shouldered my grandfather's rifle. I placed the iron sights just behind the bears front should, pulled the hammer back, took a deep breath and squeezed the trigger. The impact of the 150 grain power point bullet was immediately observed as they bear took a swipe at whatever just stung it. Then the bear took off on a dead run to my left. As the bear left my sight from my shooting window I observed a large amount of blood exiting the area I shot the bear.



Before I could get the rifle up in the next shooting window I saw the bear go down.

I couldn't have been happier with my bear. I texted Dan about my success and within an hour we had the bear loaded up. We were able to take some great pictures of the beautiful animal before heading back to camp where Dan and I caped and quartered the bear. It was hard to believe the bear hunt I had planned three years for was over so quickly. The next morning I was up by 4:30 again and on the road heading home. I was lucky enough to find the Roscommon DNR bear check station open on Sunday to check in my bear. Although the entire experience was spectacular, I would have to say my favorite aspect of the whole thing was using my grandfather's rifle to take my first black bear.



Hunter's Embassy

by Mary Harter

On October 19, 2023, Don and I were part of the dedication and ribbon cutting ceremonies for the SCI Hunter's Embassy in Washington D.C. SCI had owned the building, then it became part of the SCI Foundation, and now, since the Foundation no longer wants to own it, has been purchased back by SCI. The down payment was graciously made by Armand and Mary Brachman from Minnesota and dedicated as the Armand and Mary Brachman SCI Advocacy Center. The white brick building is located at 501 2nd Street N. E., which is very near the Capitol.

Many of the SCI Board of Directors for SCI, several congressmen, a representative from the Canadian Parliament, many of our employees who work in DC, and several other invited dignitaries were present.

We arrived a couple of days early so several from the Board of Directors could attend a hearing presented by Ben Cassidy to the House of Representatives on the Hill. He was speaking about H.R. 5009, the WILD Act, to encourage greater collaboration on community-centered conservation especially in regards to elephant hunting in Africa. SCI has done a study in southern Africa which proves sustainability for hunting elephants which included an area the size of France.

We flew to D.C. with Joe and Debbie Pedersen and Mike and Deborah Crawford. Since Deborah had never been to D.C., we three women decided to tour D.C. and hired a driver for four hours to show us the highlights. Debbie's sister, who lives in the area, joined us.





Sharing Some Good Cookin'!



Halibut Casserole

Submitted by Abbe Mulders via Bert Stromquist

Topping Mixture –

- 2/3 c sour cream 1/3 c mayo
- Grated Parmesan or Shredded Cheddar Cheese
- Small can of Hatch chili peppers
- Small jar of artichokes

(Mix together and let sit in the fridge for several hours to all day)

Casserole Assembly –

- Chop ½ of an onion
- 2 T melted butter

Place above in bottom of a Pyrex dish (9x13). Place the Fish on top of the onions & add salt & pepper to taste. Layer topping mixture over the fish. Top topping mixture with crushed Ritz crackers. Bake @ 350 about 40-50 minutes (until the fish is cooked through).

Bert also recommends Soy Yah Veri Veri Teriyaki Marinade & Sauce for marinating & cooking Salmon. (It can be found at Kroger or Meijer stores in Michigan.)



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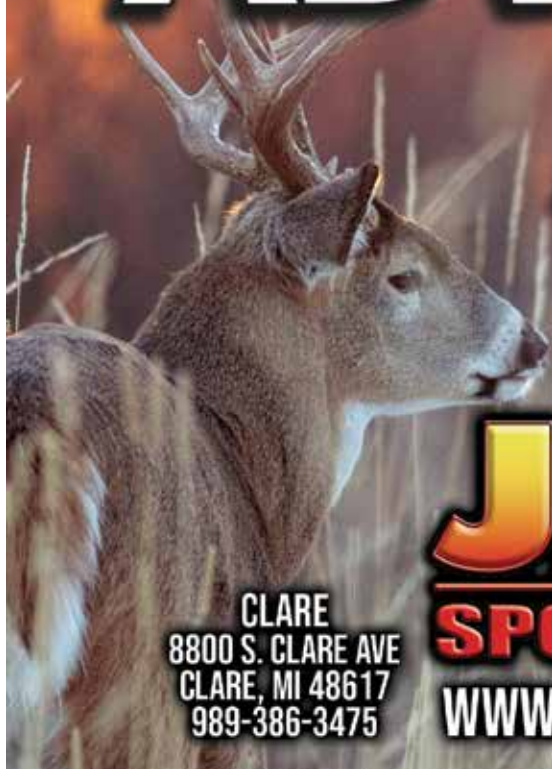


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