

KENTUCKIANA

HUNTER



KENTUCKIANA CHAPTER - SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL

FIRST QUARTER 2012

Randy's Mystery Turkey

"What Is It?"

See Story On Page 3



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President's Message

By Mike Maddox

As your Chapter President, I want to personally invite each of you and your guest(s) to attend our annual Chapter Fundraiser Banquet and Auction on February 25, 2012 at the Holiday Inn on Hurstbourne Lane at Interstate 64. Our fundraiser committee has worked hard to secure many donations that will be available during the live and silent auctions. We have some exciting African hunts as well as North American hunts, jewelry, and furs for the ladies and many other interesting items. Our web site has the items listed that will be available in the auction. Also, featured in the newsletter are some of the auction items to peak your interest.

Our fund raising initiative allows the Chapter to continue to reach out to our youth through several programs with our Hunter Apprentice Program being one of our recent successes. We also continue to take the SCIF Blue Bags full of clothes, school supplies, and soccer balls to Africa to distribute to school children, many who do not have shoes to wear to school or lunch to eat while at school. The Archery in the Schools programs continues to expand with our Chapter funding equipment purchases to get the program started in a number of schools. We also plan to sponsor an educator to attend the American Wilderness Lead-

ership School in Jackson Hole, Wyoming this summer. This program provides conservation education to educators so they can come back and teach children more about the many activities available in the outdoors.

I mentioned our Hunter Apprentice Program, and if you have read previous newsletters, you will certainly agree that the impact we are having on the attendees during the two day session is significant. Our Chapter's program has been used as a benchmark for other SCI Chapters who are initiating youth programs. Introducing youth to the shooting sports, conservation, and hunting is like feeding the multitudes. Give someone a fish to eat and you may feed a few; however, teach someone to fish and they can feed multitudes. We, as adults, have a responsibility to promote the outdoors and allow the youth to experience the activities that we have enjoyed. We hope their exposure to the outdoors and the many wonderful memories it creates will enhance their lives forever.

Help your Chapter help others by attending the Fundraiser Banquet, then dig deep and bid high. I look forward to seeing you there.



2011-2012
Officers and
Board of Directors

Officers

President- Mike Maddox
Vice President- Tom Hebert
Secretary- Mary Free-Phelps
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Spotlight On Our Sponsors



**PURCHASE A
YUDOFSKY FUR AT
THE FUNDRAISER BANQUET**

Yudofsky Furriers has been a family business in the Louisville area for 88 years. As the area's premier master furrier, **Yudofsky Furriers** continues to bring to you the largest selection of fine furs and fur accessories from around the world at the lowest prices possible. They are also the only full-service furrier in the area, providing *repairs, relining, restyling, glazing, and professional cleaning services*, and offering the only 100% fireproof cold storage vault and fur factory right on the premises. For several years Yudofsky has supported the Kentuckiana Chapter with beautiful furs and accessories. **For 2012, the live auction will include a beautiful one of a kind cashmere jacket with fox collar and sleeves. A sheared mink vest, reversible to leather will be available as well in a special raffle.**

Thank you, Joy Yudofsky, for the long standing support you have given to our Chapter. If you are looking for that special coat, as Joy says, "Don't settle for less than the Yudofsky label".

What Is It?

By Mary Free-Phelps

Editor's Note: Randy and Mary have donated a fully guided two (2) day turkey hunt (including accommodations) in the area where the rare turkey in the story below was taken! Now is your chance to hunt and possibly harvest a most rare and unique bird, possibly an Eastern/Merriam cross in Grayson County, Kentucky! DNA test results are pending! Attend your Chapter's Fundraiser on February 25th and be the winning bidder for this once in a lifetime hunt for a unique and rare turkey!

At the beginning of Kentucky's 2011 fall turkey gun season, my husband, Randy Phelps, and I had guided our annual *Women in the Outdoors* fall turkey hunting event on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. On Monday, Randy decided to hunt our back 36 acres tract of land. Randy is a "runner and gunner" type of turkey hunter. He likes to slip along and "stalk hunt" for turkeys. Several years ago, he purchased the perfect camo for his type of hunting, a leafy bug suit that makes him look like a large bush creeping through the woods.

While slipping along the back property line, Randy spied a flock of hens, jennies, and jakes, and one big purple headed gobbler that was feeding through our neighbor's open horse pasture straight for our property. Unfortunately, the four wheeler trail that Randy was following on our side of the fence was covered with crispy, dry leaves, so he could not keep up with the turkeys without making too much noise which would alert the turkeys. It was obvious that the turkeys were going to cross onto our property too far in front of Randy for him to get a killing shot. Randy decided to back track down the four wheeler trail, along the horse pasture fence, down another four wheeler trail, through our woods, then out into our food plot, down the length of our food plot, then back another four wheeler trail, back into our woods, and out in front of the flock of turkeys!!

Randy accomplished this trek with speed and stealth; however, when he arrived back at the horse pasture fence, there were no birds to be seen. The turkeys had decided to change course. If he had stood at the original spot on the trail before he decided to back track, the turkeys would have fed just past him in route to our food plot. Now, Randy sprinted back through our four wheeler trail, through our woods, then out to our food plot but, again, no turkeys!

The leafy suit turned again as Randy sprinted down the length of our food plot to the other four wheeler trail that leads back into



Randy as a Bush

our woods which was about a 150 yard dash. Just as he reached that four wheeler trail, he heard a putt, which is the alarm call a turkey makes to warn the other turkeys about possible danger. The turkeys had crossed through our woods, crossed the four wheeler trail out of our woods, and were feeding in a new food plot that we had recently sown with a blend of seeds. This food plot dropped down a slight grade just past the four wheeler trail, so Randy could only see the gobbler's head

As he watched the movement of the turkey's head, Randy stood motionless out in the open food plot. After a few moments passed, the gobbler must have decided that Randy, in his leafy suit, was nothing to be alarmed about as he went back to feeding. The turkey

bobbed his head as he fed along, so Randy had to carefully time his shot. Just as Randy shot, the gobbler dropped his head but the shot did knock the bird down. Quickly, the gobbler jumped and ran about 40 yards down the grade to the far side of the new food plot. The bird was dazed but not down! Randy ran to the top side of the new food plot and downed the gobbler with another shot.

When Randy reached his bird and picked him up, he noticed that this gobbler had very wide white tips on his tail feathers and on the tips of the feathers at the base of its tail. He definitely did not look like any Eastern subspecies he'd ever seen!

Randy wanted photos of this beautiful gobbler before we lost sunlight, so he loaded the gobbler into the truck, stopped by the house to retrieve the camera, and headed to the farm on which I was hunting. I was just leaving the woods and headed to my truck when he pulled through the gate.

Judging from the look on his face, I knew he must have taken a beautiful trophy of a bird and he did! Neither of us had ever seen a bird like it in Grayson County! After photos were taken, I email all our hunting friends and families the photos of this beautiful gobbler with the question, "What is it?" Speculation was varied but all were in agreement that they had never seen anything like it around here.

Randy and I are on the National Wild Turkey Federation's Kentucky State Board of Directors and the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife sends Steve Dobey, their turkey biologist, to our board meetings. When Steve received the email and the photo of Randy's rare turkey from us, he emailed back and asked in which county Randy had harvested this gobbler.

I emailed him back, "Grayson!"

Steve emailed me back and said, "Well, here is the story. . . In 2009, nine people were cited for purchasing, transporting, and releasing pen raised wild turkeys from another state, and Grayson County was one of the smuggler's release sites. Some of those birds were not accounted for."

To help clear up the mystery, Steve has requested a muscle tissue sample and a few feathers for DNA testing. This gobbler was a young gobbler with a six inch beard and short spurs, so he could not be one of the original released birds. Steve speculated that Randy's turkey with the white tipped feathers on its tail could be an offspring of one of the smuggled turkeys.

Randy's runner and gunner stalk in his leafy bug suit had paid off big time, and his rare bird has created quite a stir around Grayson County! The other good news is that another bird with the same color pattern has been spotted on a neighboring farm since Randy harvested his gobbler!






Become Our Friend on Facebook

East of I-25

By Bob Horrar

If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is, so the old saying goes. The email from the booking agent promised a great Elk hunt in Eastern Colorado, and the over-the-counter tag was good from September 1 to January 31 for either sex. Well, I just had to check this out! I called the booking agent and confirmed the information.

Being a little skeptical, I also called the Colorado Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Two phone calls later, I confirmed the email was in fact true, but the CDFG was unable to explain why they had a drawing of restricted permits in the western part of the state and seemingly a lack of restrictions east of Interstate 25 (I-25).

So, I called the outfitter, which was interesting. Elk were a recent newcomer to the eastern part of the state having migrated into the area over the past 50 years from the mountains. CDFG did not want to manage the herd or keep paying for fence and crop damage. The land is short grass prairie and considered high desert with large cattle ranches making up most of the hunting concessions. I booked the hunt and headed for the area east of I-25 in mid-October. I was filled with visions of a short hunt and a large bull Elk just waiting to be collected for a visit to the taxidermist. As usual, it didn't work out that way; it almost never does.

The hunt ended up being on a 75,000 acre working cattle ranch with real cowboys, some good guides, and a great cook. It

reminded me of hunting in Africa: lots of dirt track driving - up to 70 to 100 miles per day - with occasional spotting and stalking in beautiful country thrown into the mix. The terrain was mostly flat with canyons of various sizes scattered across the ranch. Walking was easy compared to some Elk hunts I have done, but then there was the weather! It was unseasonably warm the first two days and 45 mph winds greeted us the following day. A sharp drop in temperature into the low 20's kept me guessing what clothes or how much to wear.

Now the hunt! The first two days the only Elk we saw were on another ranch and untouchable. Many Antelope and Mule Deer kept us from getting bored but hunting was slow. The third day we switched to the other side of the ranch and immediately found Elk although they would disappear into the thick junipers as quickly as we found them. One nice bull and few cows gave us fits as we tried to track them. Finally, they went running off in a stampede with only the noise of their hoofs to confirm that we had been close.

Later that afternoon we found another small 4 x 4 and we played the same hide and seek game except he messed up and trotted through an opening in the trees giving me a 50 yard shot (which I passed on)! After four years of bow hunting for Elk, and coming up *snake eyes*, I was not going to settle for something small with a rifle. Besides, my son, Jim, has bow hunted for Elk three times and harvested two bulls. The first one was a nice 4 x 4 on the second day of a hunt in the mountains of Idaho. The other was an even larger 5 x 5 in Northern New Mexico his first morning out. He doesn't really think that bow hunting for Elk is all that difficult. Some people are just born lucky! However, we are a very competitive family and I can't let him get too far ahead.

Day number 4 was crunch time. This was my last day since I couldn't stay the full 5 days. I admit I was a bit discouraged, but as we salied forth in the morning, I was thinking that with a little luck my hunt could be over in a matter of minutes. An hour later, we drove down a dirt track, topped a small rise, and immediately saw a herd of Elk trotting across a road 150 yards ahead.

Gary stopped the truck, and I jumped out, grabbed my rifle, jacked a round into the chamber and hollered at him, "Where's the bull?" Even though we were at the tail end of the rut, I knew there must be a bull with the cows.

Gary hollered back, "He's bringing up the rear."

I threw my rifle up and picked him up in the scope. Fortunately, I had it screwed down to 4 power which made the difference. I immediately saw him, swung my cross hairs in front of him and squeezed the trigger. As the .300 WSM came down out of battery, nothing was in sight. I heard the bullet strike, but the bull had disappeared into the junipers along with a dozen cows.

We jumped into the truck and got to the spot where the herd crossed the road. We began to slowly move into the thick junipers looking for blood and tracks but found nothing for the first 40 yards. As we moved carefully through the

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Habitat "To Do" Check List

By Sam Monarch

It is a generally accepted fact that for wildlife to survive, prosper, and reproduce, it must have access to food, water, and cover every day of the year. Regardless of the acreage we control, it is possible to enhance the wildlife population on that land by improving the quality of its habitat. In my efforts to improve the habitat on my farm, I learned of a habitat planning calendar published by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDF&WR) in its "Wild Know How" newsletter. That KDF&WR calendar has proven to be of great assistance to me. The following excerpt and future excerpts from that calendar which appear in the "Kentuckiana Hunter Newsletters" are reproduced with the permission of KDF&WR.

1st Quarter Calendar "To Do" Check List

January

- _____ Contact a wildlife biologist to discuss upcoming planting season*
- _____ Take soil samples to determine soil nutrient needs
- _____ Prepare firebreaks for upcoming prescribed burns
- _____ Order seeds for spring planting

February

- _____ Mow Korean lespedeza or clover fields to encourage new growth
- _____ Burn or mow fescue sod in preparation for converting to other cover types
- _____ Disk fields in preparation for renovation to clover and grass
- _____ Erect, clean, or repair nest boxes; check predator guards
- _____ Install nesting platforms for geese

March - Mid April

- _____ Prescribe burn in preparation to eradicate fescue
- _____ Strip disk to promote bare ground and new forb growth
- _____ Sow clover or lespedeza
- _____ Sow cool season grasses
- _____ Apply lime and fertilizer per soil test to wildlife food plots

*For the phone number of your "private land biologist" call 800-858-1519

East of I-25

trees, we found our first track and began following it. We only went a few feet before we found the bull standing and looking at us; however, I couldn't get my rifle up quickly enough before he disappeared.

Okay, we assumed the bull must not have an immediately fatal wound; back to tracking we went. Ten minutes and 50 yards later, we found him again, but this time he was lying down. As he jumped from the ground, I shot quickly from the shoulder at a 20 foot distance but he pulled his disappearing act again. The bullet slammed into his hips, missing bone, but he was gone into the trees yet again.

We continued to track him: out of the junipers, across a small drainage ditch and into another forest of trees. Our slow careful tracking paid off - within 10 minutes, we found him again, lying



Author With Trophy Elk



A "Bragging Rights" Elk

trophy. We were able to get the truck to him and, with some winches and extra help, he was loaded and taken back to the ranch. It had been close, but sometimes the last day is the best day!

This magnificent bull Elk will soon have an honored place on the wall at our home in Big Sky, Montana. It is only fitting that he becomes a part of the mountains where so many of his kind still live. I don't think I will ever hunt for Elk again with a rifle. Bow hunt-

down, but this time he couldn't get up. I finished the bull off with a shoulder shot to keep him permanently anchored. Only then could I begin to admire his beauty and great size.

It was a great finish to a hunt that had me doubting if I would actually collect anything, let alone such a magnificent

Bear Tracks

By Aline Abell

My love of bears began when, as a young girl, I was given a new pair of snow boots. These weren't just any snow boots. These boots left perfect bear tracks with every step I took. You couldn't get me out of those boots. I wore them until they were much too small, and then reluctantly passed them down to one of my younger sisters. As a child, I also remember visiting my Uncle Fred's house. Uncle Fred was the only hunter in our family, and he had a couple of deer mounts on his wall, but my favorite thing in his home was his bear rug. He allowed us to sit on the rug and I remember petting the bear's head like it was a dog. Although I have always loved bears, pursuing one was a relatively new idea since I have only been hunting a little over 4 years now.

My desire to hunt began when my husband, Michael, returned from his first deployment. I didn't like the idea of him going off to hunt for a whole day without me, so I started tagging along and re-discovered my love of nature. When I was a child, my family did a lot of camping and most of my childhood was spent up a tree eating mulberries or in a creek chasing crawdads. As an adult spending time in the woods, I discovered that hunting was just as much about being a part of nature as it was about the lure to harvest an animal. It was during my time spent in the woods with my husband that I decided hunting would become my new hobby. Little did I know at the time how big a part of my life it would grow to be.

Three years into my hunting career, the opportunity to hunt a black bear became available to me and I couldn't turn it down. My husband was usually right by my side during my hunts. In fact,

Michael was in the same tree with me when I bow shot my first deer, so this was going to be a very different kind of hunt for me. Firstly, my husband couldn't go. We had just returned from an Iowa deer hunt and Michael couldn't take another week off from work. Secondly, I would be hunting in a place I had never been with people I didn't know very well. It would be a true adventure!

It was late December 2010 when I drove to costal North Carolina with my husband's friend (James), his wife (Holly) and their girls (Emily and Madeline). James was taking me to his family's home where they have been hunting bear his whole life. We arrived late at night and drove straight to the local Wal-Mart to purchase our hunting licenses and bear tags. The next day was opening day of bear season in that region of North Carolina and we were ready to hunt. Before sunrise, James' parents, affectionately known as Ms. Barbara and Haha, were at the breakfast table with about 6 other hunters and me. Ms. Barbara is quite the cook and it is tradition for everyone to meet there to have breakfast before the hunt.

The hunt, I found out, was to be done using dogs. We were to head out in trucks and stop when one of the dogs got on the scent of a bear. Then, we would park the trucks and head out on foot following the dogs. It was only the second stop of the morning when the dogs got onto a good scent trail. We were hunting where there were large patches of pine tree woods and fields, and the bear was somewhere in this very large patch of pine trees with a thick undergrowth.

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"AUTHORS" NEEDED

Kentuckiana Hunter needs more "hunting authors"!!!

All articles published in our newsletter are written by fellow Kentuckiana SCI members!

Share your hunting experiences with friends and preserve your hunting memories

by writing an article for the newsletter!

EDITING ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED

E-mail your article to Sam Monarch at smonarch@bbtel.com

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Bear Tracks

Soon, all of the hunters moved into positions surrounding the woods. James was carrying a lever action rifle with iron sights chambered in .45-70 GOVT and I was carrying a scoped bolt action chambered in .300 WIN MAG. As James and I walked through a field of tall grasses and briars to get closer to the wood line on the far side of the woods, we could hear the baying of the dogs weaving in and out of the trees. We stopped about 60 yards from the



500 POUNDS PLUS!!!

wood line and we were standing in the middle of tall grasses when we heard the dogs getting very close. We heard movement in the grasses right in front of us!

Another hunter about 100 yards away took a shot at the bear, missed, and made the bear go back into the woods. This whole time we had never even seen the animal: we had just heard it and James realized that this would be a much closer shot than we had expected. While we were both trembling from the cold and adrenaline, James suggested that we switch weapons. I was to be the primary hunter, and he was backing me up. He had shot bears in his hunting career and I had not. Also, being a

good friend of my husband's, I think James had promised to keep me safe, at least as safe as possible when dealing with bears.

So, now, I am holding his lever action .45-70, a weapon that I have never even held before. We walked closer to the wood line and near a natural path in the woods. Getting out of the tall grasses gave us a little more visibility. The entire time, we heard the bear being pushed by the dogs. Usually, I was told, the bear will tree giving the hunters' time to approach and then shoot the bear out of the tree. For some unknown reason, this bear was not treeing!

After what seemed like a very long time, we heard the dogs coming much closer. Although this area of woods was very large and it was unpredictable where the bear may emerge, we seemed to have picked the perfect spot. The closest other hunter was several hundred yards down the tree line and out of our sight. We could barely hear the bushes moving over the sound of the dogs but in what seemed like slow motion, the bear came out of the thick undergrowth about 30 yards in front of us!

I m m e d i a t e l y , I heard James yell, "Shoot!" I remember very clearly hearing him yell "Shoot!"

three times before I actually took a shot. I think James was as anxious as I was and in hindsight, I think he realized just how big this bear really was. For me, it was just a bear. He was the first one I had ever seen in the wild. I remember thinking that I had to make this shot count and I was waiting for the bear's shoulder to get out from behind trees and into a good position.

The bear was coming toward us at a slightly left-facing trot, and he was followed by at least 8 dogs! I would never be able to



Aline With Gigantic Black Bear

handle shooting someone's dog by accident so the shot had to be right. It's amazing what all passes through your head when you are getting ready to shoot! When I took the shot, the bear was about 17 yards away. I remained as calm as possible and aimed for his shoulder. The bear made a twitch with the impact and took a harder left turn so that now he was lumbering away facing away from us.



Aline And Guide / Friend, James

James, holding my .300, took a shot while I was getting the lever action working for another shot. Missing the first time, James shot again. We were only about 20 yards away, and James's second shot hit the bear, but the bullet did not seem to faze him. I didn't get a second shot off because, at that point, the bear was surrounded by the dogs. I felt sure my first and only shot had been a good one. The bear angled back into the woods with the dogs after him. We could hear that the dogs were staying close and not moving away again which was a good sign.

We found the bruin about 50 yards away just inside the wood line. The dogs were all over him, pulling at the bear with their teeth. They were all as excited as I was! I was amazed at the size of the bear, and James kept telling me that it was a really big bear. Again, I had nothing to compare it to, but up that close, even I could tell. I knew he was big when I couldn't even pick up the bear's head for a photo.

James' brother, Eddie, was the next person on the scene. We were trying to tie up the dogs and take a couple pictures. The other hunters soon arrived to help get the bear out, and it wasn't easy! Even with the help of several men and an ATV, we were struggling. Once we got the bear close to the truck, we took some time to take photos and then loaded the bear onto a trailer to take him back to Haha's house to weigh him.

Weighing the bear also proved to be more difficult than we had anticipated. The bear was too heavy for Haha's 500 pound scale! Our only choice was to gut and skin the bear and weigh him in parts. When we gutted and skinned him out, I was delighted to find that my shot had been true, hitting his near shoulder and then lodging in his opposite shoulder. The guts weighed right at 80 pounds, his hide and head weighed in at 130 pounds, and the meat and bones weighed in at 295 pounds. We estimated that we lost at least 20 pounds in fluids, so as far as an exact weight, we don't have one, but we estimated him at around 525 pounds.

After all was said and done, I really couldn't believe how quickly this had all happened. I had planned on being at Ms. Barbara's and Haha's home for a 5 day hunt, so the next 4 days were spent getting to know James's family and trying my hand at duck hunting. The whole experience for me was what really made this hunt! I met good people and visited with a great family, and I have a magnificent trophy to help me remember it all. The bear's skull measured in at 20 and 15/16 inches *Boone and Crockett*, just 1/16 inch away from making the all time record book. There is no doubt that I will be visiting the Tar Heel state again for yet another adventure!



James's Father, Ha-Ha

South African “Blue Bag”

By Trudi Weber & Shawn Woodward



Trudi And Vlam Giving School Supplies to Children

When Shawn announced that we were going on a safari to Africa, all sorts of images filled my mind and, I have to admit, I was a little afraid. Images of charging lions and stampeding elephants made me question the sanity of our plans; however, as we began to talk with other Kentuckiana Chapter members about their adventures on safari, the thing that stood out was the stories about the people they had met and the friends they had made.

As we leafed through safari picture albums with friends, I was captivated by the photos of “exotic” animals that were not exotic but natural in their home environment of the African bush, but when I came to one group of photos which featured native children in their natural surroundings, my



Trudi and Children

heart ached. How could these children have such big smiles when they had so little!

Then came the stories of the “Blue Bag Projects”. I learned that SCI members would use their extra baggage space to take gifts, school supplies, and medical supplies to these children who needed so much. This sounded like a great idea and we decided to take gifts too. Our outfitter, Madubula Safaris, and our PH, Vlam Myberg, who had helped other Kentuckiana Chapter members with “Blue Bags Projects”, were excited about the prospects of helping us deliver our gifts.

Planning your first safari is a whirlwind of excitement and that excitement grows as your departure date approaches! We had checked and double checked our packing and “to do” lists, gathered all of our gear, practiced and zeroed rifles, and then came the time to shop for the children!

The most fun Shawn and I had while preparing for our adventure was shopping for the children. I could envision the looks on the faces of the children as they were given their very own first coloring books and crayons and wondered if the medical



Trudi Shows Vlam Some Of The Gifts

supplies would help them feel better during a long night of sickness, but my visions fell short of reality. The smiles of the children were priceless! Who would have thought that a soccer ball could be so great and that markers were so wonderful! I have never seen children enjoy a sucker more and the hugs and “thank you’s” were the sincerest.



William And His New Soccer Ball

As we reflect on our adventure to the Limpopo Province of RSA, besides sharing a wonderful adventure together and taking some beautiful trophies, we accomplished three additional (3) goals. 1. We donated approximately 2,200 pounds of fresh protein laden meat to the locals. 2. We delivered much needed basic medical supplies. 3. We delivered basic school supplies which were also much needed.

Beware, African Safaris as well as “Blue Bag Projects” are addictive. I can’t wait until we can visit Africa again, and a “Blue Bag” will go with us. I now know why the Chapter members we talked with about Africa are so enthusiastic and the ones who take “Blue Bags” are so passionate. Being there and meeting the people gives you a whole new perspective!

DO WE HAVE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS?

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Send a note to our webmaster below
and you will be added to the e-mail distribution list.
Webmaster Please Include Me!
webmaster@kentuckianasci.org**

Records Are Made To Be Broken

By Sam Monarch

He was a tall, pleasant looking fellow noticeably several years my junior. I watched as he and my wife chatted, both were obviously excited, both were obviously having a good time. Alice and I were at the 2007 SCI Awards Banquet in Reno, Nevada where she had just been awarded the #1 Major Award in the muzzleloading category for taking a new world record leopard. She and her new acquaintance were waiting their turns to see the SCI photographer. I knew her new friend was a Major Award winner, but who was he?

A few minutes later, Alice and her friend turned and walked toward me, "Sam, I want you to meet Gary Tennison. He . . ."

I interrupted, ". . . just set new world records for every springbok subspecies in South Africa. I am delighted to meet you! You have taken some fantastic springbok," I continued, "Do you think your records will ever be broken?"

Gary responded with a smile, "Records are made to be broken. If you break my records, then, I will have a reason to go back and try to break yours."

I was impressed with his gracious but subtle challenge. We chatted briefly then he returned to his table. A few minutes later, Gary returned with another gentleman: a gentle looking man with a pleasant smile. "Sam, I want you and Alice to meet a friend of mine. This is Julian Theron. When my springbok records are broken, they will be broken on Julian's farm. That's why I wanted you to meet him."

As I spoke with Julian, I immediately liked and trusted him. After a while, I asked, "What is the secret to your springbok success?"

Julian responded that there is no secret, "The springbok on the Karoo do not migrate or at least, not much; so, I cull the inferior animals and leave the better ones to breed and reproduce. That is the way I was taught to raise sheep, and we try to do the same thing with springbok."

What Julian said made sense! In the States, we tend to seek out and harvest the very best animals and let the inferior animals live to reproduce, thus reducing the genetic quality of the herd. Our practice of always "taking the big one" because "if I don't take him, somebody else will" doesn't make good sense, but that attitude appears to be a natural and unfortunate consequence of public ownership of wildlife.

In January of 2008 at the SCI Convention, I again saw Gary who again directed me toward Julian. Julian, Alice, and I talked at great length about Julian's wonderful "Karoo" and its world famous springbok, but the thing that peaked my interest was Julian's common sense approach to wildlife management. After we parted, I told Alice, "Someday, I am going to hunt with Julian."

We again visited with Julian at the 2009 SCI Convention, and it was like visiting with an old friend. I told Julian that "someday" I was going to hunt with him and that I planned on breaking



**Back Courtyard View
From Our Window**



**Tom Takes Aim Over Tall
Shooting Sticks**



Tom With #2 White Springbok



Goliath



Clay With #6 Typical Springbok

every one of Gary Tennison's records.

Julian responded, "You are welcome and we will certainly try."

Later that same year, Alice and I took our grandchildren to South Africa to hunt with a muzzleloading rifle. We hunted with our favorite PH, Vlam Myberg of Madubula Safaris. Words cannot describe how great the experience was for the boys as hunters and for Alice and me as grandparents. Tom, the older boy, took a SCI #4 blue wildebeest and a #9 blesbok both in the muzzleloading category. Clay, the younger boy, who was only going to be the cameraman, changed his mind and borrowed Vlam's .375 and took a trophy blesbok.

In January of 2010 in Reno, we again visited with Gary and Julian and shared with them the story of our boys' successes and of our intent to take Tom and Clay back to Africa. Gary was very encouraging and repeatedly stated that he would love to see my grandchildren break his yet untouched springbok records. Our convention time with Julian reinforced my earlier impression that he was the type of person with whom I wanted my grandchildren to hunt and, more importantly, to get to know.

Before the January 2011 Convention convened in Reno, I got permission from my son and his wife to make a return trip to Africa with our boys during their upcoming spring break, and I began to make inquiries into our hunt destination options. Julian renewed his invitation to hunt springbok on the Karoo, and Gary was most encouraging, so the trip was on! [Note: As of January 2011, eleven of the fifteen largest springbok ever taken on the continent of Africa were Julian's springbok, and Gary Tennison's Muzzleloading Records for #1 Copper, #1 White, #1 Black, and #1 Typical Springboks were all taken with Julian!]

When I told Gary that his records were going to be broken by a couple of kids, Gary responded, "Nothing would make me happier, records are made to be broken, and I would love for Tom and Clay to be the ones to break my records!"

With their parents' and their schools' permission, we stretched spring break three additional days which permitted a six day hunt on the Karoo. The Karoo region of South Africa is a high elevation, arid plateau which normally receives only 15 or 16 inches of rainfall per year. Julian's 150,000 acre farm in the Karoo is the perfect area for springbok as they are capable of going for months without drinking water.

Julian's guest lodge is five-star beautiful and most comfortable, and his staff is very efficient and very gracious! . . . And, the springbok hunting is the world's best! Julian told our boys that they would try to break Gary's records but it would be tough; however, with hard hunting and good luck, a top quality Grand Slam was possible.

The first day was spent familiarizing us with

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the Karoo and looking for “something big”. There is no way to estimate the number of springbok we spotted! Much of the Karoo is tabletop flat and, with binoculars, we could see for miles and springbok were everywhere! In the early afternoon, Julian spotted a white springbok which looked gargantuan to me. Julian commented, “It is the best one I have seen for a long while. It will be touch and go with Gary’s world record.”

I turned to Tom, “You’d better take him if you can. White springbok don’t get much bigger than that!” With that observation, Tom and Izak, Julian’s son and Tom’s PH for this day, grabbed the muzzleloader and the tall shooting sticks and started across the grassland while Julian, Alice, Clay, and I watched with binoculars.

The stalk seemed to take forever. Tom and Izak crept slowly in the direction of the giant “white” using scrub acacia bushes to break their silhouettes. The springbok was obviously not comfortable with the situation as he kept meandering away: always just a bit out of range. I had cautioned Tom that as he was shooting over the tall sticks, 100 yards should be his maximum range.

As we all watched, the “white” finally stopped and turned broadside to Tom at about 100 yards. I held my breath as Tom set up the sticks and aimed the rifle . . . and aimed . . . and aimed. He then took the rifle off the sticks as the springbok ambled off. I feared Tom could not get steady: perhaps he was nervous.

Again, the stalk was on and all we could do was watch as the springbok steadily walked another 400 to 500 yards before he stopped. I watched Tom set up, then I turned the binoculars toward the springbok but, again, no shot from Tom and the springbok nervously strolled away. “What’s going on?” I inwardly questioned as I anxiously watched, “White springbok just don’t get much bigger than that!”

Again, Tom and Izak inched closer to the giant “white” and, again, Tom set up and, again, I turned my binoculars to the monster springbok. Suddenly, all four of its legs and its nose hit the ground and a second later the sound of the shot reached us. A perfect shot! As Alice, Clay, and I whooped and hollered, Julian turned the truck and raced toward Tom and his trophy. Before I could climb out of the truck, Julian and Tom were hugging, back slapping, hand shaking, and generally acting like a couple of buddies who had just won the lottery.

What would Tom’s trophy measure? Was Gary’s world record “white” now history? In a minute or two, the tape measure came out for the rough in-field measurements. The number to beat was 39 5/8 (Gary’s #1). As Julian measured for the second time, I became anxious. Finally, Julian turned to Tom and said, “I think he’ll be #2. I am sure that you have broken every muzzle-loading record in the world **except** for Gary Tenison’s! It’s truly a great trophy!” and Tom beamed!



Tom Congratulates Clay



Izak And Clay With Clay’s First Black



Julian, Izak And Clay With Clay’s #3 Copper



Izak Congratulates Tom On #4 Typical



Clay, Alice And Sam Admire Tom’s #3 Black

When things settled down, I asked Tom why he had let the springbok walk away twice. He responded that he had fired each time, but each time he had heard the dreaded, “Click!” Knight muzzleloaders have two safeties, and in the excitement, the firing pin safety had not been screwed all the way off “safe”.

Tom and Clay are extremely competitive, especially with each other, so it really made me proud to watch Clay sincerely congratulate Tom and show true excitement for his big brother’s success.

After the in-field pictures were taken and the first trophy was in the meat shed, we headed out to look for a springbok for Clay. At one point, Julian stopped and pointed toward a springbok several hundred yards across the vast grassland. Through the binoculars, the horns looked really good, but not fabulous. The thing that was unusual was this “typical’s” body size! He was with a herd of ewes and he was colossal by comparison. Julian commented, “I’ve named him ‘Goliath’. He is probably 20% bigger than a normal sized male. We put a tag in his ear and he is not to be shot. I want to get his genetics in the herd. Some of his female offspring will eventually breed with a ram with exceptional horn genetics, and maybe we will get a huge ram with monster horns.”

As we continued to drive slowly along the jeep trail, I pondered, “Why do we consistently shoot young 10 and 12 point whitetail bucks in the States and leave the inferior 6’s and 8’s to breed? Are we selfish or just plain stupid?”

Before this thought was out of my head, Julian again stopped abruptly and grabbed his binoculars, “There he is! It’s ‘Fishhooks!’” he exclaimed.

“Wow! . . . Wow! . . .”, I responded at a loss for words. My binoculars revealed that Fishhooks, too, had a tag in his ear. He was not to be shot as long as he was still a breeding ram, and the reason was obvious! Even I could tell that I was looking at what will someday be **the new world record typical springbok!** I could only imagine the enormous great-grand-ram offspring that Fishhooks’ and Goliath’s combined genetics should produce!

As I was marveling at the possibilities, Julian again hit the brakes and grabbed his binoculars. There at a distance was another huge typical springbok and he was looking straight at us. “I haven’t seen him in a long time!” Julian said excitedly as he turned to Clay and opined, “Clay! He won’t break Gary’s record, but he is ‘Top Ten’ with the muzzleloader. It’s up to you. There may be a bigger ram out there, but this one is definitely ‘Top Ten.’”

Clay was about to bust! He jumped out of the truck and whispered excitedly, “Pap, I want him!” and the hunt was on. We waited as Izak and Clay grabbed the muzzleloader and the tall shooting sticks and angled back and away from

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us. Through binoculars, I watched as the huge, nervous typical springbok twitched and inched away from us, always keeping his attention on us and missing the real danger.

After about 10 minutes, I watched the springbok crumple to the ground, and then I heard the blast of the muzzleloader. Tom, the photographer for this stalk, snapped a picture of the world class ram just as Clay fired. The photo reveals that the animal was literally dead before it hit the ground. Instantly, Julian and Clay and Izak and Tom and Alice and I were all celebrating Clay's perfect shot! Again, I felt pride in the boys' support of one another. This time, it was Tom who was excited for his little brother!

In-field measurements informally confirmed the "typical's" trophy standing. Later measurements by a Master Measurer placed Clay's typical springbok at 42 4/8 inches and #6 in the muzzle-loading category. I told Clay that only 10 people in the whole world could be on that "Top Ten" list and I would bet that he was the only 12 year old on it! Clay was having a ball and so was his "Pap"!

The next four days were every hunter's dream! We saw thousands of springbok, and the boys made dozens of stalks. Some were successful but many were not. Springbok are nervous little fellows and would often disappear beyond the horizon at the first hint of danger.

Going into Day Five, Tom, who had been very selective, had harvested 3 world class springbok, but he still needed a "copper" to complete his Grand Slam. So far, Gary Tennison's #1 springbok records were still untouched, but Gary's #1's were the only records on the muzzle-loader Top Ten list that had not been moved around by our boys. Tom had taken the following world class muzzleloading trophies:

- white springbok #2 SCI - 38 4/8
- typical springbok #4 SCI - 43 7/8
- black springbok #3 SCI - 37 2/8

... Clay had taken five springbok, which netted him a Top Ten Grand Slam plus one extra "black". Gary's comment that "records are made to be broken" hit home with the taking of Clay's two black springboks. Clay's first "black" had knocked the famous Jim Shockey off that Muzzleloading SCI Top Ten list. Clay's second "black" knocked his Pap (me) off that same SCI's Top Ten list!

Clay still needed another white springbok for its cape. Clay's first white springbok was a solid gold medal and the new SCI#3 with the muzzle-loader, but its cape showed the ravages of old age and Julian told Clay that he could take a second "white" for its cape. At the close of Day Four, Clay had harvested the following Top Ten springbok:

- copper springbok #3 SCI - 35 0/8
- typical springbok #6 SCI - 42 4/8
- black springbok #5 SCI - 35 7/8
- black springbok #9 SCI - 34 0/8
- white springbok #3 SCI - 35 7/8

The morning of Day Five was devoted to Tom and his quest for a monster "copper" and the



Sam, Tom, Alice And Clay With Clay's "Old" #3 White



Sam, Tom And Clay With Clay's 2nd White #7



Julian Congratulates Tom On #2 Copper



Clay Congratulates Tom On World Class Copper



Night Hunting Adventure

completion of his Grand Slam. For some reason, "coppers" are the most wary and Tom's pursuit of the last leg of his Grand Slam had eluded him. Julian had advised that our best chance of breaking one of Gary's records was with a copper springbok as he had recently seen a couple of world class "coppers" in the area. The morning's plan was for Tom, Alice, and Izak to set up in the tall grasses at the end of a long, broad valley while Clay, Joshua (Julian's younger son and Clay's PH for the day) and I set up under a large clump of acacia bushes nearer to the hills while two horsemen rode slowly from one end of the valley to the other. Hopefully, the horsemen's presence would move the springbok and a good "copper" would drift close enough (150 yards) for Tom to get a shot and possibly a "white" would show up for Clay.

After a couple of hours, Clay spotted movement on the horizon, possibly a mile away. With the binoculars, I could barely see the movement of three springbok headed in our direction. At about 300 yards, Clay excitedly exclaimed, "Pap, they're "coppers" and they're huge; one is enormous!"

We had previously discussed the fact that I did not have a copper springbok and that I'd like to take one if an opportunity presented itself. I turned to Clay and whispered, "If they come into range, would you mind if I borrowed your muzzle-loader?"

Enthusiastically, Clay handed me his short stock rifle and I set up over the shooting sticks while he coached from the side. Joshua confirmed that the big ram was indeed a world class trophy and just as Clay ranged them at 143 yards, the biggest one stepped in front of his traveling companions and stopped broadside.

White smoke filled the air and I could see nothing, but Clay who had seen him go down jumped and ran in the direction of my shot. With legs that are more than fifty years senior to Clay's, I slowly followed. A few steps later, I could see the beautiful copper springbok, and after a few more steps, I realized that he was even better than I had hoped.

Joshua was really excited about the "copper" and speculated that it just might break Gary's world record (38 3/8 inches), but to be sure we had to wait until we reached camp for Julian's tell-tale tape. Julian was not hunting with us as he was busy putting together the next day's "springbok round-up". After in-field pictures were taken, Joshua, Clay, and I returned to the acacia bush and reloaded just in case a "white" came by while we waited hoping to hear a shot from Tom's direction.

Not more than 30 minutes later, another "copper" started walking toward us. "Pap!" Clay whispered excitedly, "He's huge! Let me shoot it!"

"No way, Clay, 5 springbok in the skinning shed with another "white" coming is enough! Let him grow, he will be bigger next year," I countered.

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Clay, who by then was a self proclaimed springbok expert, argued, "Pap, you'd better shoot him! He is bigger than yours! I swear!" Clay pleaded as we watched the exceptional springbok turn at a 45 degree angle and move around the ridge in Tom's general direction.

About 15 minutes later, we heard the distant boom of Tom's muzzleloader, but we were too far away to hear the shouts of joy that we hoped were happening. Soon, the safari truck arrived with the news that Tom had made a great one hundred plus yard shot on a once in a lifetime copper springbok that Izak was almost sure would break Gary Tennison's world record!

After pictures and comparisons, we headed for the skinning shed where we found Julian waiting for us with his tape in hand! The speculation was that both "coppers" would break Gary's Muzzleloader World Record, and both "coppers" would make the "Overall Top Ten" list!

Clay had captured our family's first "Top Ten Grand Slam", Tom had just completed a spectacular "Top Five Grand Slam", and I had just taken the "copper" of my dreams measuring 40 6/8 inches which would be the new SCI World Record with the Muzzleloader and #4 overall. Tom's "copper" came in at an impressive 40 1/8 inches which is now the new SCI #2 with the muzzleloader and #6 overall. What a day! We had finally broken one of Gary Tennison's world records . . . and we had done it twice!!

The fun continued mid-afternoon as Martisan (Julian's wife) and Mundy (Izak's fiancé) had put together a massive "Birthday Party" for the 33 native children who live on the farm. The party, complete with cakes, doughnuts, candy, and soft drinks, was to celebrate Tom's and Clay's SCI Blue Bag Project! The boys, with the help of our Kentuckiana SCI Chapter and our help, had gifts of sweatshirts, socks, bandanas, toboggans, toothbrushes, coloring books, crayons & markers, books, peppermint candy, soccer balls, and much, much more for all.

It was fun to watch the children's expressions as Tom and Clay served cake and soft drinks and passed out presents. There was an immediate friendship because our boys were young people too. As the party ended and the children prepared to leave, the hugs for Tom and Clay and the smiles on the faces of the children and their mothers were matched by the smiles on the faces of our boys.

That evening after another fabulous dinner, Izak and Joshua took Tom and Clay on their second night of springhare (a kangaroo-looking rabbit) chasing and varmint hunting. Alice and I are still not sure if the springhare chasing is a serious sport or a joke on the boys, but watching Joshua, Tom, and Clay chase a bouncing miniature kangaroo look-a-like was worth the whole trip!

This night, like every other fun-filled minute we spent with the Theron Family, was priceless and the next morning, another adventure began to unfold! Each year throughout South Africa, surplus wild animals are rounded up and sold to



Martisan Introducs Tom And Clay To The Farm Children



Joshua And Clay With 2nd Black #9



Clay Takes A Black By The Horns



Tom Carrying A Black Springbok



Sam With #1 World Record Copper

game ranches for breeding and hunting purposes. Julian, who is affectionately known as the "Springbok Man", has springbok that are highly sought after as they are considered to be the best of the best. Julian had promised the local association that he would have some of his springbok in an upcoming wild game auction and Day Six found us participating in one of the wildest events imaginable: a "springbok round-up!"

Envision the festive mood of friends and neighbors, farm workers and family gathering in the African bush with half a dozen powerful, old beat-up Ford pickup trucks, a couple dozen skilled native horsemen, and two daredevil motorcyclists roaring down a grid of makeshift dirt roads at break-neck speeds attempting to force wild animals into a net and you have a springbok roundup! The scene would have made a great adventure movie and our boys were right in the middle of the chase and capture scenes and loving every minute of it.

After the springbok were herded into the soft net, a net gate on a wire quickly closed the opening and everyone (including Tom and Clay) rushed in to manually catch the springbok. Julian, Izak, Joshua, Mundy, and Liza Marie (Julian's daughter) were all well experienced with the process and the mad rush of springbok was quickly and skillfully managed. Tom and Clay joined the rest of the crew as they caught and immediately released nursing mothers with their young and carried others to Julian for culling. With Julian's expertise, the culling process was simple. The very best regardless of age were released. One super-special young ram was ear tagged as a future breeder. Others were mildly sedated and put in a stock truck to be sold as breeding stock while others were also mildly sedated and put in a semi to be sold to game ranches.

Our last afternoon on the Karoo was spent hunting Clay's last springbok, a white springbok which was to be meat for the table and a cape for Clay, but Julian had told Izak to find Clay a "nice one" and he did! After much stalking, Clay had his 6th Top Ten muzzleloading trophy, a white springbok that ranked #7 SCI and measured 35 1/8 inches.

Gary Tennison's record book challenge had added motivation for and excitement to our adventure, and our success has given Gary a reason to return to the Karoo. Gary had been right: records are made to be broken. Many of us who love the outdoors and hunting also love the competition of the record book and while trying to break one another's records, we have become friends. A friendly conversation with competitive overtones with Gary at the SCI Awards celebration had led Tom, Clay, Alice, and me to "The Karoo" where we harvested eleven Top Ten animals and spent a wonderful week with a wonderful family who were great role models for our boys. It just doesn't get any better!

Julian's website is
www.julesofthekaroo.co.za

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NOTICE

Prairie Dog Safari



The Kentuckiana SCI Chapter's annual
"Prairie Dog Safari"
has been scheduled with
Rebel Ridge Outfitters of Syracuse, Kansas for
June 17th (arrival date) and
June 18th, 19th, and 20th (shooting dates).

This year's safari will be in
Eastern Colorado/Western Kansas.
Space is limited to 20 shooters; accordingly,
reservations will be on a first come, first served basis.

To book your spot, call
Charles Monarch (cell: 270 668 3000) (work: 270 547 2271)
(home address: 123 Creek Run Road, Hardinsburg, KY 40143)



Trevor McStoots Shoots
As Tom Monarch Spots



Judge William Knopf Spots
For Trevor McStoots