



Oklahoma *Safari Trails*

May 2008



CONSERVATION OF WILDLIFE/PROTECTING OUR RIGHT TO HUNT
Oklahoma Station, Safari Club International, PO Box 186, 114 N. 4th, Okarche, OK 73762,
(405) 263-7404 / (405) 721-7229 / (800) 405-3580 / Fax: (405) 263-7956 / www.oklahomastationsci.org

SCI HUNTER'S CODE OF ETHICS

Recognizing my responsibilities to wildlife, habitat and future generations, I pledge:

- A. To conduct myself in the field so as to make a positive contribution to wildlife and ecosystems.
- B. To improve my skills as a woodsman and marksman to ensure humane harvesting of wildlife.
- C. To comply with all game laws, in the spirit of fair chase, and to influence my companions accordingly.
- D. To accept my responsibility to provide all possible assistance to game law enforcement officers.
- E. To waste no opportunity to teach young people the full meaning of this code of ethics.
- F. To reflect in word and behavior only credit upon the fraternity of sportsmen, and to demonstrate abiding respect for game, habitat and property where I am privileged to hunt.

SCI PURPOSE AND INTENT

- A. To promote good fellowship among all who love the outdoors and hunting.
- B. To promote conservation of the of the world's renewable wildlife resources, recognizing hunting as one of the many management tools.
- C. To educate youth, sportsmen and the public in conservation of our wildlife and our forests, which are our natural heritage.
- D. To share our hunting experience and information among our membership.
- E. To operate the association as a non profit organization, consistent with its charitable purpose, while providing enjoyment for our members, always with the goal of helping to conserve the animals that we love to hunt today - for those who will come to love the sport tomorrow.



Leadership of the Oklahoma Station Chapter of Safari Club International:

Financial Advisory Directors:

William H. Crawford,
George Caswell

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Past Presidents Council:

Dr. M. W. (Bill) Lockard, Sam Munhollon, Leroy Ussery, Jim Waters, James L. White

The view through the Presidents sight:



Greetings Oklahoma Station members and supporters;

Thank you! Our March Awards Banquet and Charity Fundraiser was one of the best in years and will allow us to carry forward with our mission to protect our heritage of hunting, educate the public about the value of hunting as a wildlife management tool, contribute to conservation projects and reach out with humanitarian services. We are truly grateful for your support.

One project we started last year is the Safari Care program. SCI provides us with a blue bag that we fill with medical and educational items. Then when a SCI member goes on an international trip to areas of poverty and need, we supply these items to clinics and schools in those areas. We need your help in securing items to fill these bags. Items we need donations for include; over the counter drugs, first aid supplies, mosquito netting, coloring books, crayons, school supplies, toys and hard candy. The list is endless. If you can help, send Mike Mistelske a note mjmistelske@yahoo.com letting him know what you can do to help with this worthy endeavor. Or you can call Verilea (405) 721-7229 with the information. You can also make a cash donation to be specifically used to buy these items and cover the airline excess baggage costs.

The Alaska Chapter of SCI is reaching out to all SCI members to look for support on the upcoming ballot initiative to stop predator management in Alaska. You can support the cause and get more information at the Alaskans for Professional Wildlife Management's website at www.protectmoose.com. The Alaska Chapter of SCI has also put together a raffle to raise resources to educate the public on the issue; there are three special trips being raffled off, a Kenai Fishing trip, a red stag hunt and a brown bear hunt. There are only 200 tickets for sale. You can contact the Alaska Chapter SCI at admin@aksafariclub.org or president@aksafariclub.org. If this initiative passes, we can expect the ungulate population to be decimated in areas where it has just started to rebound and this will result in lost opportunity for current and future generations.

Did you know that Oklahoma sportsmen impact Oklahoma's economy by more than \$ 1Billion dollars a year, with a ripple effect of \$ 1.7 Billion dollars! Sportsmen spend more than the combined annual receipts for the hog and wheat industries in Oklahoma. We support more than 20,000 jobs in Oklahoma. Yet only a fraction of one percent knows what SCI is about or are members of SCI. Tell a friend or co-worker about SCI and the good work we do, because chances are they are a sportsman too. Bring them to a membership meeting. Invite them to check out our website. If we want our legislators to sit up and pay attention, we must have the numbers. Your membership and support is vital to carrying out our mission. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Scott Holmes



Trophy Room



Becky's had a 10" beard and 1" spurs

These turkeys were taken April 12, in Little River SE of Broken Bow, Dewey County, hunting with Rawhide Creek Outfitters.



Ld's had a 9.5" beard and 1.25" spurs

Trophy Room



PADDLEFISH

Paddle Fish 03-22-08 Twin Bridges State Park

L. D. Ferguson with son and grandson.





Published Monthly

May 2008

“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

“Hunting provides the principal incentive and revenue for conservation. Hence it is a force for conservation.”

Special To The Hunting Report World Conservation Force Bulletin

by John J. Jackson, III

□ Polar Bear Suit Developements Conversation Force to Intervene

The petitioners, the Center for Biological Diversity, Natural Resources Defense Counsel and Greenpeace, Inc. have filed a *Motion for Summary Judgment* and set it for hearing on May 8th. It requests the Oakland, California, Federal District Court to order Secretary Kempthorne and the US Fish & Wildlife Service to “publish in the Federal Register a final listing determination for the polar bear within seven (7) days of this (the) Order.” It also requests that “if the final listing determination” lists the bear as “threatened or endangered” then it should be made “effective immediately upon publication in the Federal Register,” rather than the usual statutory 30 days after publication. It also asks for the usual award of attorney fees and for the court to retain jurisdiction to ensure compliance with the requested order.

The Secretary and USF&WS had not yet answered the suit, much less responded to this Motion for Summary

Judgment, as this was written. The US has not made any appearance in the case yet. In fact, the Scheduling Conference is not set until June 17, but the case may be over by the date of the Conference to schedule the case.



The petitioners argue that the deadline for publication of a final determination is not discretionary and the only real issue remaining “is how long the Court should give the Secretary to come into compliance with the law.” They cite *Marbled Murrelet v. Lujan*,

1992, where the Court ordered publication three days after the order and other cases where the Court-set deadlines were 5 to 120 days after the date of similar orders. (You may recall that last month we reported that it is not uncommon to miss the deadline.) They argue that the “final determination left the relevant field office more than three months ago,” so it is ready to be published “within seven days of the hearing” of the motion. That allegation is not supported by any affidavit and, of course, the field office material is not a “final determination.” The “field” in this case is far greater than Alaska, where part of the determination was being made. Conservation Force in its comments to the proposal has questioned the obvious bias of those in the Alaska field office and called for oversight from others. That so-called field office is run by the leadership of the IUCN Polar Bear Specialist Group which has its own agenda and little or no knowledge or experience with the

Endangered Species Act as such. They surely don’t have the experience and technical know-how with the ESA.

One must also remember that the scheduled May 8 hearing date is not necessarily the date the Order will be signed, starting any court-ordered countdown deadline for publication. There is little doubt that the Court will order publication as soon as possible because the deadline is non-discretionary, but no one is privy to the true status of the final rule at this time to really know how close to ready it is.

The petitioners’ argument that the final rule, if it lists the bear, should be effective immediately instead of the statutory 30 days after publication is based solely upon the fact that all the deadlines have been missed so no further delay should be allowed. That is a wholly untenable position! The 30-day delay serves an entirely unrelated purpose than deadlines. In effect, that would punish and injure innocent US hunters and others who are entitled to reasonable advance notice. Moreover, polar bears are not in imminent risk. It would be unconscionable to override the 30-day effect provision simply because the processing deadlines were missed when the very reason for the fixed deadline was to protect those affected by the determination. It would hurt those the deadlines were intended to protect. The fixed deadlines were adopted after oversight hearings in the 1980s explicitly to afford protection to the stakeholders affected by the uncertainty such as the US hunters, brokers, taxidermists, wildlife managers and Inuits in this instance. If anything, the proposal should be dismissed as a de facto withdrawal if the listing is premature, information is deficient or not sufficient to generate a timely decision.

It should be understood that the petitioners’ motion does not and cannot direct that the bear or any of its sub-populations be listed. The Court can only order the making of a final determination and its publication. The Court is not being asked to make the listing determination itself one way or the other.

There are some allegations in the Motion for Summary Judgment that

Conservation Force disputes. One is that polar bears are “completely dependant upon Arctic sea ice for survival.” Only summer sea ice is in issue, not year-round ice. Some healthy and abundant populations have lived for centuries without summer ice, such as in Davis Strait.

Another is a half-truth. The Motion correctly states that the first documented “changes in polar bear parameters such as declining body condition, lowered reproductive rates and reduced cub survival” started in the late 1980s, but then incorrectly states it was “attributed...to climate warming and predicted that they would ultimately lead to population declines.” Petitioners need to get their facts straight. The late 1980s was an extremely cold period and the scientists attributed the change in bear characteristics to it being *too cold* and/or overpopulation (density), not to warming. This wholly undermines petitioners’ claim that the characteristics of the bear are related to global warming. The origin of those concerns correlates with the cooling of the Arctic and continues to this date in some very limited areas.

Petitioners repeatedly state that global warming and ice melt are occurring at a more drastic rate than the models projected. Petitioners should know full well that the “record” (records date back to 1980) ice melt in 2007 was not due to warming. They disingenuously neglect to state that the Arctic refroze earlier than normal this winter, and that it is now colder than average. According to NASA, the record melt was due to a front that blew off the cloud cover and held it off and exposed the ice to direct sunlight longer than normal, not warming. Warming would increase cloud cover. It has refrozen and exceeds the three year average by four percent.

Conservation Force is preparing an intervention and/or amicus brief to rebut the request that any listing be made effective immediately. We are also researching the merits of a suit to dismiss the listing proposal because the mandatory deadlines for listing have expired. The delay is harming US hunters and Inuits and interfering with their



JOHN J. JACKSON, III
Conservation Force



“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

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Editor/Writer

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Publisher

Don Causey

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longstanding polar bear conservation system. One of the clear and explicit Congressional purposes of making the

deadlines nondiscretionary was to prevent such injuries and damage to those awaiting the outcome. If the informa-

tion is not adequate to list the bear within the deadline then it should not be listed. It should be dismissed.

Briefly Noted

Improvement of Trophy Inspection Protocols: Conservation Force has been assisting the National Customs Broker and Freight Forwarders Association of America and the National Taxidermists Association with numerous problems that arise during inspections when trophies are imported.

On Friday, April 4, 2008, Carol Rutkowski representing the National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association, Coppersmith, Inc. and John Janelli, representing the National Taxidermists Association (www.nationaltaxidermists.com) met with the staff of the Veterinary Services – Animal Products Division of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Rockville, Maryland. That staff is responsible for the wording of regulations and setting of procedures for the inspection of imported hunting trophies. One purpose of the meeting was to clarify that trophies that have been dipped, packed and dried overseas don't have to be dipped again.

Thanks in large part to Carol's efforts, a memo written by the USDA staff was published late last year on its website (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ncie/pdf/guide-imp-rum-tro.pdf>) but it was not being implemented correctly at all US ports. That memo instructs Customs and Border Protection Agricultural Specialists (CBP/A) how to review documents and perform physical inspections of hunting trophies. The memo appears not to have been disseminated nationwide to all CBP/A staff. The memo completely changes how the CPB/A Specialist, at the first port of unloading, are to look at imported hunting trophies. The improved wording is so succinct that even the newest inspector should be able to read the documents and forward on, as *unrestricted*, the "dipped and packed" trophies to the port of entry.

A second dipping is not just an unnecessary duplication of expense; it

has ruined the skins of some trophies, according to John Janelli of the National Taxidermists Association. John provided tanned and flint-dried capes of two warthogs to demonstrate the destruction and severely damaging results of improper dipping techniques. "Re-dipping usually runs around \$65 per animal here in the US, which is duplication of what has already been done," said Carol. "It works out to \$600 to \$800 per shipment of unfinished trophies, which amounts to millions of dollars of added costs. Not every hunter is a rich person. Most hunters have worked and saved for years for their trip of a lifetime and all these unnecessary costs are quite bur-



densome," said Carol.

At this meeting, Carol also was finally successful, after six years of trying, to get the definition of "dip and pack" approved for inclusion in the Animal Products Manual. This will save international hunters the cost of having their trophies re-processed (dipped) in the US when they have already paid to have this done overseas. Foreign countries' own health regulations require the dipping (chemical treatment) before trophies are exported.

Carol reports that "There still needs to be more interaction with this agency with regard to what they consider non-commercial versus commercial shipments, particularly as it refers to the

number of animals being shipped and the mode of transportation on which they arrive into our country." John Janelli suggested that the NTA be included on the USDA advisory council when the time comes to review Veterinary Services Memorandum 593.5 which pertains to restricted imports – handling and disinfection regulations that have been on the books since 9/13/76.

Carol is a real trooper. It was she who spearheaded the effort to conform Zimbabwe's CITES export permit forms to the new USF&WS internal CITES regulations that were adopted this past summer. It is partners like her that help us help you. John Janelli is likewise a hero. He has secured a position for the National Taxidermists Association (NTA) on the technical Advisory Board for all future revisions of the regulations. The NTA is an important and long-time supporter of Conservation Force.

Technical Workshop for the President's Executive Order on Facilitation of Hunting Heritage and Wildlife Conservation: On April 6, 7 and 8, yours truly attended the Technical Workshop "to help develop a plan that will serve as the foundation for hunting and wildlife conservation for generations to come" (James L. Connaughton, Chairman, Executive Office of the President's Council on Environmental Quality). This was the "Technical Workshop" to define the problems, goals, impediments and solutions in nine categories of issue topics. The nine issue topics were: 1) North American Model, 2) Habitat Conservation, 3) Energy, 4) Climate Change, 5) State, Tribal and Federal Management, 6) Funding, 7) Access, 8) Recruitment and Retention, and 9) Education.

The next planning workshop will be on policy in May in Washington, D.C. and the conference itself with

President Bush – *White House Conference on North American Wildlife Policy* - will be in September. Shane Mahoney of Conservation Force's Board of Directors was the principle speaker/expert on the Model and lived up to his reputation. He is the author and orator in the *Opportunity for All* DVD, the story of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation that is available from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Dallas Safari Club and elsewhere. Just a week before at the North American Wildlife Conference in Phoenix, Shane had delivered a paper jointly written by him and me on the North American Model and acceptance of components of it overseas (soon to be published in the North American Wildlife Journal).

The Model in and of itself attests to the important role hunters and anglers have played for 110 years to North American conservation. The President's Executive Order recognizes that and should in itself demonstrate the relevancy and importance of hunting to the non-hunting public. It is for that reason Conservation Force has distributed over 10,000 designer copies of the Executive Order and has just given the American Wildlife Conservation Partners \$5,000 towards public relations broadcasting of the Order and planned Conference. The government organizers of the workshop also used Conservation Force's parchment-paper, designer copy of the Executive Order for distribution and were very thankful for the way we had produced it. We alone have distributed over 10,000 copies.

If there was a theme of the workshop, it was the perpetuation of the North American Model. In fact, the conference and all supporting events were said to be "designed to achieve measurable outcomes to preserve and strengthen the North American Model." The model or system for the last 110 years has been largely funded and advanced by American hunters. The working group said it was "the greatest conservation movement in the world" and "one of the greatest achievements of American society." We must "reinvigorate the practices of the seven principles." We "must ensure

the public understands that wildlife and wild places don't exist by accident." (Shane Mahoney) Hunters are the force.

The *North American Wildlife Conservation Technical Workshop* was an historic event for North American hunting and conservation with many of the greatest minds of our time. I can't overemphasize the importance of the Boone & Crockett leadership, the American Wildlife Conservation Partners (each and every one) and our own Board member Shane Mahoney as a gifted speaker and genuine authority on the all-important North American Model. The May policy workshop will be on general policy development, option prioritization/selection.

Conservation Force Leaders Recognized: Three of Conservation Force's Board of Directors have been recognized once again, demonstrating the caliber of the Board and all that the members do around the world.

Founding Board member Dr. James Teer has been chosen to the Texas *Hall of Fame*. A book could be written about all that he has achieved. In fact, his autobiography is to be published in June. We will keep readers advised.

Shane Mahoney has been selected to receive Safari Club International's *Conservation of the Year Award* at its May awards program in Washington,

Conservation Force Sponsor

Grand Slam Club/Ovis generously pays all of the costs associated with the publishing of this bulletin. Founded in 1956, Grand Slam Club/Ovis is an organization of hunter/conservationists dedicated to improving wild sheep and goat populations worldwide by contributing to game and wildlife agencies or other non-profit wildlife conservation organizations. GSCO has agreed to sponsor *Conservation Force Bulletin* in order to help international hunters keep abreast of hunting-related wildlife news. For more information, please visit www.wildsheep.org.

GRAND SLAM CLUB OVIS

D.C. Shane will be the third Board member of Conservation Force to receive this truly prestigious award. Dr. James Teer and Dr. Bart O'Gara, both founding members of Conservation Force, have received the award in the past.

Yours truly received *The President's Award for 2008* from the Guide and Outfitters Association of British Columbia in Victoria, B.C. during the GOABC's annual conference. It was awarded for more than a decade of work and commitment on issues from grizzly bear hunting to representation of GOABC at CITES conferences around the world. The inscription on the statue reads: "Against the Wind – President's Award for 2008. Awarded Annually to Recognize an Outstanding Contribution to Wildlife Stewardship and to the Guide Outfitting Industry in British Columbia." This is the fourth such award yours truly has received from a professional hunters association and the second in five months, the last being the *Conservationist of the Year Award* from the Namibian Professional Hunters Association on the other side of the world. Conservation Force receives support from ten professional hunters associations around the world and partners with many others. That confidence, support and encouragement is rewarding/awarding in itself. We are all a greater force for conservation because of that partnering.

Helping Hunting and Conservation Through Law Enforcement: The national forensic laboratory has asked Conservation Force for help. They need some horns and hoofs from Ethiopia to establish and maintain correct DNA data for their forensic DNA library. If you have some horns or hoofs from game in Ethiopia, please contact me at jjw-no@att.net; or by phone at 504-837-1233. Because the contribution comes through Conservation Force, a 501(c)(3) public charitable foundation, the contribution is tax deductible at the value of its tanning, but its value towards eliminating poaching is far greater than that. – John J. Jackson, III.



OWMA MESSAGE

Archery in the Schools state tourney draws record crowd

Nearly 800 students — 775 to be exact — competed April 3 at the fourth annual Oklahoma Archery in the Schools (OAIS) state tournament held at the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond. That number dwarfs the 400 in attendance at last year's tournament.

Students at the state tournament competed in archery shooting after a season of practice and competition in their respective schools. Coordinated by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Oklahoma Archery in the Schools is part of a national program that partners state wildlife agencies, schools and the nation's archery industry to introduce students to the sport of archery. The Archery in the Schools curriculum is designed for 4th-12th graders and covers archery history, safety, techniques, equipment, mental concentration and self-improvement. About 10,000 students participated in the program this school year. The top three shooters in each category at the state tournament received medals and prizes. First place winners received a new bow, second place winners received a dozen new arrows and third place winners took home a new bow carrying case. In addition, the top five shooters in each category qualified for the national tournament to be held May 10 in Louisville, Ky. The top three shooters in each age category include:

High school boys

Dillon Addington, Clayton
Blake Blakely, Keys
Kris McMillen, Beggs

High school girls

Kayla Replogle, Coweta
Bailee Cartwright, Moss
Madison Arnold, Beggs

Middle school boys

Chase Biel, Cimarron
Houston Gaither, Coweta
Chaz Morgan, Shawnee

Middle school girls

Brianna George, Morris
Taylor Gee, Coweta

Hannah Stevens, Greenville

Elementary school boys

Stanley Burkett, Coweta
Dalton Markes, Beggs
Grayson Shockley, Cherokee

Elementary school girls

Rebekah Marks, Coweta
Hadlie Barnes, Greenville
Hannah Lawhorn, Keystone

In addition, several schools scored high enough to compete as teams at the national tournament. Qualifying teams include Coweta High School, Beggs High Schools, Coweta Middle School, Shawnee Middle School, Cimarron Middle School, South Rock Creek Middle School, Morris Middle School, Coweta Elementary, Shawnee Elementary, Morris Elementary, South Rock Creek Elementary and Zaneis Elementary. According to Lance Meek, OAIS coordinator, the state tournament's success each year is made possible by the Department's partnership with UCO. "The staff at UCO have been an important partner and have really had a positive impact on the youth involved with the Oklahoma Archery in the Schools program," Meek said. "The facilities and staff at UCO helped make this event a huge success." Over 100 schools across the state have enrolled in the Oklahoma Archery in the Schools program (OAIS), which offers competitive archery to students, and grant money can make it easy for other schools to join up as well. "Thanks to a Wildlife Department grant, schools can now get involved in the program for a fraction of the cost of the equipment," Meek said. The grant is available for schools to acquire all the equipment, including bows, arrows, targets, safety nets, curriculum and training necessary to begin an OAIS program in their communities at little cost. In order to be eligible for a grant, the school must send a teacher to an eight-hour workshop where they will learn how to conduct the program at their school and instruct students in archery. Teachers interested in learning more about the OAIS program or in starting an OAIS program at their school should contact Meek at (405) 522-4572 or lmeek@odwc.state.ok.us. For more information on the Archery in the Schools program, log on to wildlifedepartment.com.



**For Immediate Release
February 21, 2008**

SCI Applauds U.S. FWS Decision to Remove Northern Rocky Mountain Gray Wolves from the ESA

Safari Club International today congratulated the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) on its announcement of the delisting of the northern Rocky Mountain population of wolves. The delisting marks the recovery of the wolf population living primarily in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. The rule to delist will be published in the Federal Register on February 27th and will take effect 30 days later.

Wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains have long exceeded the FWS's recovery criteria and now number in excess of 1500. Upon delisting, states will assume management responsibility for this predator species.

SCI President Dennis Anderson stated "Safari Club International is pleased to see that the FWS has removed wolves from the endangered species list, transferring management to the individual states. The FWS's decision to delist will enable the state agencies to manage wolves in a way that will sustain the species, while preventing harm to wild ungulate populations. When appropriate, the states will now be able to hold regulated wolf hunts."

Safari Club International has long supported the FWS's efforts to recognize the recovery of gray wolves. SCI is currently participating in litigation to defend the FWS's decision to delist the wolves of the Western Great Lakes. SCI is also seeking to participate in litigation recently filed in Montana that challenges rules giving Montana, Idaho and Wyoming enhanced management authority to lethally remove wolves that are causing harm to elk, moose and deer populations.

The full release by the FWS can be viewed at

<http://www.fws.gov/news/NewsReleases/showNews.cfm?newsId=3CDF97D5-F405-0551-E357499D39440B2B>

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SCI-First For Hunters is the leader in protecting the freedom to hunt and in promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. SCI's 179 Chapters represent all 50 of the United States as well as 13 other countries. SCI's proactive leadership in a host of cooperative wildlife conservation, outdoor education and humanitarian programs, with the SCI Foundation and other conservation groups, research institutions and government agencies, empowers sportsmen to be contributing community members and participants in sound wildlife management and conservation. Visit the home page www.safariclub.org <<http://www.safariclub.org>> or call (520) 620-1220 for more information.

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What's Under My Hat

by Monte Tucker

Howdy friends and neighbors. Come on first Tuesday in November! I have already had about all of the Presidential election I can stand. Surely, somewhere out there in this great nation is a “good ol’ boy or gal,” that is worth voting for. You know, someone that has actually done something, not just talked about what they think they have done. It’s only the first quarter in the game between the R’s and the D’s. Both sides keep talking about time for change. Just what are they going to change? They obviously haven’t changed the game of politics. Billary and Bama Lama Ding Dong boost the word “change” every time I see the media put their face on my boob tube. The first place they could start changing things would be on the Senate floor that they’re already on. Just go and look at their voting records for the last several months and you will find they aren’t showing up to vote. You know, the job they campaigned so hard to get by promising “change,” but they just don’t have the time. McCain isn’t immune from this either.

Let’s talk “change.” What in the world do these hot air compressors think they are going to change and why? Again, I’m just a professional bovine relocation specialist (it’s the 21st century, we used to call them cowboys). But the way I see it from Sunny Point , Oklahoma , how are they going to change the greatest nation in the world? All of the candidates are demanding we must change! OK. I wake up a free man every morning and I’m free to do anything that is morally right or I can do nothing. If I choose to do something productive that day, well I can whistle at my dog, start up my ol’ tan feed truck that I bought with the help of a free enterprising banking system I chose to use. Plus, there’s the fact that other free Americans assembled this truck, and the companies that bought, sold and hauled parts and supplies to make that pickup possible. As I turn the key, ol’ tans fires up on diesel fuel that a mean, nasty, big

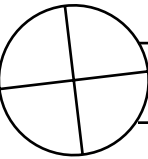
oil company conveniently made very accessible and affordable to me. I turn out of my land that I can freely own, onto a county maintained road that leads to any point in North America I would choose to go to that day. Also, in this country, I am free to own livestock and free to care for them so that the livestock will return a profit so I can repay my bank, buy my feed and fuel, and provide for my family. On Sunday Morning (or any other day that ends in “Y”) my family is free to drive from our house on a ribbon of roads that lead to the Church of our choice and worship the real owner of all things we know, God. We can give praise to Him for all and especially for Jesus.

Why can’t these hopefuls for the highest-ranking governmental seat see that it is just that simple? Provide me infrastructure and protect me from these knot-headed whack’s that think they can take away our freedom. Billary, Bama Mama or McNobrain aren’t going to change anything. The foundations of this great country can’t be changed by one person, no matter how much they think they can. As Americans, we have the right to succeed or fail and try again as we please. As a free man, I’m getting good at failing but I get smarter when I try again.

When presidential candidates tout change, the only thing I see in this country that needs changing is them. Life in America is good and for those that don’t think so, you’re free to leave at any time, go to another country of your choice and try to change it.

I’m Monte Tucker, and that is what’s under my professional bovine relocation specialist hat. Wait, I’m not changing, that is what’s under my COWBOY hat!

IN THE CROSSHAIRS



E-news from SCI ‘s Washington Office

Court Orders FWS to Publish Polar Bear Listing Decision by May 15, 2008
On April 28, 2008, a U.S. District Court in California ordered the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to publish a final decision on the proposed listing of polar bears under the Endangered Species Act by May 15, 2008 and to make that listing decision effective immediately. The Court ignored the FWS’s assertions, supported by SCI, that the agency needed until June 30 to make its decision. The court’s ruling was the outcome of a lawsuit filed by three groups to challenge the FWS’s failure to issue the listing decision by January 9, 2008, the statutory deadline. The FWS has the option to ask the District Court judge to reconsider her decision, or to try to get the Ninth Circuit to grant an immediate appeal. Barring a change from the

courts or a failure by the FWS to comply with the order, the listing decision will go into effect on May 15 -- although the announcement of the listing decision may come out a few days earlier. If some or all of the polar bear populations are listed, the FWS has indicated that imports of trophies from any listed populations would be barred as of that date, regardless of where in the process the application is. Note that a listing will affect only permit applications from populations listed by FWS. It is possible that the FWS will not list all or some populations.

Nonetheless, anyone with a pending polar bear import permit application is urged to contact the FWS permit branch immediately. *SCI will keep you posted on further developments.*

ALASKAN CLYDESDALE

Only in Alaska..... This guy raised an abandoned moose calf with his Horses, and believe it or not, he has trained it for lumber removal and other hauling tasks. Given the 2,000 pounds of robust muscle, and the splayed, grippy hooves, he claims it is the best work animal he has. He says the secret to keeping the moose around is a sweet salt lick. Although during the rut he disappears for a couple of weeks, but he always comes home....

Impressive!



BANQUET-AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS



Field, Forest & Stream: The History of Oklahomans and the Outdoors

The Oklahoma History Center and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation are proud to present a new, special exhibition at the Oklahoma History Center entitled *Field, Forest & Stream: The History of Oklahomans and the Outdoors*. *Field, Forest & Stream* will relate the history of outdoor recreation and conservation in Oklahoma. The exhibit space will include historical artifacts, dynamic graphics, audio-visual elements, and fun, hands-on interactive features.

Visitors to the exhibition will find lots of interesting things to see and do. Artifacts and manuscripts from collections such as those of the aviator and avid outdoorsman Wiley Post, the pioneering outdoor television producer Don Wallace, and various Oklahoma-based companies will be on display throughout the exhibit space. The beautiful craftsmanship of a Plains Indian bow and quiver, the diverse shapes and colors of Oklahoma-made fishing lures, and the charm of vintage Oklahoma camping equipment are just a few of the artifacts you will discover.

Three main topic sections will be represented as hiking trails that guests will follow. Follow the *Water Trail* to learn the history of Oklahoma's streams, rivers, and lakes. At the turn of the nineteenth century, rivers and prairie streams were the highways upon which the early explorers and settlers depended. Later, as some of these waterways were dammed to create the large lakes we know today, sporting opportunities increased for all Oklahomans. You will find a high-definition video aquarium with real-life Oklahoma game fish species displayed in their natural setting. A hands-on catfish noodling activity will allow you to experience what only a brave few have tried as holes and crevices in a simulated cut bank provide different tactile sensations.

Take a stroll down the *Forest Trail* to learn about the development of Oklahoma's national forests, game management areas, wildlife refuges, preserves, and state parks. Prior to statehood, the endless miles of untouched prairie and woodland in the Indian Territory were home to a boundless supply of wildlife. Beginning in the 1820s, as the U. S. Indian Removal

policies forced thousands to settle in the area, the populations of game animals began to decline. Since the Territorial Legislature of the 1890s enacted the first hunting laws it has been a long road to recovery for Oklahoma's wildlife. On the *Forest Trail*, visitors will experience this dramatic comeback and how Oklahomans past and present have enjoyed this valuable resource. The *Forest Trail* will include a life-size hunting blind interactive that will give the visitor a chance to actually climb in, sit down, and choose between a number of outdoor sport and conservation activities with a history lesson or two thrown in.

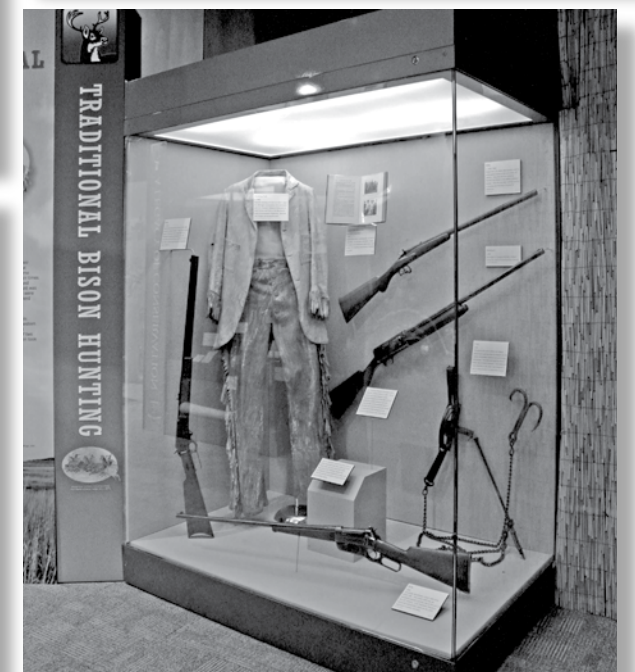
If you walk down the *Camp Trail* section of the exhibit, you will experience the cultural history behind this popular form of outdoor recreation. See and experience examples of vintage camping equipment, camping methods, and Oklahoma recipes from over the years. For those who love to sit by the campfire, the *Camp Trail* section will feature camp stories told in an interactive presentation. Guests will be able to choose between several reenacted historical figures that will appear on a screen to relate their past experiences in the Oklahoma outdoors.

Today, outdoor sports are more popular than ever. The tireless efforts of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation through the years have successfully ensured that all Oklahomans can enjoy healthy wildlife populations and well-managed public lands. In a groundbreaking partnership between state agencies, the Oklahoma History Center and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation have come together to present the *Field, Forest & Stream: The History of Oklahomans and the Outdoors* exhibit as a celebration of this success story.

Field, Forest & Stream will run through the end of 2008.



www.okhistorycenter.org
N.E. 23rd East of the Capitol
405.522.0765



Air Travel with Black Powder is Absolutely Prohibited: What You Need to Know

■ Black powder is a Class 1.10, Packing Group II, number UN0027 "Explosive". Air travel with black powder in your checked luggage is prohibited. Carriage on a plane is not one single offense. Rather, it constitutes multiple offenses and subjects the sportsman to multiple separate civil penalties (15 to be exact) that can each be substantial. The following is a partial quote from a Notice of Proposed Civil Penalty received by a hunter when his luggage was found to contain one container of Jim Shockey's Gold Premium Grade Black Powder Replacement:

By reason of the above, you violated the following Department of Transportation Hazardous Materials Regulations (Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations):

1. Section 171.2(a) in that you offered a hazardous material for transportation in commerce when the hazardous material was not properly classed, described, packaged, marked, labeled, and in condition for shipment as required or authorized by applicable requirements of this subchapter.

2. Sections 172.200(a) and 172.202(a)(1) in that you offered a hazardous material for transportation and failed to describe the hazardous material on the shipping papers, including the proper shipping name prescribed for the material in Column 2 of the § 172.101 Table, in the manner required by this subpart.

3. Sections 172.200(a) and 172.202(a)(2) in that you offered a hazardous material for transportation and failed to describe the hazardous material on the shipping papers, including the hazard class or division prescribed for the material as shown in Column 3 of the § 172.101 Table, in the manner required by this subpart.

4. Sections 172.200(a) and Section 172.202(a)(3) in that you offered a hazardous material for transportation and failed to describe the hazardous material on the shipping papers, including the identification number prescribed for the material as shown in Column 4 of the § 172.101 Table, in the manner required by this subpart.

5. Sections 172.200(a) and Section

172.202(a)(4) in that you offered a hazardous material for transportation and failed to describe the hazardous material on the shipping papers, including the packing grouping, in Roman numerals, prescribed for the material in Column 5 of the § 172.101 Table, if any, of the material covered by the description, in the manner required by this subpart.

6. Sections 172.200(a) and Section 172.202(a)(5) in that you offered a hazardous material for transportation and failed to describe the hazardous material on the shipping papers, including the total quantity (by net or gross mass, capacity, or as otherwise appropriate), including the unit of measurement, of the hazardous material covered by the description, in the manner required by this subpart.

7. Sections 172.204(a) or (c)(1) in that you offered a hazardous material for transportation and failed to certify that the material was offered for transportation in accordance with this subchapter by printing on the shipping paper containing the required shipping description one of the certifications set forth in this part.

8. Section 172.204(c)(2) in that you offered a hazardous material to an aircraft operator for transportation by air and failed to provide two copies of the certification required in this section.

Conservation Force Sponsor

Grand Slam Club/Ovis generously pays all of the costs associated with the publishing of this bulletin. Founded in 1956, Grand Slam Club/Ovis is an organization of hunter/conservationists dedicated to improving wild sheep and goat populations worldwide by contributing to game and wildlife agencies or other non-profit wildlife conservation organizations. GSCO has agreed to sponsor Conservation Force Bulletin in order to help international hunters keep abreast of hunting-related wildlife news. For more information, please visit www.wildsheep.org.

GRAND SLAM CLUB OVIS

9. Section 172.204(c)(3) in that you offered for transportation by air a hazardous material authorized for air transportation and failed to add the certification required in this section the following statement:

"I declare that all of the applicable air transport requirements have been met."

10. Section 172.301(a) in that you offered for transportation a hazardous material in a non-bulk packaging and failed to mark the package with the proper shipping name and identification number (preceded by "UN" or "NA", as appropriate) for the material as shown in the § 172.101 Table.

11. Section 172.400(a) in that you offered for transportation a hazardous material in one of the packages or containment devices listed in this subpart and failed to label the package or containment device with the labels specified for the material in the § 172.101 Table and in this subpart.

12. Section 172.600(c) in that you offered for transportation a hazardous material and failed to make the emergency response information immediately available for use at all times the hazardous material was present, and failed to make such information, including an emergency response telephone number, immediately available to any government agency responding to an incident involving hazardous material or conducting an investigation which involves a hazardous material.

13. Section 172.21(a) in that you offered for transportation materials designated "Forbidden" in Column 3 of the § 172.101 Table.

14. Section 173.21(b) in that you offered for transportation forbidden explosives as defined in § 173.54 of this part.

15. Section 173.54(a) in that you offered for transportation an explosive that had not been approved in accordance with § 173.56 of this subpart.

In accordance with Section 5123(a) of Chapter 51, Title 49 of the United States Code of Transportation, 49 U.S.C. § 5123, [name of violator] is liable for a civil penalty of not less than \$250, nor greater than \$50,000 (\$100,000 if death, serious illness, severe injury, or substantial property damage results), for each violation of the regulations.

Muzzleloading Propellants: Blackhorn 209 Earns an 'A'

Though nearly twice as expensive, Western Powder Co.'s 209 formulation shot accurately, consistently, and cleanly. We also liked Triple Se7en, but we wouldn't buy Shockey's Gold.

Muzzleloading propellants have lagged behind propellants in cartridges for some time, this despite the great increase in inline popularity and use that continues today. Sulfur-based propellants are hygroscopic and filthy, promoting gun corrosion, requiring immediate cleaning, and are horribly inefficient. Blackpowder, a mixture not a compound, leaves behind about 50% of itself as fouling. Performance- and convenience-minded sportsmen have long looked for a better way.

The prevalent blackpowder replacement for decades has been Pyrodex. Though synthetic, it also contains sulfur and generates sulfur salts that continue the corrosion problem. In the opinion of many muzzleloading enthusiasts, it is even worse than blackpowder in the corrosion and cleaning departments. Yet, for many years that is what muzzleloading shooters have been stuck with.

Over the years, various volumetrically measured gas-generating compounds have been introduced. Due to marketing problems, production problems, and quality-control problems, many of these products have vanished from the marketplace. This includes such

products as Black Canyon, CleaR-Shot, and various other compounds. So, with this history behind us, what are the best muzzleloading propellants today?

The Candidates

To define and compare the attributes of current sulfurless muzzleloading propellants, we selected three distinct products: Blackhorn 209, a new propellant introduced by Western Powder Company; Triple Se7en, introduced by Hodgdon Powder in 2002 and enjoying success in the marketplace; and Shockey's Gold, produced by American Pioneer.

Using major catalog retailer street pricing, we found Triple Se7en FFG sells for \$26 per 1-pound bottle, and Shockey's Gold at \$20 per pound. The new Blackhorn 209, which isn't in wide retail distribution, is estimated to sell for \$29 for a 10-ounce bottle. Powder manufacturers rarely publish retail pricing, and local pricing can vary widely based on the season. Complicating the matter is that while sold by weight, these propellants are often measured by volume. Cost per shot is a more valid means of comparison, and cost per shot at the same velocity even more relevant.

A variety of muzzleloading rifles were tested with these propellants: a Knight RB, a Knight KP1, a Savage 10ML-II, a Thompson Contender G2, and a Thompson Encore, all in .50 caliber. Right: For velocity testing, we shot the loads over a CED Millennium M2, setting the first screen 5 yards from the muzzle. We used a Knight KRB Rolling Block, shooting all the powders on the same 42-degree day. We used Federal 209A shotshell primers on top of 100-grain loads measured by volume using a Thompson/Center U-View powder measure. The primary test bullet was a Barnes TMZ 290-grain sabot boattail.



A variety of muzzleloading rifles were tested with these propellants: a Knight RB, a Knight KP1, a Savage 10ML-II, a Thompson Contender G2, and a Thompson Encore—all in .50 caliber. But to compile head-to-head velocity data, our testers then shot the loads over a CED Millennium M2, setting the first screen 5 yards from the muzzle. We used a Knight KRB Rolling Block as our test rifle, shooting all the powders on the same 42-degree day. The primers used were Federal 209A shotshell primers. All volumetric loads were 100 grains by volume using a Thompson/Center U-View powder measure. The primary test bullet was a Barnes TMZ 290-grain sabot boattail.

Accuracy Testing

In 100-yard accuracy testing using the Barnes TMZ 209 projectile, we found that Triple Se7en produced 1.5-inch groups in our Thompson Encore, with Blackhorn 209 producing similar results. Shockey's Gold could not do better than 2.75- to 3-inch groups. Blackhorn 209 gave us 1.25-inch 100 yard groups with the Knight KP1, and the Savage 10ML-II gave us 0.9- to 1-inch 100-yard groups with Blackhorn 209.

The velocities clocked out of the KRB were a bit slower than other rifles; however, it was important to use identical testing protocol for all of these powders—which is exactly what we did. Muzzleloading hunters should have no problem achieving muzzle velocities around 1750 fps with 300-grain sabots or 1850 fps with 250-grain sabots, contingent on rifle and usable bore length with either Blackhorn 209 or Triple Se7en. Also, we should note that Hodgdon calls 100 grains by volume of Triple Se7en a “max load,” while Western Powders calls 120 grains by volume of Blackhorn 209 a “max load.” Muzzleloading rifle manufacturers have their own notions, with many of today's inlines including 150-grain loads in

Blackhorn 209's residue was minimal, allowing load-and-shoot operation with no distinct change in loading characteristics. Blackhorn produced 100-yard groups in the 1.5-inch range in the Thompson Encore, 1.25-inch groups in the Knight KP1, and 1-inch groups in the Savage 10ML-II. It cleaned up easily with Hoppe's No. 9 and a couple of patches.

Hodgdon's Triple Se7en, a gluconic-based compound, produced both good and consistent velocities. Also, Triple Se7en produced 1.5-inch groups in the Thompson Encore, so we didn't have accuracy worries using it. But T7 is corrosive, so cleaning your muzzleloader after shooting T7 in it remains mandatory. Another issue with Triple Se7en is the very hard fouling ring that may appear near the breechplug. Clean-up was not easy with just water.

Shockey's Gold FFFg showed erratic granulation, its velocities were poor, and its fps readings varied widely. With a shot-to-shot velocity deviation of well over 220 fps, our shooters felt this was unacceptable. Also, it could not do better than 2.75- to 3-inch groups.



CHRONOGRAPH DATA

	Blackhorn 209	Shockey's Gold FFFg	Triple Se7en FFg
Min. Velocity	1662 fps	1057 fps	1630 fps
Max. Velocity	1680 fps	1386 fps	1665 fps
Max. Deviation	38 fps	329 fps	35 fps
Average Velocity	1671 fps	1194 fps	1645 fps

Chronograph: CED Millennium M2, with the first screen 5 yards from the muzzle. Rifle: Knight KRB Rolling Block. Test temperature: 42 degrees. Primer: Federal 209A shotshell. Volumetric Load: 100 grains, measured using a Thompson/Center U-View powder measure. Bullet: Barnes TMZ 290-grain sabot boattail.

their owner's manuals. In the end, the individual shooter will, of course, determine the load that suits his purposes, and he'll decide which combination of rifle/sabot/bullet works the best for him.

In more detail, here's what we found about these three muzzleloader powders.

**Western Powder Co.'
Blackhorn 209, \$46/lb.**

Blackhorn 209 is a hollow extruded, very strong tube propellant that is billed as completely non-corrosive and non-hygroscopic. The residue from the test rifles was minimal, allowing load and shoot operation with no distinct change in loading characteristics.

We found the Blackhorn 209 to be extremely consistent through the chronograph, producing 100-grain volumetric velocities with the TMZ 290 in the Knight KRB that varied only from 1662 fps to 1680 fps. As this propellant does not suck moisture, we felt its shelf life was clearly superior to other propellants. Cleaning was accomplished with a couple of patches of Hoppe's No. 9.

With very good velocities, amazing consistency, and no cleaning required, Blackhorn 209 earned an enthusiastic buy rating from our testers.

**American Pioneer
Shockey's Gold FFFg, \$20/lb.**

Shockey's Gold is an ascorbic acid-platform propellant. Erratic in granulation, its velocities were dramatically poor and varied widely. 100 grains pushed the TMZ 290 in the Knight KRB in the mid-1000 fps to the high 1300 fps range. A typical sequence was 1162 fps, 1386 fps, 1168 fps, 1196 fps, and 1057 fps.

With a shot-to-shot velocity deviation of well over 220 fps, our shooters felt this was an unacceptably poor performance.

Also, though billed as a “no-swab” propellant, a hard whitish crust formed at the muzzle that prohibited loading a second sabot easily. In fact, a third “no-swab” shot at-

tempt wedged a sabot so tightly in the muzzle area that we had to pull the breechplug from the Knight KRB, and push everything out from the breech end with a range rod. Clean-up was performed with just water followed by a bore protectant.

**Hodgdon Powder
Triple Se7en FFg, \$26/lb.**

Hodgdon's Triple Se7en, a gluconic-based compound, produced both good velocities and consistent velocities ranging from 1630 fps to 1665 fps with the TMZ 290 and a 100-grain volumetric load. A great deal of hard fouling crud remained in the barrel, enough that licking a patch and swabbing the barrel between shots was the only way to seat the Barnes sabot properly.

In a pinch, we felt that forcing a sabot through the crud for a motivated follow-up shot was likely, but certainly not a third shot. T7 is cor-

rosive, but not as violently so as Pyrodex. Cleaning your muzzleloader after T7 use remains mandatory.

Another issue with Triple Se7en is the very hard fouling ring that may appear near the breechplug. This happened with the T/C Contender G2, to some extent, in the T/C Encore Pro Hunter, and also with the Savage 10ML-II. It did not appear in the Knight KRB rolling block nor with the Knight KP1, however. Clean-up was not particularly easy with just water. We found that Birchwood-Casey Blackpowder solvent worked better. We finished with Breakfree CLP as a bore protectant.

It is corrosive, and it does require swabbing between every shot with properly fitting sabots, but due to the consistent and very good velocities it developed, Triple Se7en was found to be a suitable product, and earned a buy rating.

GUN TESTS REPORT CARD



**Western Powder Company Blackhorn 209,
\$46/pound
GUN TESTS GRADE: A**

On the basis of low fouling, swab-less load-and-shoot operation, and its non-moisture attracting, non-corrosive composition, Blackhorn handily wins the day, in our opinion.



**Hodgdon Powder Triple Se7en,
\$26/pound
GUN TESTS GRADE: B**

We'd buy Triple Se7en for its good performance, but its caveats of spit-patching between shots, corrosive and sometimes crusting fouling, and the timely maintenance it dictates make it a second pick for us.



**American Pioneer Shockey's Gold FFFg,
\$20/pound
GUN TESTS GRADE: F**

In our view, this was obviously the worst performing product, with feeble velocities that were also erratic. We wouldn't shoot this in our guns.

Written and photographed by Randy Wakeman, using evaluations from GUN TESTS team testers. GT

The Eleventh Hour Ram

Mike scanned the horizon once more as time was running out on my first aoudad hunt. He concentrated towards the southwest, squinting through his ten power binoculars. He brought them down slowly, looked at me straight and said, “There’s your sheep”.

I love a good hunt and I am always searching for something different. My good hunting buddy and great lifelong friend, Andy Cobb of Oklahoma City, had asked me several times about an aoudad hunt. An aoudad/Barbary sheep is native to the Atlas Mountains in northern Africa. In the late 1940’s, they were introduced into the desert mountains of west Texas and southern New Mexico. They are well adapted to this rough terrain and their incredible eyesight enables them to elude most predators, including hunters. Andy did the legwork and we booked a free roaming hunt with Tays Guide Service out of Tinnie, New Mexico for February 1, 2008.

Andy and I met in Albuquerque and drove down to Tinnie, arriving at 7:30 PM. Mike Tays, his wife Linda and his son, Scott, met us. After dinner, he explained what would be required of us, his style of hunting and the time that breakfast would be ready.

After breakfast, Andy and I confirmed zero with our rifles. Immediately after shooting, we paired off; Mike with Andy and Scott with me. Scott and I headed north while Mike and Andy hunted a few miles south of us. We spotted our first sheep midmorning, two ewes and one small ram. They

looked big to me, but as we glassed, Scott started my aoudad education. Check the length, check the bosses, check the width of the hair between the bosses, check the chaps (the long flowing hair that extends down the front legs), check the overall body size and when all else failed, I checked between their legs when they faced away from me. The ewes looked enormous to

me, as did the rams. We worked our way northeast and back out. Mike and Andy spotted numerous sheep that morning, but no mature rams. After lunch, Scott and I headed out south of our morning hunt. In our second canyon, we stalked to within forty yards of a group of sixteen sheep. Next to the sheep were six mule deer does. One of the does was bouncing and sniffing at a sheep, within a few feet of each other. The deer spotted us and spooked, scaring off the sheep. We dropped off the ridges and headed west up through the bottom of Cherry Canyon. Scott spotted them first, the same sixteen sheep. We glassed them for a few minutes and continued down the canyon. As it dumped out onto the road, I spotted two sheep break out of the scrub oak. One was a ewe but the other looked like a nice ram. I immediately dropped into the shooting mode while Scott judged the ram. No go, but he sure looked nice to me. As we drove into Mike’s yard that evening, Scott said that Andy must have been successful, since the light was on at the skinning shed. Sure enough, Andy had taken a monster. It was the shot that Scott and I had heard

at 4 PM. Mike and Andy had hunted northwest of us at Buck Lake. Andy had spotted the three rams. Mike determined that they were mature, so he and Andy stalked to within 250 yards of them. Mike determined the largest of them and Andy made a successful shot. He was nice, almost 28 inches with monstrous bases. This hunt seemed like a

walk in the park, but I was in for a rude awakening.

The next morning, Scott, Andy and I started out south of Mike and Andy’s previous morning hunt. We spotted seven sheep, but no shooters. They spooked at something below them and trotted uphill, over the ridge. The afternoon hunt was at Dead Man. Dead Man gets its name from a dead man being found there shortly after William Bonney (aka Billy The

Kid) and the Regulators chased down one of the sheriff’s men during the Lincoln County Wars. Scott and I went to southeast side while Mike and Andy scouted northwest of us. Scott spotted two sheep northwest of Mike. He focused his spotting scope on them for us. There was no way that I could see them through my binoculars. We worked down to the bottom and took our time heading back out and stumbled onto three sheep, two ewes and a ram. I thought that he was the one. Calm, propped, easy 200 yard shot, broadside. With plenty of time to take the shot, I was waiting for the call. “Tell me something, Scott.” He said what I didn’t want to hear. “He’s not quite what I want for you, but you may shoot him if you like.” And so ended the second day.

Morning of day three involved a lot of moaning as I tried to dress, especially as I threaded on my socks. The previous two days of strenuous hiking was taking a toll on me. Linda was driving Andy into Roswell for a flight home. Unfortunately, a family emergency had interrupted Andy’s hunt. He had tagged out but his presence in camp and his scouting ability was missed by all of us. Mike dropped off Scott and me a little north of Buck Lake. He continued north to an overlook to scout while Scott and I worked the canyons for the two rams that were running with Andy’s ram. Nothing but a lot of sheep sign. The wind was starting to kick as we made it to Mike and the truck. We spotted some fresh mountain lion tracks in a creek, as we headed back to camp. Mike said that sometimes the lions venture off of El Capitan, but are rarely seen. We were hunting at the east side, near the base of El Capitan, the only ridge in the entire Rocky Mountain chain that runs east to west. Its tallest peak reaches 10,100 feet. El Capitan is also the birthplace of the famous Smoky the Bear and rumors speak of hidden Spanish treasures, the result of Mescaleros attacking Spanish soldiers as they

traveled to Santa Fe. After lunch, Mike said that we should pack some warmer clothes for the afternoon hunt. I went out to the bunkhouse to retrieve my coveralls. As I rounded the corner of the garage, I saw a ram in Mike’s front yard, 100 yards away. He was at the windmill, getting water. I threw down my coveralls and tried to find someone... anyone to help me. Mike was behind the shop. Scott stepped out of the back door. “It’s a sheep, a ram.” Scott had a puzzled look on his face as he assumed the high altitude had taken a toll on my eyesight or sanity. “Is it tame? May I shoot it?” These were legitimate questions since Linda called the deer in her yard her babies and hand fed some of them. Scott said it was fine as I grabbed my rifle and went prone to see under the tree limbs. He was gone, but Scott glimpsed him as he made his way back up the hill. Scott gets me into a foot race around the pasture to try to cut the ram. Here comes Mike on the Ranger. “What is going on?” After a short explanation, Mike says the ram will probably cut across the saddle between the two ridges in front of us, but we should hurry. It wasn’t totally straight up because I didn’t use any ropes. Have I mentioned that I live at 72 feet elevation and Scott lives at 5500 feet elevation? We dropped over the top onto a more walkable terrain. Scott stopped as the ram crested the next ridge, grabbed his binos and tried to glass him before he disappeared. The wind blew Scott flat on his butt. The ram was gone. That afternoon, we searched the canyons south of the first afternoon’s hunt. I retrieved my Kestrel meter, which I use for competitive shooting, from my pack to measure the wind speed. 20 mph sustained with gusts that made propeller sing so loudly that evidently created a noise that ran off all the sheep for miles around. That was the first time I have ever felt frozen in sixty-degree temperatures. On the way out, Scott spotted eight ewes on the side of a



hill in a group of cholla. Oh my aching feet.

I awoke the following morning to a crisp 26 degrees with a steady 25-mph wind. Please, Lord; let me shoot one quickly. These people never tire. Scott and Mike seem excited that this cold, harsh wind will have the sheep in tighter spots, out of the wind and seeking the early morning sunlight. The downside of this is that Scott and I will walk the rims above the canyons (26 degrees and 25 mph wind). Scott and I start our new walkabout in the same area that Mike and Andy hunted on the first morning. We left the jeep and started up the first hill, heading north, up the tallest ridge around, of course. There was a tall pillar of stacked stones at the highest point. Scott explained that it was an eagle trap from the old days when eagles were a plague to the sheep ranchers. The eagles would land on the tallest point (the pillar) to wait for easy prey. The rancher would set a snare on the pillar to catch the eagle. We dropped off the top of the ridge to scan the first canyon. Scott has this urge to drop over every rim at least 100 feet down. I'm thinking that we can see the whole canyon perfectly fine from the top and if you go down 100 feet you gotta come back up 100 feet to go to the next canyon. It was just a thought.

In the first canyon, Scott spotted eight deer. They spooked and ran over a short ridge to our northeast. As they crested the ridge, I spotted two sheep crossing the same ridge, but much closer to the canyon bottom. The mulies came out of the next canyon and headed up the next ridge, a mile away, still running as though they were being chased by a foxhound. We stood there a few more minutes and finally saw the sheep come out of the canyon, just like the mulies, still running. None of these animals had spotted us, but something sure had them spooky. After glassing several more canyons, Scott saw four ewes. They spooked and sped away like the previous animals. All of these animals were hundreds of yards away and several hundred feet below us. They had not seen us. I finally realized how the cold wind had changed their habits. They were huddled in lower areas, out of the wind, and in the sunlight and the slightest indication of danger (possibly our scent) resulted in their fleeing for two miles. We crossed a few more ridges and turned west. We were now hunting into the wind. No chance of anything sniffing us unless they stuck their nose to our hands. We walked up the first canyon (100 feet below the rim) and spotted one ewe

bedded next to a juniper. Oh, I forgot, during your training, try walking up and down the steps sideways to simulate walking around the edge of these canyons. The ewe finally stood and limped off. We watched her a few minutes as she worked her way up a ridge. She never ran. We moved up another 100 yards and Scott motioned for me to drop. He had spotted some sheep 1000 yards up the canyon. We glassed them for a few minutes and agreed that there were no shooters among the seven sheep. They spotted us and ran over the ridge. We turned south and headed back to the jeep. That afternoon, we scouted a few canyons that we had hunted on Saturday morning. No sheep. We hurried up to Buck Lake with an hour of sunlight left, in hope that we could spot sheep coming to water. No sheep.

Tuesday, February 5, dawned a crisp 26 degrees with wind. Maybe no wind is what makes the 6 o'clock news. Scott and I drop Mike off at the far east side of Dead Man. Mike wants Scott and me to go southwest to a ridge that has a water tank centered in a large patch of cholla. He plans to scout through some deep canyons and work his way toward us. It should take a couple of hours. If he spots a ram, he'll come to get us. If he bumps something, we should see it crossing the ridges and be able to form a plan to intercept it. Mike gets to the truck about 9:30. The wind is really whipping and I am miserable. I'm thinking that we should go back to the house, play cards and watch the Lonesome Dove video. Mike picks up his binos and scans southwest. He comments that the sheep are never in that area. He brings down his binos, looks at me and says, "There's your sheep". Scott scrambles for a spotting scope while I prop my rifle on the truck hood, dial my scope to twenty power and focus on the two rams. Through my scope, I can tell only that they are barrelchedsted sheep.

Scott and Mike came up with a plan. We could mark their general location by a fence that etched it's way from the bottom. Mike said, "They aren't to far past the fence. We can't run the ridges because we'll be exposed. Keep in mind that they are only a mile away". I start trying to calculate what that means, sneaking up to a sheep a mile away, in this country. First, we dropped down into the canyon just below us, heading northwest. We pass by several finger canyons that turn southwest. We turn left into a canyon that looks like the other hundred that I have traipsed across for five days. They are on a mission

with my short 30" inseam legs struggling to keep up. Mike has explained that we have to move quickly, since the rams are walking and feeding and that they could move enough to prevent us from ever locating them. He promises that we'll have time for me to catch my breath before we move into position. We stay low in the bottom of the canyon and turn more westerly into a smaller canyon. Mike and Scott slow to glass. We creep up a little more, then suddenly, Mike and Scott drop to one knee. They have spotted a bedded ewe in the edge of the cholla up near the rim. We had not seen her when we had glassed the rams. We backtracked to prevent her from spotting us. Mike let me have my breather while he explains plan B. Thirty-five seconds later, we start off, Mike pauses and instructs me to chamber a round. There is a large patch of cholla next to the fence on a short rise. We drop to the lower part of the hill, and then turn straight up towards the cholla. Halfway up, we start picking our way through the cholla. Mike is two steps in front of me with Scott pushing me uphill. As we near the fence, Mike motions for me to come quickly. As I prop on the fence next to a post, Scott tells me 200 yards. I'm already set for 200 yards, so I move my crosshairs from one ram to the other, waiting for Mike to tell me if one was a shooter and which one to shoot, when he says, "You better shoot. He's gonna get away". I asked, "The upper one?" since I had noticed that the lower one had not moved. He confirmed that the upper ram was the largest. I was standing between Mike and Scott, with Mike to my left. The ram had moved uphill and to our left, stopping with his head behind a juniper. Mike didn't realize that I could see the ram's whole body and instructed me to move to the next post to my right. When I moved to the next post, it was downhill enough to keep me from seeing the ram. Mike motions for me to move back to him quickly, since the lower ram decided that he had seen enough and the upper ram dropped in behind the lower on their exit. Mike said, "You gotta shoot". I took a quick rest at the original post. The sheep were running through a large patch of cholla cactus. I steadied the best that I could, the back ram, the back ram. My crosshairs were bouncing. BOOM-THUMP. Sounded like contact. He was still running as I racked another round. Mike said, "You hit a cholla". I tried to steady for another shot, but my crosshairs wouldn't settle as I tried to thread another round through the cholla.

BOOM-THUMP. Hit another cholla. The rams were rounding the ridge, but were running 50 feet below the top, staying at almost the same elevation as me. I picked up my rifle to place it to the left of the fence post. As I did, I realized why my crosshairs were dancing. My Versa-Pod sitting bipod had snapped loose in the confusion and was hanging down, swinging. I hit the quick release. As they were falling to the ground, I chambered another round. No more dancing crosshairs. I didn't feel the wind. I didn't feel the cold. No heavy breathing. Steady prop. He's running flat out, but steady, not uphill or downhill, but level. Only he was 100 yards farther than my previous two shots. With my mind reeling from calculations from years of hunting and shooting,. I pull the crosshairs even with the tip of his nose, forward slightly, and then wait for his nose to retouch the crosshairs, squeeze. My .308 rifle recoiled slightly, but not enough to keep me from seeing the result. He's down. I chamber another round and ask Scott to range the exact distance; 275 yards. I add four clicks without taking my eye away from the scope, just in case a follow-up shot was needed. I stayed locked in as Mike and Scott try to convince me that the ram is down for good. I flipped the rifle to safe and sling it to my shoulder, finally allowing the handshakes, accompanied by a huge smile. Mike glanced at his watch, 11 AM. We helped each other across the fence for the long walk to MY ram. For the first time, my short legs matched theirs, stride for stride.

*Randy Wood
Ivanhoe, NC*

Rifle – Remington 700 PSS .308 with barrel chopped to 20"

Scope – Leupold Vari-X III LR 6.5x20x50

Bipod – Versa-Pod Sitting

Bullet – Scirocco 180

Food – 3 square meals daily. The best of any hunt in my life, especially all the homemade breads.

Accommodations – First class, reminded me of a well furnished apartment instead of a bunkhouse. Outfitter and Family – The type of folks you hate to leave.

Diary of a Hunting Trip PART 3

by Michael Engster

(continued from our November Safari Trails)...

NAMIBIA 2006

Foreword by Mike Mistelske:

In this, his diary of a trip to Namibia, Chapter member Michael Engster captures many of the flavors of Africa. Michael's writing style—the touch of his German “accent”—makes for delightful reading, and the reader can easily see and feel and taste Michael's experience.

Michael's diary is presented in three parts, with “Part 1” in the August issue of Safari Trails and “Part 2” in the November issue of Safari Trails. This is “Part 3”—the final installment.

All three parts of Michael's diary are available in the Trophy Room section of our website, at http://oklahomastationsci.org/default.asp?page_id=23443.

Thanks, Michael, for sharing this with us.

We have in America the Two-Hearted River tradition: taking your wounds to the wilderness for a cure, a conversation, a rest or whatever. And as in the Hemmingway story, if your wounds are not too bad, it works. But this is not Michigan, or Faulkner's Big Woods in Mississippi for that matter. This is Africa!

Michael Engster

3-9-2006

We have breakfast on the porch while Fechter's farm workers are loading up the meat that needs to go to the slaughter house in Marienthal. We have a long ride ahead of us, and we have to make a few stops on the way back to Windhoek.

I feel sad to leave Nababis, but then again I always feel sad when I have to leave a remote place.

And so we cross the Packriemen River two more times, dropping off some meat at the Falkenhof farm. Fechter's brother who owns this place is not like Michael. The place is definitely not inviting, and even the black guys are somewhat different.

We push on to Kalkrand to

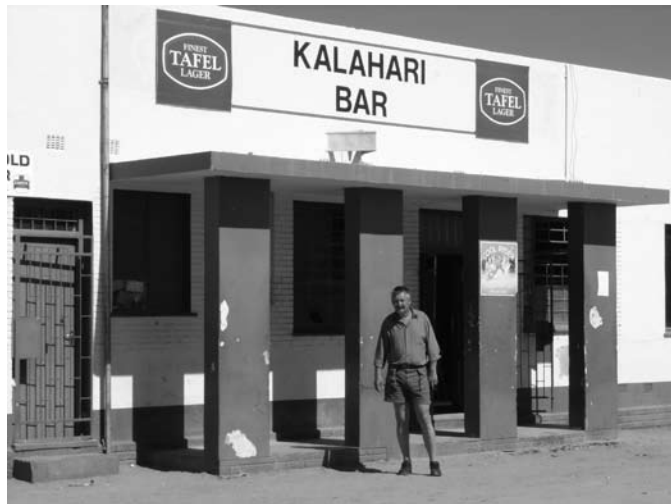
get gas and look at the Kalahari Bar one more time being surrounded by nothing else but filth.

I try to sleep on the way back to Rehoboth but I can not sleep in a car. And so I look out of the window to see the Baster Homeland where African animals have ceased to exist. Cattle, poachers, greed, stupidity and lack of any kind of game management have wiped this huge area clean of whatever Africa once had to offer. History repeats itself.

Fechter leaves the main road to drive through Rehoboth, the capital of the Baster land, but there is not much to see, however I have to admit that the place looks cleaner then I thought it would be.

Our next stop is the house of Fechter's parents that is hidden on a little hillside surrounded by cactus, huge flowery bushes and tall trees. We leave some more meat before we finally hit Windhoek.

Katrin who is leading the way drives up to a German restaurant called “Bierstuben”, and that is where we have good German beer and a meal that is strictly outstanding. For a moment I feel like being back home in



The Kalahari Bar; I'll stay outside

southern Germany. Needless to say – everybody speaks German, even the black waitresses. You figure. The next stop is a taxidermy company called Nyatti Wildlife Art. I have seen many taxidermy shops in my days but this place is absolutely top notch. We drop some of our trophies off and look at the ones from last trip that are ready to be shipped to the States. The owner gives us a tour through his facility that employs at least 50 people and gives us a little story about his company. Interesting guy. Now James Weber wants to see the Windhoek market and some of the sights, but he soon gets stuck with some naked girls from the Ovanimba tribe. He has to pay \$5 US to have his picture taken before he is ready to browse the market where we all look for wood carvings. Fechter does the talking, knowing what the price structure has to be. We buy some nice stuff before we head towards the Protestant church and the statue of the German Horseman, a reminder of the few heroic soldiers of the Protection Troops of the early 1900.

Eventually we are done in Windhoek, which is really not such a bad city, and we drive towards Omunjereke.

The day is still young, and while Michael and Katrin stay on the farm to do some catching up with paperwork, telephone calls, etc.; James, Martin and Bernhard, the Herero foreman, go on a little baboon hunt.

I feel like being alone and make my way down to the river looking for frankolins and guinea fowl. My bird hunting trip however does not go as planned. The closer I get to the river, the higher the grass gets covering all the warthog holes. After falling into four of them my brain starts to work again. Here I am trying to break my legs, sweating and covered with spider webs. If there are any snakes I do not know, but in this tall grass I would not see them anyway. I can hardly see the warthogs running away from me, and I can definitely not get a shot at them. And so I leave the river bottom and make my way uphill.

I walk a lot this evening and being all by myself I

feel that I own this part of Africa and all the animals within. The vastness of the land makes you feel small, and at the same time it makes you feel like a king. Strange, is it not?

A lot of wildlife crosses my way and once I see a major warthog with long tusks sticking out of an ugly face. Luck is with the pig, I can not get out of the wind in time, and the fat Pumba disappears into the thorny brush while I start walking back to the farm. The black clouds rolling in from north-west finally catch up with me, but I am still way too far from the ranch to even try to outrun the weather, and so I get a good African shower. When it rains – it pours and it



The German Horseman

does not stop. It also gets fairly cool, and back on the farm the Fechtters decide to eat inside today. Martin and James had as much luck hunting baboon as I had hunting birds and pigs. To compensate for that, we eat a lot and drink a lot this evening. We want to go to bed early, but jokes and hunting stories are exchanged, and all of a sudden it is late one more time. Good company does that to you.

3-10-2006

The birds wake me up again; I get out of the bed and step outside to see the sun coming up. I take a few

pictures, unsuccessfully trying to capture the spell that this awakening day puts on me. A picture however is two dimensional. The third dimension, the noises and the smell of a new morning can not be captured by a digital camera, but only by your senses.

This is our last hunting day, and I do not want to be late for breakfast. I wake up Martin and James and walk over to the main house where Katrin and the black girls are busy preparing another gourmet meal. We are not loosing any weight on this trip. No way, sir.

And while we are getting stuffed, the plan for the day is discussed. Fechter has to leave in the afternoon to pick up some Swedish hunters at the airport. In the morning Martin and James want to check for baboons, while I rather go on a little bird hunt. We all leave with our trusted 4x4 truck, and after a half-hour drive Michael Fechter drops me off on a small ridge. He shows me a windmill half way up on a far away hillside. “Can you see it? And when I nod he says: “It should take you about a good hour to get there. You find a tree stand and a waterhole. Good spot. We pick you up around noon. Good luck.”

“Thanks, no sweat, I will be there.”

And then I am alone. I get my gun ready and head for the windmill. I have more then four hours to get there. Piece of cake!

And so I watch the others disappear, put shells in my gun and start for the windmill. I am mesmerized by the landscape, the trees and flowers, the absolute abundance of birds and wildlife. The guinea fowl however are very shy today, and I can not get a shot. I can not get a shot at the warthog either, and still I feel great. I am all by myself again, and Africa belongs to me, the tall grass, the sandy creek beds, the wide valleys and the rocky ridges and the waterholes. The thing that does not belong to me is the windmill. The windmill disappeared on me and no matter how often or how long I glass the area, someone stole the damned windmill. If I put it in other words: I am lost. And so I try to make my way back to where I came from which takes me about an hour and a half. Believe it or not, the windmill is back!

Now walking from ridge to ridge, from the big tree to the dead tree, from the red rock to the brush pile and so forth, I finally reach the windmill. I am as happy as I am tired and I look like a guy who took a shower with all his clothes on. And where is the compass when you need it?

Not even five minutes later I hear our truck. My

buddies did not get a baboon, and it was easy for me to get here, and I have been waiting for them for over an hour. Fechter looks at me and grins; I grin back. It was a good morning after all.

We slowly head back to Omunjereke. The baboons are still fooling us. Martin shoots twice with Fechter’s Mauser 9,3x64 but unfortunately with little result. The same thing happens to me and my birds. There will be no guinea fowl soup after all.

Cheetah!! And three of them. “Someone shoot!”

We know that Michael Fechter lost 8 calves the last month, and he lost them to these cats. He has a license from the game department and wants to see at least one of the cats dead. Well, Martin’s gun is empty and Fechter has the spare shells in his pocket, my gun is also empty, and Jim Weber misses with his .300 Win. mag. The cats are gone. “Sh...!”

But what is this, one of the cats shows up again just to get killed by a well placed shot fired by our Yankee guest James Weber. We call it luck, he calls it shooting skills, but we are strictly joking. James is a good shot, and now he is also a lucky hunter. It does not happen too often to run into several cheetahs, miss and get a second chance. It does not even happen too often to just see these elusive cats. This is the real thing here; we are not in a park where animals pose for you.

The cheetah happens to be a young female which as of now is immortal due to the many pictures that we take.

The cat’s hide however has to stay in Namibia due to the regulations that do not allow a hunter to bring such a trophy back to the U.S.A. Fechter finds his little whisky glasses and the gin bottle somewhere in the truck. A ceremonial drink is definitely on order, followed by a good glass of red wine back on the ranch.

And while we are sitting in the shade of the grass roof eating another one of Katrin’s good dishes, we watch some warthogs fighting down at the bank of the river. It can hardly get any better.

Michael Fechter has to pick up new customers at the Windhoek airport and take them south to a Kalahari Desert hunt. It always hurts me to say goodbye to a friend, especially when you do not know when you will see him again. And so we make it short. “Take care, see you soon, keep your powder dry, do not let the bad guys get you, and so on.” And then he is gone. We have half a day of hunting left before our bags

have to be packed. Thinking about the long flight back, the layovers, customs, security checks, waiting in line and eating sh...ty but expensive junk food at the airports makes my skin crawl.

One more time – if I could stay here, I think I would.



The final hour of our hunt; thank you Mr. warthog.

Bernhard picks us up at about 3.30 pm after we had a good cup of coffee. The farm feels empty without Fechter.

We are driving north, and I am the first one who is dropped off about 300 yards from a big tree stand. Martin and James stay on the truck. I watch them drive away until the African brush swallows them. My rifle is loaded when I slowly approach the tree stand. Seeing some movement out of the corner of my eye makes me stop. Too late, a big hog has spotted me sooner and is taking off double time. No chance for a shot.

Fechter told us to always check the tree stands for wasp nests and snakes. I can not detect either one and

settle for some hours of waiting and glassing. It is like watching National Geographic on TV: springbuck, oryx, hartebeest, a sow with 5 piglets, a young jackal, some kudu cows and an assortment of birds keep me entertained; and when I finally spot a major warthog, adrenaline is released into my system.

The pig is about a mile away but makes good progress to come my way. I think about leaving my tree stand but abandon the idea. So far my sneaking up on pigs did not work – why should it work now. And so I watch this warthog for at least 20 minutes before I loose it in the tall grass. Obviously this is not my day, and the sow that brings her piglets right under my tree stand does nothing to improve this. I take some pictures before mamma pig takes her children back home. Nothing for the next hour. I would like to walk back to the ranch, but Bernhard wants to pick us all up and when you go hunting with other people one should stick to the plan.

Some of my springbuck friends that I have been watching ever since I

got here start acting a little nervous. I reach for the binoculars and spot two warthogs about 50 yards out there, one of them sporting serious tusks. There is no time to waste. My cape gun comes up; I get the crosshairs centered and apply pressure to the front trigger, sending a 286 grain bullet on the way. The warthog dies in its tracks and my Africa hunt is over. This was a last-minute shot. The patience that was more or less forced on me paid of.

And so I get off the stand and walk over to the hog; I break a little branch and stick it in the warthog’s mouth. This is an old German hunting tradition. The last bite. You have to respect the animals that you hunt. You can call it silly or laugh about this, but I

will still do it.
Death is not a dreadful thing in Africa – not if you respect the animal you kill, not if you feed people or your memory.
Dragging the pig back to the trail turns out to be a job and a half. I guess it is a macho thing. I could have waited for Bernhard, however I have my own ideas about hunting. The more you work for a trophy, the more valuable it gets.
It is dark already when Bernhard comes back; we load up the pig, shake hands and go to pick up Martin and James.
On the way back to Omunjereke we swap stories. Martin shot a jackal with his .470 N.E. and we decide not to look at the pictures he took. James was baboon hunting and shot a fairly big one but could not find



The close of The Blue Hour

him in the dark. He was not really happy about this. After a warm shower, supper with oryx filet, red cabbage, dumplings, salad, fruit and pudding accompanied by red wine from the Cape we have a few sundowners. The fire glows and our last evening slowly comes to an end.

3-11-2006

The last breakfast, good as always. I take the truck and drive back to my tree stand to pick up the binoculars that I forgot the night before.

Back on the farm we load up our gear, say goodbye and head for the airport.
“Goodbye to you Katrin and thanks for a good time. Hope to see you soon. Say hello to Michael!”
Needless to say, our flight to Johannesburg has been cancelled. People everywhere, all of them complaining, while the mess is getting bigger and bigger. Nobody knows what is going on. We feel sorry for the poor gate agent who is getting yelled at by almost everybody.
Whenever we stranded people get news through the loudspeaker, it turns out to be wrong. We watch some rich Texans bribing the gate agent with some good old American dollars. Shameful, but money talks.
A good hour later, after two planes could not start due to mechanical problems, things slowly get back to

normal and we end up on the same flight the Texans paid money to get on.
I can not help smiling at them: “Nice to see you again, gents.”
They give me the dirty look in return.
The rest of our trip is boring and too long, like always.
But finally we make it back to Ponca City. The next few days we have our photos developed and start talking about our next trip, much to the dismay of wife and mother.
But when you leave

Africa, a part of you seems to stay there, and so you have to go back to reclaim it.
The times of Hemmingway’s, Ruark’s or even Capstick’s safaris are over. Let us enjoy what is left as long as there is something left to enjoy!

Michael Engster Ponca City, OK

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For Big Game Hunters

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

May 2008 Volume 28 Number 5

“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

DATELINE: AFRICA

News... News... News The Zimbabwe Mess. Other Developments

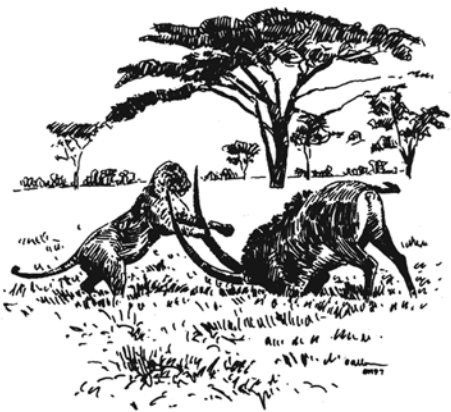
(Editor Note: Hunting Report President/Publisher Don Causey filed the following report on new developments in Africa.)

What is going to happen in Zimbabwe and what should I do about a hunt I have booked there? That was a question I was getting as this issue went to press. More than likely, by the time you read this, election tensions will be over and the way forward will be clear. If not, the advice we have given before still stands – namely, stay in touch with your outfitter. Do so right up until the time you book your flight. Another good contact is SOAZ – Safari Operators Association of Zimbabwe. You can reach SOAZ at 011-263-4-702-402, dialed from the US. Sally Bown is an excellent person to ask for.

Once in the country, do not discuss politics at all, even with your PH if others are listening. Avoid public gatherings and try to arrange to be met at your arrival airport. A new wrinkle in the warnings emanating from the US Embassy in Harare is to be careful taking photos of anything that could be interpreted as controversial. Your best bet may be to keep your camera hidden in ur-

ban areas. The value of this warning about photographic equipment was borne out by a note we received from a subscriber last month who said the individual he brought with him to film his safari was held up at the airport. You can expect that if you are traveling with equipment that could be used for shooting news footage. The current government is extraordinarily sensitive to negative news coverage. Don’t do anything that would result in your activities being viewed as surreptitious news coverage. You could be jailed for that.

The situation in Zimbabwe is murky indeed, but it is worth keeping in mind that to date (April 21) the US State Department has not issued a formal Travel Warning. You can see if that has changed by going to our web site and clicking on Recent Travel Warnings. While you are there, you may want to click your way to that part of the web site where the latest information on Zimbabwe is available. In particular, look for a section devoted to



Warden’s Messages. The URL is <http://harare.usembassy.gov/warden2008.html>. The Embassy in Harare has been issuing travel-related bulletins on Zimbabwe on a regular basis. It had issued three in April alone as this issue went to press.

I don’t want to dwell too much on the possible downside of visiting Zimbabwe because, at this writing



hunters are continuing to come and go. That will almost certainly be the case when you read this. I do not have sufficient information to advise anyone what to do about a booked safari to Zimbabwe, but I can tell you on April 21 that I would still go there myself, and I would take my wife with me.

Next door in **South Africa**, the new President of PHASA (Professional Hunters Association of South Africa), Peter Butland, has taken huge exception to the report I wrote last month about captive-bred lion

hunting in that country. The report, you'll recall, reassured would-be captive-bred lion hunters that already booked hunts for 2008 will be honored irrespective of the outcome of the lawsuit that has been filed by the South African Predator Breeders Association (SAPBA). SAPBA is challenging the government ruling that captive-bred lions have to be released two years before they can be shot. SAPBA wants that period reduced to six months.

What irked Butland enough to trash *The Hunting Report* in a memo to the entire membership of PHASA is my inadvertent use of the term “captive lion” instead of “captive-bred lion.” In all candor, I have never heard of this distinction before, and no slur was intended. After all, the lions that are raised to be shot by hunters in South Africa are literally “captive” animals, as are kudu raised to be shot on game farms. Both are kept inside enclosures they cannot escape from. Hence, they are “captive.”

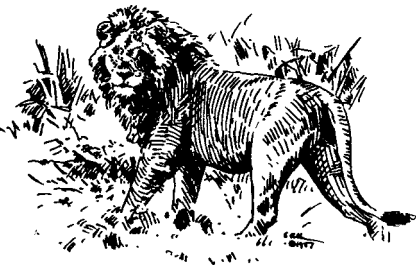
In a sharply worded note that Butland sent the membership of PHASA, he says the term was interpreted in South Africa as a “intentional slur on South Africa... that let us down badly.” As such, it reinforces his view that *The Hunting Report* has not given South Africa “fair treatment” over the years.

Here at *The Hunting Report*, I have never had any difficulty apologizing for mistakes and issuing retractions. However, in this case, I have no intention of doing so. My view is Butland and some members of PHASA are attempting to shoot the messenger here, instead of dealing with what they view as a problem they have allowed to develop in their midst. If PHASA is deeply embarrassed by captive-bred (or simply captive) lion hunting, it should work to eliminate it, not lash out at its friends for imagined insults.

Still in South Africa, Old Africa Hands know the area around O.R. Tambo International Airport is a

high-crime area, and you need to be careful there. Recently, though, a new wrinkle in criminal activity there has emerged. It's so serious we issued an E-mail Extra bulletin about it on April 1.

Seems 17 Americans in a single week were robbed in South Africa recently within 24 hours of passing through O.R. Tambo International Airport. That fueled speculation in the local press that corrupt airport personnel were telling criminals who is arriving with large sums of cash and where they are staying. Indeed, both bits of information used to be required on Customs forms that all arriving tourists must fill out. South African police deny there is any linkage between the customs forms and the wave of robberies, but



Customs officials have taken the precautionary step of issuing new customs forms that do not require arriving travelers to indicate where they are staying. They also banned the use of cell phones by customs officials, by the way. Obviously, if you happen to be handed one of the old forms asking you to state where you are staying, ask for a new form.

Importantly, the new forms still require visitors to declare how much money they are importing. And that brings up a subject I have written about repeatedly – the danger of traveling with a large amount of cash. There are many alternatives to cash, and a host of reasons to not travel with cash. My advice simply is – don't do it, no matter what your outfitter tells you. The outfitter who

demands you pay in cash is probably up to no good. Money can be moved digitally all over the world now, and with sat phones readily available, it's an easy matter to relay messages back to the United States or Europe. Carrying more than a nominal amount of cash into a hunting camp anywhere in the world is simply unnecessary.

Besides leaving the cash at home, there are some other common-sense precautions you should take to reduce the chances of being victimized upon your arrival in South Africa: Do not dress in an ostentatiously affluent manner; hide your jewelry from sight; don't flash a large amount of cash in public or withdraw a large sum from an ATM in the airport; and don't convert a large sum of money into Rands at the airport either.

The best advice of all is to use some kind of meet-and-greet and/or driving service to organize your travel while visiting South Africa. Reputable safari operators typically provide meet-and-greet services for their clients arriving at Johannesburg, or they refer clients to one. If yours does not, two good contacts are: Air 2000/Hunters Support (www.hunterssupport.com); and Afton Guest House (www.aftonguesthouse.com). PHASA (www.professionallhunters.co.za) can also provide recommendations.

Whatever meet-and-greet service you use, Anne Gaines Burril of Air 2000 says to be sure your greeter does not use placards displaying your name and hotel or lodge, as that provides criminals with vital information. She says several tourists were robbed at the entryway of their chosen lodging last year because of this practice. Also, Burril says to arrange payment for meet-and-greet services before or after your pickup at the airport, as showing any cash in public is an invitation to be followed and robbed.

Annalisa Bekker of Afton Guest House offered this additional advice: Do not allow anyone pedaling

services to approach you at the airport, much less handle your belongings or take you anywhere. “Trust no one,” she says. “You don't know what their true intentions are until it is too late.”

The bottom line here is this: Get out of O.R. Tambo International Airport as soon as you can on arrival in South Africa. Oh, and don't let all this talk about crime spoil your enjoyment of a hunt in South Africa, or wherever you happen to be transiting to from Johannesburg.

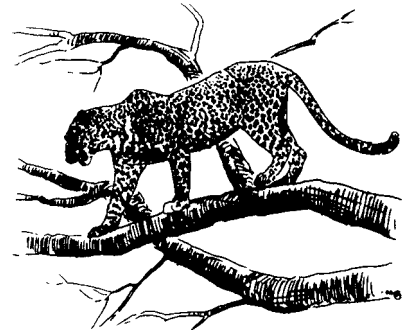
Next door in **Namibia**, the long awaited allocation of Government Concessions has been delayed yet again. The delay this time came just days before the allocation process was set to begin. Word we have is all of the paperwork was in order April 14 to begin a process that would have been completed by April 28.

So, what happened? The stated reason is the naming of a new minister to oversee this area of the government. The new minister, it was decided, needed time to study the allocation plans before going forward. It's anyone's guess now when the allocation will take place.

In the meantime, of course, hunting is continuing in Namibia on private land and a growing number of Conservancies. What's being lost is the chance to hunt areas containing the majority of the country's big game, such as elephant, leopard, lion and buffalo. The bright side (if there is one here) is the quality of the game that will be available on Government Concessions in Namibia once those areas open. This is an opportunity to keep your eye on.

The other bit of good news from this country is word that Namibia has solved the problem that was causing US Fish & Wildlife to deny entry to some leopard trophies. The problem had to do with a CITES tag USF&WS did not like. A new, self-locking tag that meets all USF&WS requirements is now being used in Namibia. Problem solved.

Moving north to **Botswana**, the season there had just opened as this



was written and preliminary reports were that things were going well, al-

beit without lion on quota. The big question in Botswana is what the new president Ian Khama is going to do about hunting. He came into power April 1, having made numerous statements about his opposition to hunting. Just what he will do has everyone guessing and hoping for the best.

The remarkable thing about Botswana is the degree to which it has evolved toward being a full-fledged democracy, with a central government that listens and responds to popular inputs. That bodes well for the future of hunting

WESTERN STATES: IMPORTANT DEADLINES

(Editor Note: Here are the important permit/tag developments to watch out for this month in the US West, thanks to Editor Barbara Crown.)

State	Telephone	Comments
Arizona	602-942-3000	2008 regulations and applications for deer, sheep and buffalo are due June 10. Mountain lion permits are available over the counter, and the season is open. Some units are subject to a quota or closed outright; call 877-438-0447 to check before buying a permit.
Colorado	303-297-1192	Over-the-counter bear and mountain lion licenses with a quota are available. Call 888-940-5466 to see which units have met quota.
Idaho	208-334-3717	Deer, elk and antelope applications are due June 5. General permits for the 2008 season are available on a first-come basis. General spring bear permits are available over the counter.
Montana	406-444-2950	Big game regulations for 2008 are available. Antelope applications are due June 2.
Nevada	775-688-1500	Results for the big game drawings will be available June 20. A second drawing will be held for all remaining quotas for big game with an application deadline of July 7. Results will be posted online July 18. Mountain lion permits, subject to a quota, are available over the counter. Call 800-800-1667 or visit www.ndow.org/hunt/seasons/fur/mtlion.shtm to determine which units are closed.
New Mexico	505-476-8000	2008 big game booklets and applications are available. Mountain lion and fall bear permits are available over the counter.
Oregon	503-947-6100	2008 big game booklets are available, and applications are due May 15. The deadline to enter the department's special raffle drawings for deer, sheep, pronghorn and goat is May 16.
Utah	801-538-4700	The deadline for big game applications was May 1. Results will be posted online at http://wildlife.utah.gov on May 8. Hunting-objective cougar permits are available over the counter. Call 888-668-5466 to check which units have completed their quotas.
Washington	360-902-2464	Deer, elk, goat, sheep and moose special permit applications and regulations will be available after May 15 and are due June 18.
Wyoming	307-777-4600	Results for the deer and antelope drawings will be posted online at http://gf.state.wy.us on July 10. Applications for left-over Full Price Limited Quota elk, deer and antelope licenses will be available July 10 and due July 20. Issue-after licenses are available August 1.

in Botswana because the operators there have worked hard to involve communities in the benefits of hunting. Much has been done to insure that the activity is viewed as ethical and contributory to conservation, too. These efforts have created a substantial base of popular support for hunting throughout the country. It is not clear Khama could close hunting outright even if he wanted to. Stay tuned....

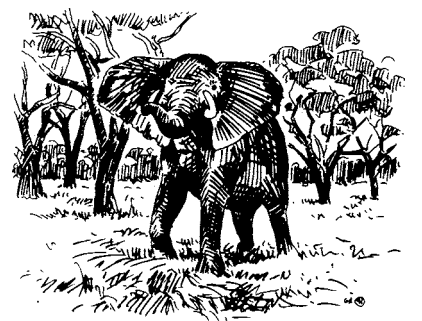
Up in **Zambia**, the area allocation merry-go-round continues unabated, with the announced reallocation of three major areas (Nyampala, Msoro and West Petauke). The reallocation is part of a larger deal that sees the important wetland areas being taken away from private operators and reassigned to ZAWA. This latter development has met with general approval by the majority of the operators in Zambia who resented having to work through a private operator to offer clients wetland hunts for lechwe and other animals.

The most important area to be reassigned is Nyampala, of course, which is arguably the single best concession in Zambia, with good lion, leopard and buffalo among other species. The new leaseholder is Rashid Randera of Baobab Safaris, US agent Gretchen Stark (307-587-5596). As for Msoro, it is said to have been reassigned to Eastern Safaris. The West Patauke reallocation, we understand, is being vigorously contested by Ian Manning of Mbeza Safaris who was previously awarded this area. Meanwhile, as if all of the above were not enough change, there are reports that Sandwe and Chisomo have also been reallocated. Just who will operate these areas is not clear.

Area turmoil like this is not unusual in Zambia. Likely as not, it will have little effect on most booked safaris. Still, if you have a safari to Zambia on your calendar, be sure your intended operator is still in control of the area you are

booked to hunt. A good source of additional information on Zambia is our book, *Zambia: A Country Report*. Copies cost \$40, plus \$2 shipping in the US; \$3 in Canada; \$5 elsewhere. You can order on our web site (www.huntingreport.com); or by phone at 800-272-5656. This is a print-on-demand book that can be updated repeatedly. As this is written, we are incorporating all the new information mentioned above in a revised edition of *Zambia: A Country Report*.

So, what is the latest on trophies taken in **Tanzania** last year? Those trophies have been going out late this year because of all the turmoil over trophy fees last season, which I have reported on *ad nauseum* in these pages. The bottom line is, the



Tanzanian Government has now invoiced all safari operators for trophies taken in 2007, and you should have heard from your operator by now regarding your trophy shipment. The only reason an operator would not have started shipping trophies at this point is his failure to pay the invoice he got from the government. If he hasn't paid that invoice, your trophies are being held by the government.

There is an additional wrinkle in all this you need to be aware of. The sudden release of so many trophies by the government of Tanzania created a temporary shortage of cargo space on airlines this spring. Fortunately, that backlog has now been cleared and shipments are no longer being delayed by the airlines. However, some shipments are still going

out late, and that poses a risk to hunters who collected CITES species in Tanzania last year. If you are among those, check the expiration date on your import permit from the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Do that right away. Make sure it is not about to expire. If it is, you must contact your safari operator immediately to arrange for him to hold your shipment until you can secure a new CITES permit. Your shipment could be returned or confiscated if it arrives with an expired permit.

The 2007 season in Tanzania was one that clients and operators alike would prefer to forget. That last-minute increase in fees followed by extended negotiations and uncertainty apparently took its toll on client confidence, as some operators are telling us bookings are way off. Some operators say they have had clients postpone safaris or simply cancel them outright. Others say they just aren't filling slots as usual. The problem may not be entirely attributable to the turmoil last year (after all, the US and European economies have been in a tailspin of late), but it is almost surely playing a role in it. Apparently, many hunters fear a repeat of last season's scenario in which prices were changed by the government after hunt contracts were signed. One operator tells me showing would-be clients the published 2008 rates in the safari hunting booklet published by the Ministry of Natural Resources has done little to convince them those rates will stand.

For sure, everyone is watching this coming season carefully for any more upsets. Frankly, I don't expect one, and neither do any of the operators and agents I have spoken with recently. My advice is, scoop up one of those last-minute bargains that are emerging in Tanzania. There won't be any bargains by next year when everyone knows things are back to normal.

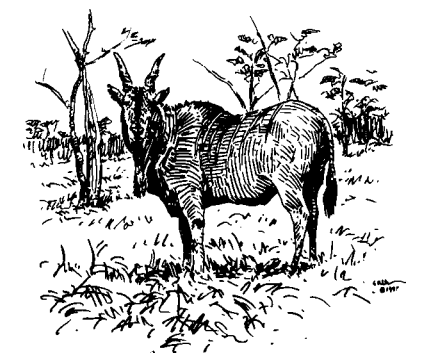
Over in **Cameroon**, you'll recall our report about a community-based

hunting program there called CAMNARES, which stands for Cameroon Natural Resources. The program involves local villages that provide porters and trackers to hunters interested in *chasse-libre*-type (on-your-own) hunts. CAMNARES started by offering forest hunts for bongo, and *Hunting Report* subscriber Wayne Lau was their very first client last July. Lau struck out on a bongo, but his hunting partner succeeded in taking a large, old bull. We published a detailed report on that hunt a while back.

Now, Lau reports that CAMNARES has begun to offer northern savannah hunts for Lord Derby eland. Seems Lau took an eland bull this past February with CAMNARES that was so old that he had worn the front side of his horns flat. Lau says the hunt went "unexpectedly well" even with the attempted coup next door in Chad, which occurred during his hunt. He has promised us a full report soon. In the meantime, you can see a photo of Lau's eland in the Trophy Gallery section of our web site, along with a photo of the

bongo also taken with CAMNARES.

Eugene Yap of Southpoint Safaris (808-322-3201; southpointsafaris@hawaiiintel.net) is the contact person for anyone interested in a CAMNARES hunt in Cameroon. Just remember that hunts with CAMNARES are not for everyone.



Only experienced Africa hunters in good shape and able to judge trophy quality for themselves should attempt one of these hunts.

Finally, I am hearing that the season in **Central African Republic** has been relatively trouble-free. Yes, the Sudanese poachers are still around, and they are continuing to

kill elephants. But at press time I could not uncover any evidence of conflict between poachers and safari operators. That may be because most operators this year decided to suspend anti-poaching operations while clients are in the field. Failing to do that last year is widely thought to be what led to a deadly confrontation between poachers and the camp staff for one French operator.

The downside to canceling anti-poaching efforts during the hunting season is the green light that gives to poachers. Clearly, a larger plan has to be devised to stop the killing of CAR's elephants. Otherwise, it is only a matter of time before they will be completely extirpated. CAR is one of the gravest flashpoints in the world as regards poaching. Some organization needs to step up to the plate.

In the meantime, I would love to hear from subscribers who hunted in CAR this year. Either file a Hunt Report on our web site, or drop me a personal note at: doncausey@msn.com.

Get in a good safari somewhere in Africa this year! – Don Causey.

Briefly Noted

Things To Do, Places To Go, New Developments

■ Hunters whose caribou hunt in Schefferville, **Quebec**, was cut short this past fall should have heard from their outfitter by now about some kind of compensation. You'll recall that scores of hunters were shut out of their caribou hunts last fall when the local Innu Indians staged a protest that effectively barricaded the road into Schefferville, preventing anyone from getting in or out of the floatplane base there. Most hunts were cancelled, and many outfitters were unable to refund their clients, having spent most the funds setting up camps, floatplanes and guides for the 2007 season. Schefferville outfitters petitioned the government of Quebec to make their clients whole. This past March the government

agreed to do so. Sources tell us that government checks were in the mail to outfitters as this was written in mid-April.

The way it works is that the Quebec government sends funds directly to the outfitters who were unable to compensate clients themselves. Outfitters then provide their clients with anything from a free hunt to a complete refund, depending on the circumstances. How each outfitter handles making things right with his clients will vary on a case-by-case basis. By the time you read this, outfitters should have gotten their checks.

As for negotiations with the Innu, we hear that those are continuing in a positive vein, with a meet-

ing of the minds on both sides regarding the importance of the outfitting industry in Schefferville and the need to eliminate the illegal outfitting affecting the Innus' subsistence hunting. While no final agreements have been reached, everyone is optimistic that this season's hunts will go forward without complications. That said, the season opens in August, only three months from now. If you have a booked caribou hunt to Schefferville this year, stay in close contact with your operator on developments there.

□ Still on the subject of caribou, you may have heard that woodland caribou in **Newfoundland** are in real trouble. Seems the number of ani-

■ And, finally, did you know that **Alaska** wildlife managers estimate 86 percent of all annual mortality for sheep, moose and caribou is due to predation? Another 10 percent is from natural causes, such as age, disease or starvation. Only four percent of the annual mortality rate for these mals in this province has declined by perhaps as much as 3/4. Only five years ago surveys estimated a herd of as many as 197,000 animals. The number today is about 37,000. Because of this, nonresident license numbers have been slashed 80 percent from 2,000 permits to only 400 for the 2008 season. We have that from Dan Chaisson of Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism (www.newfoundlandlabrador.com). So far, only one of 19 caribou management areas has been closed to hunting, but more closures may be on the horizon.

So, what's behind the crash in woodland caribou? A combination of factors seems to have converged to devastate this species. First of all, biologists say that caribou herds seem to have a natural cycle in which their numbers build to a peak then crash. The last time Newfoundland's herd crashed was in the late 50s/early 60s when the number of animals got down to 5,000. The hunting season was closed for about 10 years back then. Chaisson says biologists believe that heavy predation from coyotes, which first arrived in Newfoundland about 20 years ago, and from a growing black bear population has significantly increased pressure on the caribou and they think this has accelerated the downturn in their population cycle.

Newfoundland's Department of Environment and Conservation is busily working on a caribou recovery program plan. Chaisson says upwards of 15.5 million dollars from various private and government sources will be poured into the plan's implementation.

As for this coming hunting season, Chaisson says there are still good hunting opportunities for

2008 with the chance of taking a quality bull. He says, however, that hunters who have a woodland caribou on their list of desired trophies should not wait to get one. Although no one has suggested closing woodland caribou hunting yet, he says it is one of several possible moves to recover this population.

□

■ And, finally, did you know that **Alaska** wildlife managers estimate 86 percent of all annual mortality for sheep, moose and caribou is due to predation? Another 10 percent is from natural causes, such as age, disease or starvation. Only four percent of the annual mortality rate for these species is from human harvest, and that includes subsistence hunting. These figures are important because there's a ballot initiative scheduled for vote in Alaska this coming August which could put an end to the existing State Predator Management Program and severely limit the ability of the Department of Fish and Game to effectively manage Alaska's wildlife resources. Specifically, if passed, the initiative would repeal the Board of Game's powers relating to predator control programs and make it more difficult and more expensive for Fish and Game to cull wolves and bears, especially using an aerial shooting program. It would also mandate that predator control programs be used only when prey populations have reached a point of irreversible decline without wolf or bear control. Some observers say this means a game population would need to be on the brink of extermination before a predator control program could be implemented.

So what is being done about this threat? A coalition of sportsmen and conservationists called Alaskans for Professional Wildlife Management (APWM) has come together to educate the Alaskan public about the truth behind Ballot Initiative “05 Hunt.” You can read about APWM and their efforts on their web site at www.protectmoose.com. The Alaska



Professional Hunters Association is among those supporting the group with a contribution of \$10,000. Much more is needed to effectively fight this effort. Sport hunters interested in joining the fight can make a donation through the above-mentioned web site.

The Alaska ballot initiative, it should be noted, is not unique. Similar initiatives are being pushed by anti-hunting groups across the country. The specific activity or species varies from mountain lions in California to doves in Wisconsin, but what they all have in common is that they seek to remove science-based management from the hands of professional wildlife managers. If the Alaskan initiative passes this August, its insidious precedent may be used by the antis to push other measures. Don't back away from this challenge. Help APWM defeat this initiative.

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OUTFITTER CRITIQUES

The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

(This section of The Hunting Report is based entirely on subscriber-written Hunt Reports received in our Miami office. It is designed to provide accurate, reliable reports on what's actually happening in the field. Our policy on Hunt Reports is as follows: We mention in the newsletter all Hunt Reports as received and exert no censorship except in cases when agents or outfitters submit reports on hunts they have a financial stake in, or when we have good reason to believe there are ulterior financial or personal motives on the part of anyone submitting a report. All critical Hunt Reports are sent out to the affected agent/outfitter/PH for rebuttal comment and a reasonable amount of time is allowed for that comment. The Hunting Report does not seek to pass judgement on the validity of any conflict reported in a critical Hunt Report, but merely indicates in its pages that the conflict exists. Subscribers who think their hunting plans might be affected by the conflict are urged to write in for all the relevant correspondence. We think this prior-notification policy coupled with a neutral-comment policy is as fair a system as can be created for the airing of conflicts about hunts. It goes without saying that the existence of a conflict is not necessarily reason to avoid an agent/outfitter/guide. That determination can be made only after reading the comments provided by both parties to the conflict. We think all seasoned hunters will be able to sort out the claims and counter-claims and make better decisions about where to hunt and who to hunt with as a result of our Hunt Report Program.)

■ Subscriber Frank Moore has good things to say about a hunt in **Croatia** handled for him this past July by Tomo Svetic of Artemis Hunting (www.artemis-hunting.com). Moore says he hunted on the islands of Cres and Kornati in the northern Adriatic Sea, where there are about 1,200 islands off the coast of Croatia. Many of these islands offer the ability to combine a hunting trip with a Mediterranean vacation for the family. Moore says he hunted free-range mouflon sheep and wild boar in the mornings and evenings

and enjoyed the beaches during the day. He hunted in the mountains, which he describes as unspoiled but rugged, dry terrain, and says he saw plenty of game and of good quality. He killed two mouflon rams. One is a silver medal trophy and the other a bronze medal. His boar weighed in at 420 pounds, and he says it will make gold medal. The only problem he cites is that hunting in July means very hot, dry weather. He recommends going in September or earlier in the year in February or March when it is not quite as hot. Also, he

warns that the animals can be quite nervous, adding to the challenge of a spot-and-stalk hunt here.

In addition to mouflon and boar, Moore says he also hunted roe deer on the mainland. He hunted on Mount Velebit and reports taking both a gold and silver medal buck. He was impressed enough with the game there that he says he plans to return again this year.

Moore gives the whole experience an enthusiastic thumbs-up. He says Svetic accompanied him the entire time, and communications

“SERVING THE HUNTER WHO TRAVELS”

□

• Critical Hunt Report and rebuttal comment are available on a white-tail deer hunt handled for subscriber William Schlichtmann in Ohio by **Double E Outdoors**.

□

• Critical Hunt Report and rebuttal comment from the outfitter are available on a stone sheep, moose and grizzly hunt handled for subscriber Anthony J. Visentin and his son Paul in the Yukon by **Teslin**

Outfitters. Visentin won the stone sheep part of the hunt in a raffle conducted by *Hunting Fool Magazine* and paid extra to bring his son along in search of a moose and grizzly.

□

• Critical Hunt Report and rebuttal comment are available on a safari to Tanzania handled for subscriber Norman Baade in 2006 by **Swanapoel and Scandrol**.

□

• Critical Hunt Report and rebuttal

comment are available on a mixed-bag hunt handled for subscribers R.E. and Karen Hopkins in the Yukon this past September by **Midnight Sun Outfitters**.

□

• Critical Hunt Report and rebuttal comment are available on an elk hunt handled for subscriber Rod Fogle this past October in New Mexico by **Cougar Mountain Outfitters**. Fogle bought the hunt at an SCI Auction.

● Latest Airline Comments ●

(Editor Note: Airline-related problems for traveling hunters are multiplying. Here is a quick rundown of important recent developments. You can send your own contribution to this occasional column by e-mailing Barbara Crown at bvcrown@bellsouth.net.)

• Aeroflot Airlines: If you are traveling to Russia on Aeroflot for a hunt this season, make sure you have a copy of your firearm import permit with you. Subscriber Paul Wolleman says he and several other hunters were stuck at LAX airport last August when an Aeroflot ticket agent refused to accept their firearms without seeing their Russian permits. These permits are issued in Moscow directly to the hunting operator and in his name, but hunters can get a copy of the permit faxed to them by their operator. Wolleman says that is what he did right at the airport where he was able to reach his operator by phone.

• Northwest Airlines: Subscriber Michael P. Austin says Northwest Airlines cost him \$1,100 in shipping costs, plus a hotel stay in Winnipeg last August when the terminal manager refused to accept his caribou antlers as checked baggage. Despite Northwest’s policy of accepting trophies for shipment, the terminal manager told him the antlers were a bio hazard. When Austin pointed out that the trophies were properly cleaned of all flesh and blood and

were wrapped in cardboard and foam per Northwest’s policy, the manager then said he would not accept them anyway because they exceeded restrictions for checked baggage.

Austin says he missed his flight and had to spend a night in Winnipeg in order to find a local taxidermist to handle the shipment for him. He says he heard another group of hunters there had the same problem with Northwest, and the



Customs agents there told him they hear about this problem on a regular basis. Austin complained to Northwest Customer Service who told him that the acceptance of antlers as checked baggage was at the terminal manager’s discretion. Austin says hunters should either avoid Northwest Airlines or make alternate arrangements for their trophies ahead of time.

We confirmed Northwest’s policy about accepting antlers as baggage, by the way. Antlers and sports equipment up to 70 pounds

may be checked. Anything heavier than that must be shipped as cargo. Northwest reserves the right to refuse any piece of luggage due to its size, weight, character, or unsuitable condition for transportation on a particular aircraft. Note that while sporting equipment such as archery and rifle cases are included in the free baggage allowance, Northwest charges to check antlers. As of this month, that charge has gone up from \$80 to \$100.

• United Airlines: Be prepared to pay an extra \$25 if you fly this airline and check a second bag, including your rifle case. As of May 5, 2008, the airline no longer includes a second bag in its free baggage allowance for any economy fare flights. The exception is for travelers with status in United’s Mileage Plus or Star Alliance programs. The new policy applies to all flights within the 50 United States, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands and Canada. Fares purchased before February 4 are exempt.

What is particularly worrisome about this development is that other American carriers are sure to follow suit if United successfully implements this policy. That could make travel a whole lot more expensive for hunters who typically check multiple pieces of luggage. Charges for a second bag are already common throughout Europe.

Traveling With Ammo: TSA Confiscating Some Large-Caliber Ammo

If you are getting ready to board a plane with a firearm of .50 caliber or larger, you should know that Transportation Security Administration agents (TSA) may confiscate your ammo. That is what happened to two Hunting Report subscribers last week. One hunter was flying with .577 Nitro Express from the Denver airport; the other had .505 Gibbs ammo and was flying from Dallas/Ft. Worth. The TSA agents who confiscated their ammunition said they were doing so because ammo that large is prohibited on commercial flights.

The problem appears to stem from a misreading, or misunderstanding, of an FAA regulation that limits the size of ammunition for personal use that can be placed in a checked bag. The rule says ammo up to 19.1 mm in size is acceptable. Our sources indicate that would include ammunition up to about a .76 caliber, not .50 caliber.

We have contacted the NRA, and representatives there are working with TSA to issue an agency-wide memo clarifying the size ammo that can be legally packed in a checked bag. We have asked the NRA to help us get a copy of that memo as soon as it is issued. If we can obtain a copy, we will upload it to our web site, where it can be downloaded and taken with you to the airport. In the meantime, rightly or wrongly, you need to know that you risk having ammunition of .50 caliber or larger confiscated at the airport if you pack it in a suitcase. If that happens, please let us know. If possible, get the name and badge number of the TSA agent involved. Note the date, time and location of the seizure, along with exact specs of the seized ammo. We will pass those details on to the NRA who has assured us they will pursue this matter to the congressional level if necessary. You can send the above information directly to me at: bvcrown@bellsouth.net. - *Barbara Crown, Editor.*

AFRICAN INDABA

Hunting for Truth: Why Rationalizing the Ritual Must Fail

Guest Editorial by Shane Mahoney

Editor's Introduction: *Shane Mahoney, Director of Newfoundland Wildlife Research, is a research biologist with broad experience and an internationally known writer and lecturer on environmental and resource conservation issues. He is a leading conservationist, philosopher and extraordinary speaker on the future of hunting and sport fishing and the role hunters and anglers have played in conserving the planet's wildlife legacy. Shane Mahoney has published in a broad spectrum of scientific journals including Ibis, Canadian Journal of Zoology, Wilson Bulletin, Alces, Journal of Wildlife Management, Forest Ecology and Management, Rangifer, and Journal of Molecular Ecology. He is currently cross-appointed at three universities in Atlantic Canada. Shane is a noted authority on the North American Conservation Model and narrated a film on the model in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation in 2006. At the 30th International Wildlife Media Center & Film Festival in May 2007 Shane Mahoney moderated an international panel discussion that dramatically focused on the theme "Crisis, Hope, Vision – Solutions for Planet Earth".*

His writings and lectures reflect a deep personal commitment to understanding man's place in nature and are drawn from his own experiences in rural Newfoundland, where undoubtedly his fascination with wildlife and the human cultures that depend upon it was fostered. Shane has challenged audiences to think about the positions and beliefs they hold, emphasizing the evolutionary and historical influences on modern society's outlooks and values.

African Indaba is proud to present Shane Mahoney's guest editorial to our readers:

Across the wide belt of the North American continent a profound debate surges. It is a collision of world views; a refinement of man's view of himself; a reinterpretation of Eden; a great contemplation of the future of mankind. Yet, despite this profound nature, the debate in question is delivered to the public as a clash of soft sentimentality and rigorous rationalism, the central theme portrayed by both sides as something so far removed from its essential self that it is at worst belittled, at best trivialized. The evisceration of man's greatest achievement, *naturalness*, is the work of two opposing forces, each wrapped in the cloak of conservation, striving for supremacy in a tournament of frauds and follies. The problem for hunting today is that nobody will tell the truth.

On the one side, there are those who are opposed to hunting, who obviously do not hunt, and who portray the activity as barbaric, unnecessary, and inappropriate to today's society, and mankind's future. They concentrate on the suffering of the individual animal and upon the behavior of persons who might inflict it. They portray nature as more benign, more *right*, without man than with him; and hunters as fermented

juveniles who enjoy killing as a diversionary sport and who see animals as targets for their violence.

To persons who argue for animal rights, hunting is a cruel wastefulness and the hunt an anachronism, something we should have put behind us, as we have bear baiting and cock fighting. Hunting is empty of merit, devoid of value and without deep meaning. Its adherents are therefore the same. The activity is personified and therein lies the target. The concept, the rich idea, of hunting, becomes displaced. For the public, the gruel is watered down until it can be bottle fed. The question is asked: "why (do you) hunt?"

On the other side, stand those who support hunting, primarily hunters themselves, but not exclusively so. They fall for the trap. Their arguments in support of hunting are that it helps manage wildlife populations, it provides healthful recreation, physically and socially, it provides meat, and it generates wealth, especially in rural economies. Supporters argue it is their right, and not the animal's rights, that are to prevail, and because their activity harms no one, but benefits many, they should not be interfered with. Hunters don't discuss animal suffering, but concentrate on

the health of populations. They rightfully point out the contributions, financially and politically, hunters have made to conservation, often when other voices of support were not being raised. They trot out the balance of nature, without ever defining natural balance. They portray anti-hunters as misguided extremists, whose views would have mankind being overrun with tick infested deer, drowning in goose macaroni, or starving so other predators might thrive. Hunters argue simply, or simply don't argue. They too keep the debate easy ...to digest....or dismiss. One thing they conscientiously avoid however: they never, ever answer the question "why (do I) hunt".

Why is this? What is it about this short little question that is so ponderous, so daunting? What is it that hunters fear; what is it they do not comprehend? And, if they do comprehend, why won't they offer an explanation? Why so quick to identify the *benefits* of hunting but so reticent to at least try and describe their true motivation for engaging it? This is a conceptual divide that must be breached. We have been treating the two as though they were the same. They are not. Explaining the benefits of hunting does not in any way explain why we hunt, and why we hunt is the question, really, that society is asking. We confuse and avoid the issue...but we will either answer it, or we will be dismissed. The one thing we must protect and define for hunting is its *relevance*; notoriety and debate will not kill it. Fabrication and irrelevance will. Once deemed irrelevant hunting will no longer be debated; nor will it be engaged in. If we want continuity and recruitment, if we want respect and tolerance for what we do, then we best get busy earning it...by explaining to the reasonable majority what hunting *really* is.

Hunting is not simple. It is the generator of our human condition, the crucible of intellect, and the fire of creativity. It is our mirror of the world, the image maker of wild creation; it has defined how we see, literally and figuratively. It is the only absolute rediscovery mechanism available to human beings; the mind-body fusion of all meditative, spiritual experience is derived from its pasturage. Those who return there know full well the sense of universal intimacy it gives over. Explaining this odyssey is our greatest challenge; but succeeding will be our greatest achievement. The world remains perpetually absorbed by this search, yet hunters know the way. Why not celebrate the truth for a change? Hunting is a deliberate journey to the union of birth and death; it cannot but create a deeper perspective and appreciation for the glorious importance

of both. What society does not dream for such citizens?

Like it or not we have to search deep within ourselves, journey to the place where the mind is floating free. We have to voice what is silent; capture what is shadow. The hunt is a universe of emotion that overwhelms, scatters all notions of other preoccupations, and delivers the *persona completa*. Hunting is a love affair; turbulent, gnawing, and all possessing. It is composed of lives, but has a life of its own; a life held precious by the participant who, in part, creates it. But then there is the "other", unpredictable, honored. Yes! An affair of the heart; and like all such affairs it drags the mind along, a great force subjugated by the senses engaged to their fullest; but alive just the same, and capturing memories and creating fantasy's that are nearly one and the same. Hunting is an immersion; a drowning in connectedness that squanders pride and privilege; the true hunter is the humble man, the enthralled child, and the knowing prince. All is ready, nothing is restive; all is rhythm, nothing is in friction.

Hunting is knowing why the senses were made! It displaces both the practical and the excess. It represents evenness, oneness and the knowledge of self. Hunting is a cataclysm of inward progress. We hunt for spiritual reasons; we hunt to find inner peace; we hunt to understand the world. Hunting is our first great myth! The true hunter is both the alert and the meditative man. Thought and action combined in purpose; a hymn for the unity of world and self. Hunting is a search for *all*.

Truth makes a great message; not an easy one! But saving the preciousness of life is never simple. We need remember however, that if hunters are viewed as dopes, hunting is viewed as a pass time for the dim witted; if hunters are viewed as slobs, hunting is a wasteful debauchery; if hunters are viewed as juvenile, hunting is deemed delinquent. Only hunters can change such stereotypes. The task at hand is to articulate the relevance of hunting; not its correctness, nor its practical service to human kind. Rationalizing the mythology is both a tactical error and a diminishment of pride. Lies and excuses usually are.

Shane Mahoney was the celebrated guest speaker at the 2007 convention of the Professional Hunters' Association of South Africa. He is also director on the Board of Conservation Force and an appointed expert of the CIC International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation,

AFRICAN INDABA

Joy of the Hunt: Why can't Postmodern Society Acknowledge its Inner Wild Man?

Peter Shroedter

Hunting is a highly charged emotional issue, much like abortion, and people generally hold fast to the position they choose early in life all too often before they understand the consequence of their decision. Hunting is as natural an activity as falling in love and making babies. It's how families were sustained since the dawn of time.

The only people who can speak against hunting with some moral authority are true vegans; everyone else's comments are tainted by varying degrees of hypocrisy. Anyone who eats meat or uses animal products is responsible for killing on an industrial scale unimaginable in hunting.

Even the vegans' moral authority is in question when they criticize hunters because the market gardens that grow their vegetables have degraded the ecosystem and caused the demise of some wildlife somewhere. The cities and suburbs where they live have killed and displaced countless animals. The fact that they participate in our modern economy puts blood on their hands as well.

It is amazing how our society gorges itself nightly on virtual violence against people in movies and video games. We can also sit passively while politicians debate the finer points of genocide in far-off places and still somehow decry hunting.

Perhaps this dichotomy should not come as a surprise in a society where most people live their entire lives without being part of the food chain except as consumers. In a culture where the word hunting is another word for killing, it is easy for earnest young people to conclude that hunting, like dog or cockfights, is part of a senseless brutal past.

The act of hunting in the pure sense of the word is

a communion with nature and an acknowledgment of our species' past and its enduring dependency on the environment for survival. The fact that human beings are genetically programmed to hunt should be enough reason to acknowledge that hunting is part of being human. We are omnivores at top of the food chain, able to eat almost anything between meat meals, but it is meat that gives us the protein we need. It is the act of hunting that connects us to the essence of our existence and our dependency on our environment.

I've been a hunter since childhood and still hunt actively. I make no apology for it. The process of hunting has made me keenly aware of my place in the environment. Through hunting I learned early about the importance of conservation. It was through hunting I learned patience and perseverance and became a student of nature. I also learned about the sacredness of life and how all life is interdependent.

People who speak the loudest against hunting have turned the campaign to stop hunting into a very profitable industry. They choose to forget that it was hunters like Theodore Roosevelt who created the concept of national parks. They ignore that hunters pay for conservation efforts and give of their time to organizations like Ducks Unlimited and other conservation efforts that have undone the damage our modern economy has done to the environment.

The least part of hunting is the killing but you cannot hunt without intending to kill. In the words of Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset, in *Meditations On Hunting*: "One does not hunt in order to kill. On the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted."

One of the problems we have as hunters is that

"One does not hunt in order to kill. On the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted"

we do not talk about the hunt to non-hunters and when we do we make assumptions that non-hunters can appreciate the fine details of our passion without having experienced the "hunt." Hunters know about the range of emotions and state of heightened physical awareness that only the hunt can provide.

Non-hunters assume hunting is all about killing

of the experience. An excellent article describing the transition from urbanite to human hunter was written by Michael Pollan, for the *New York Times* entitled *The Modern Hunter Gatherer*, published March 2006. Pollan is an urbanite non-hunter and he took a walk in the woods with hunting friends. He used to scoff at Gasset and Ernest Hemingway for writing what he



because to have blooded your own hands for something to eat is such a rare experience today. I have killed many animals for food because for most of my life, the only meat I ate was that which I slaughtered myself. There is no similarity between that bloody work and hunting.

When hunting with city friends I see the transition from urbanite to "the hunter" once we get into the bush and I point out the game sign. In less time than it takes to program a VCR, people who have never hunted before begin to see and hear things they never noticed before. They learn to sort out the forest sounds and begin to see in a new way. They begin to see the world through a hunter's hungry eyes searching for prey. They lose their sense of time and become acutely aware of minute changes in temperature and wind direction. As novices they can't understand the information their senses are detecting, which only increases the intensity

called hunting porn. But, before the hunt ended, he felt the depth of the emotions that hunting arouses and experiences what he calls "a cannabinoid moment."

Cannabinoids are compounds that affect the neurotransmitters, creating an intense sensory experience. I never knew the scientific cause for the altered physical and emotional state hunting brings on but it is the reason I hunt. I hunt to be part of the great thing that is the environment and to take my place in it.

Scientific explanations aside, suffice it to say that for many hunters, hunting is as important an experience and as spiritually uplifting as a religious pilgrimage.

So why, in a pluralistic society that tolerates so many spiritual pursuits, is hunting becoming an anti-social behavior. Is it that postmodern society is still afraid to acknowledge the inner wild man?

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Oklahoma Station – Safari Club International



Application for Lifetime CHAPTER Membership

(You must maintain an active membership in Safari Club International for Lifetime Chapter Membership in the Oklahoma Station chapter to be in effect.)

Name: _____

Home Address: _____ City, State: _____ Zip: _____

(Preferred mailing address if different than above: _____)

BS Phone: (_____) _____ FAX: (_____) _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Mobil/Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Pager (_____) _____ Other Phone: (_____) _____

Signature: _____

Sponsor Name: _____ Sponsor Membership #: _____

(Please check one below)

____ Yes, I support the Oklahoma Station and Safari Club International's goals of conserving wildlife and protecting the hunter. Please enroll me as a ***Lifetime Chapter Member***. I understand that this enrollment will entitle me to a permanent subscription to the chapter newsletter, ***The Oklahoma Safari Trails***, and all other publications and/or notices that are sent to active chapter members. I am under the age of 65 and am enclosing the lifetime membership fee of \$600.

____ Yes, I support the Oklahoma Station and Safari Club International's goals of conserving wildlife and protecting the hunter. Please enroll me as a ***Lifetime Chapter Member***. I understand that this enrollment will entitle me to a permanent subscription to the chapter newsletter, ***The Oklahoma Safari Trails***, and all other publications and/or notices that are sent to active chapter members. I am over the age of 65 and am enclosing the lifetime chapter membership fee of \$400.

Enclosed is \$ _____ or charge to my (please check one) _____ VISA _____ MASTERCARD

Credit Card Number: _____ Credit Card Expiration Date: _____

Please return this form with the appropriate fees to:

Sam C. Munhollon
Membership Chairman
10830 N. Bryant
Oklahoma City, OK 73131

E-Mail: smunhollon@aol.com

Office Telephone Numbers: (405) 302-4168 --- (877) 838-1234 toll free





Oklahoma Station – Safari Club International



Membership Application

ADULT CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

Name _____ Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Day/Office Phone: (____) _____ FAX: (____) _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____

Pagers (____) _____ Other Phone: (____) _____

E-Mail: _____ @ _____ Web Site: (____) _____

Other Address, City, State, ZIP: (circle one) Business or Home: _____

Signature: _____ Sponsor Name & Number: _____

Check One:

_____ Yes, I support the Safari Club International's and the Oklahoma Station Chapter's goals of conserving wildlife and protection of our hunting rights. Please enroll me as a chapter and national member for **\$85.00**. I realize that my membership fees include a **\$30 Chapter membership**. The **national membership fee of \$55** includes an annual subscription to the monthly *Safari Times* newspaper and bi-monthly magazine, *The Journal of Safari Big Game Hunting*.

_____ Yes, I support the Safari Club International's and the Oklahoma Station's goals of conserving wildlife and protection of our hunting rights. Please enroll me as a **chapter member for \$30.00**. I understand that to enroll as a chapter member, I first must be a member in good standing of Safari Club International. My SCI Membership is : _____

OTHER SCI MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS (Check One)

Sportsman's Advocate Membership	_____ Annual \$30 US (USA, Canada, Mexico)	_____ Annual \$55 US (Overseas/Airmail)
Family	_____ Annual \$75 US (USA, Canada, Mexico)	_____ Annual \$100 US (Overseas/Airmail)
National	_____ Annual \$55 US (USA, Canada, Mexico)	
International	_____ Annual \$80 US (Overseas/Airmail)	
Life Member	_____ \$1,000 US (USA, Canada, Mexico)	_____ \$1,500 US (Overseas/Airmail)
Senior Life (60 Years old +)	_____ \$750 US (USA, Canada, Mexico)	_____ \$1,250 US (Overseas/Airmail)
Spousal Life	_____ \$500 US (USA, Canada, Mexico, Overseas/Airmail)	

Enclosed is \$ _____ or charge to my (please check one) ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD

Credit Card Number: _____ Credit Card Expiration Date: _____

Credit Card CDD# _____

Please return this form with the appropriate fees to:

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Membership Chairman
10830 N. Bryant
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