

August 2010



Lansing Area Chapter Safari Club International Newsletter

Lansing Area Chapter, SCI presents \$10,000 to The Demmer Shooting Sports Education & Training Center



Chapter President Dr. Ron Lanford presents the chapter's third payment of \$10,000 to Michael Galella, Manager of the Demmer Shooting Sports Education and Training Center. Also present: Keith Hein (shooting sports program director), and SCI Board Members Mike Leonard, Jim Leonard, Dallas English, Janet Leonard, Craig Mortz, Lynn Marla, Sally Ellis, Jim Ellis, Jim Houthoofd, and Glenn Belyea.

Before ground was broken more than three years ago, the Lansing Area Chapter of SCI committed \$30,000 toward construction of the Demmer Center on Michigan State University's campus. We have now fulfilled that commitment and the center is up and running! ***And it is very impressive!*** If you have not yet visited the center, you really should take the time to check it out. Membership and event information is available on line at www.demmercenter.msu.edu.

www.scilansing.com

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**Presidents Message
Ron Lanford**

So how have you been enjoying this nice cool weather? I've heard that the northern area of our chapter has been getting plenty of rain, but we haven't had any in the southern area until we were deluged yesterday. It kind of makes you yearn for the cool fall days or even the icy-cold late season deer hunts, doesn't it? I've been in the hot sun working fields to put food plots in, and these areas haven't seen a plow or brush cutter for decades. It's a lot of work, but hopefully, it will be worth it, except I just found out I evidently ran over some poison ivy with the rototiller. I've got little itchy spots all over where the juice got me.

Chapter member Jim Gordon and I had our properties evaluated by Tony LaPratt last winter. Tony's operation is called Ultimate Land Management, and he also runs his Whitetail Bootcamp here in Coldwater. Jim and I knew our properties needed a lot of improvement if we were to have a high quality deer herd. Boy, do they ever need a lot of improvement. One of the biggest problems we have is that our woods looks like a park. You can see through the woods for hundreds of yards, especially in the winter. It makes it easier to spot something, except something isn't there. We all know that whitetail want heavy cover and we don't have it. I have a little bit. Tony and I were walking through the fields across from the house and I was talking about yanking all of the prickly ash clumps out. If you've never seen prickly ash, it's a small tree with vicious thorns all over it that grows in really dense clumps, with some clumps on my property being 20 yards wide by 50 yards long. Tony told me I was an idiot. He isn't the first one to say that, but it wasn't long before I believed him. At the first clump, he said that if I cut small paths into the clump and hollowed out really small areas inside, the deer would bed in them. Yeah, you

bet. We walked to the next clump and found a small path leading into it with a couple of deer beds inside. I was about to rip out some of the best bedding and protection areas on the property. I thought that maybe this chubby guy knows what he's talking about. He does.

Everyone knows that bucks need age, nutrition, and genetics to grow big antlers, but any mature whitetail buck that gets good nutrition is a trophy regardless of genetics. Certainly some areas have better genetics than others, but a 5-1/2 year old buck should make anyone drool. Tony goes way beyond that. He shows you and teaches you how to make your property hold deer on it so they don't leave during the daytime. Your neighbors can't shoot what they can't see. He builds everything that the deer want and need, even in barren fields.

The bootcamp that Jim, his son-in-law Jason, and I attended this summer was amazing. We walked Tony's small property and saw how to create the ultimate environment. We saw beds that were

specifically built for does, and those specifically built for bucks. Food plots were designed to get bucks up and moving on his property, without moving off. Stands were set up with sneak trails leading right by them, and the trails were made so that the deer wouldn't see the stands. What the heck? He had hundreds of tips from food plots to scent control. It was absolutely amazing, and I know that I don't remember half of what he told us. Good thing I took notes.

Jim bought his bootcamp at last year's banquet, and Tony has offered to provide one for next year's banquet and to be an exhibitor. Dave Bradish sent a letter about another Michigan outfit he contacted about whitetail habitat, and the guy cheated Dave out of \$400. Many of you have property that you would like to manipulate for trophy deer, and many of you might like to learn about whitetail from someone who knows what he's doing. If you're thinking of doing that, check out Tony at www.tonysulm.com. You can also call 517-238-4566, or e-mail them at info@tonysulm.com. If you're thinking of using someone else, check with Dave Bradish at 517-676-4965 to try to make sure you don't get taken.

Me? I need to get back out to the woods. Bring on the cold!!
Ooh, I'm itchy.

Ron

**Editor's Comments
By Sally Ellis**

Since our chapter of SCI was founded, we have repeatedly been told that we are different than most of the other chapters. Different in a good way. Many chapters do not even have regular membership meetings because of lack of interest on the part of their members. Most chapters do not have a newsletter, without advertising, with stories exclusively by its members. Therefore, please help us keep up the Lansing Area tradition – support your chapter – attend the membership meetings, send in your photographs to Glenn and Ron to be included in the chapter record book and awards program, and please send in photos and stories to me for the newsletter. Believe it or not, people REALLY are interested in your success, or lack thereof in some cases! And if you just want information on a subject or are curious about something, let me know and we'll see what we can find out. Suggestions or comments are welcomed.

Email me at sallyellis47@yahoo.com; or send to 7529 Roxborough Lane, Grand Ledge, MI 48837; phone: 517.230.7398. Thanks for your support. **Sally**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 15, 2010
Board of Directors Meeting
October 14, 2010

Chapter Meeting
Eagle Eye

November 10, 2010
Board of Directors Meeting

December 9, 2010
Whitetail Deer Night
Eagle Eye Upper Level

January 5, 2011
Board of Directors Meeting

February 2, 2011
Board of Directors Meeting

February 10, 2011
Chapter Meeting
Eagle Eye

March 18, 2011
OUTFITTERS NIGHT
Eagle Eye

March 19, 2011
FUNDRAISING BANQUET & AUCTION
Eagle Eye

Farewell Sarah



The morning of Saturday July 17, 2010 brought Lansing Area Chapter Vice-President Bruce Caltrider and his wife Suzanne the horror that every parent dreads. Their daughters Zoe and Sarah had been in a horrible automobile accident the night before, and Sarah had just died from a severe closed head injury. Fortunately, Zoe suffered only fairly minor physical injuries.

Sarah was fun to be with, and she loved the outdoors. She and her sisters attended many of the family events the Lansing Chapter held, and you knew it when Sarah was around. I had the pleasure of attending a youth doe hunt at Red Pine Whitetail Ranch with Sarah. She, Zoe, my grandson Brett Burtrum, Amy Kurtycz, and Kyle Keech were guests of Larry and Cindy Higgins on their first deer hunts. Sarah was the only one that didn't harvest a doe, but she had a blast. I know she was disappointed, but she was so excited for the other kids and congratulated them enthusiastically. She continued deer hunting and her first doe is pictured. She enjoyed other successful days in the field with Bruce when they were able to harvest game, or just bask in the wonder of this sport that she and we love so much.

As the word of Sarah's death got out, condolences and support started arriving immediately from the Lansing Chapter family to their family in the form of phone calls, e-mails, cards and letters, and personal visits literally from around the world. Bruce informed me that he and the rest of the family got tremendous comfort and strength from the contacts.

Sarah's funeral was held in the First Presbyterian Church in Mason that her family worshipped in regularly. But this church was not built for the crowds that showed up that day to pay their respects to such a wonderful young lady. Every seat was filled in the sanctuary, and well over a hundred more were packed into a room in the basement that couldn't hold that many, where they viewed the service on hastily installed televisions. Those who couldn't get in stood outside in the sweltering heat listening through the windows to

the awe inspiring eulogy offered by Bruce and Reverend Bill Pinches. Bruce told that Sarah and he would have frequent arguments about the impropriety of wearing flip-flops to church with Bruce finally laying down the law about her having to wear "regular" shoes. Bruce and Rev. Bill, as well as many of us in attendance, had heard the story earlier and wore flip-flops that day. Sarah was buried in her flip-flops.

Following is the obituary that Bruce wrote for his daughter for the Lansing State Journal:

After only 15 years, Sarah was taken from us on July 17, 2010. She was born in Lansing, MI on June 14, 1995, the second daughter of Bruce and Suzanne Caltrider. Sarah was part of a very close knit family, sharing life with sister and best friend Zoe, and twin sisters Kaitlyn and Chloe. This past June, Sarah completed her freshman year at Mason High School as an Honor Student earning a 4.0 grade point average and achieving Varsity letters in both swimming and water polo. She played oboe in Mason High School Concert Band and saxophone in the marching and jazz bands. She had recently been selected for the Mason Color Guard Squad for fall 2010 and the Symphonic Band. Sarah was a Girl Scout for ten years, participating in many community service projects, completing her Bronze Award and beginning her Silver Award. Sarah was recently confirmed as a member of First Presbyterian Church of Mason. Sarah was kind and caring of other people, often thinking of others before herself and helping wherever needed. She loved life and lived it big and bold, ready to face any adventure. To her, swim and water polo teams and jazz band were her great passions. She truly loved her teammates and being with them. The four Caltrider girls were inseparable, and Sarah dearly loved and was dearly loved by her family. Her death creates a void that can never be filled.

For those of you who had not heard of this horrible tragedy and would like to send condolences, you can reach Bruce and Suzanne at 1863farm@comcast.net, or their address is 1050 N College Rd. Mason, MI 48854.

Bruce, Sue, Zoe, Kaitlyn, and Chloe, on behalf of the Board of Directors and the members of the Lansing Area Chapter of Safari Club International, I want you to please always remember that your family of chapter members is here for your support.

With Love,
Ron Lanford

CHAPTER AWARDS PROGRAM

October 14, 2010

This year's awards program will be covering the Introduced North American, rest of the world (other than North American and Africa) and turkeys section of animals and will be presented at the October 14th meeting at Eagle Eye.

Please send pictures of all your animals to me for inclusion in the program. If you wish to have your animals considered for the awards, please submit score sheets. I already have all animals presently in our chapter trophy book or those scored by me. Animals harvested during the last 4 years and not entered previously will be considered for awards. Send them all in, and I can let you know if they've been entered already.

Also please send any other photos of your fish, small game, birds, or kid's animals that you might have. These are in the programs every year.

You can always send pictures to me of any of your animals. I will put them on file for the appropriate awards section.

Remember that our awards programs are not complete without your animals.

Photos can be sent to me at: 657 Hodunk Rd, Coldwater, MI 49036

Or e-mailed to me at: Lanforddoc@directv.net

Let me know if you want the photos returned. Thanks.
Ron Lanford

CHAPTER RECORD BOOK

This year – 2010 -- our Lansing Area Chapter will update the North American section of our record book. We encourage all members to participate. It is a tribute to the animal taken as well as the hunter to be included in our record book and we welcome all entries. There is no minimum score for the Lansing Area Chapter Record Book. Send your SCI scoring forms for North American animals to either Dr. Terry Braden, 951 Haslett Road, Williamston, MI 48895 or Glenn Belyea, 8051 Clark Road, Bath, MI 48808 by October 1, 2010. If your trophies have not been scored, contact one of our chapter scorers listed below. Participate, join in the fun, and enter your animals in our chapter record book.

Terry Braden 517-655-4157	Master <i>Williamston</i>
Gary Bradish 517-676-4965	Official <i>Mason</i>
Ken Johnston 517-349-2976	Master <i>Okemos</i>
Ron Lanford 517-278-5667	Master <i>Coldwater</i>
Jim Leonard 517-323-3361	Official <i>Lansing</i>
Mike Leonard 734-231-3226	Official <i>Dexter</i>
John Murray 517-627-2147	Official <i>Grand Ledge</i>
Tim Torpey 989-382-7089	Official <i>Barrington</i>



EAST LANSING, Mich. -- The Demmer Shooting Sports Education and Training Center will be hosting an X-Factor Archery Tournament and Open Shoot Aug. 14 and 15, where participants can compete in the adult and youth classes or shoot just for fun.

Participants will have the opportunity to shoot at pop-up and running 3D targets, such as bears, turkeys and deer, and compete with each other to win prizes like a [Mathews Mission Bow](#) (a \$500 value), a [Parker Crossbow](#) (a \$300 value) and a dozen [Carbon Express arrows](#) (a \$150 value). Door prizes will also be given out during the two-day event.

"It's fun shooting at automated 3D pop-up targets and running targets across the field," said shooting Glen Bennett Lead Archery Instructor. "People will be able to demo and try many of the latest and greatest bows and crossbows, and they can also enter to win a Polaris 800XP ATV."

At the X-Factor Archery Tournament and Open Shoot, participants

will receive free hot dogs just for demoing a Mission Bow and the first 100 people who demo a Mission Bow will receive a free Mission hat. [Country Woods Archery](#) will also be located indoors at the Demmer Center to sample many different bows.

The Youth Class, for those under the age of 18, consists of one practice round and one qualifying round, with an entry fee of \$20. The Adult Class entry fee is \$40 and consists of one practice round and one qualifying round, with the option to purchase a re-qualifying round for \$10. Shooters of both classes can come anytime between the hours of 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. to shoot.

Open shooting is available for those not interested in registering for the contests and can still partake in all the fun that will be going on at the Demmer Center. Prices for open shooting is \$5 per Round (10 shots) or \$20 for five Rounds (50 shots).

For more information on the X-Factor Archery Tournament and Open Shoot or to register for a youth or adult class, visit the [Upcoming Events](#) at the [Demmer Center](#) website at www.demmercenter.msu.edu. For more information on [X-Factor Archery](#), visit www.xfactorarchery.com. The John and Marnie Demmer Shooting Sports Education and Training Center is a facility for providing a venue to promote, advance, and encourage the safe use of firearms and archery equipment for Michigan State University students, faculty, staff, and the public, related specifically to programmatic and recreational use.

SCI & Cabela's Young Hunter Award

July 9, 2010



Dear SCI Chapter President and Board Members,

It's time to begin planning for the SCI Annual Hunters' Convention and the Major Awards Program. The SCI and Cabela's Young Hunter Award is truly a prestigious honor and has become a bright spot during the Thursday evening banquet and auction. The Record Book Committee voted to create new criteria for this award in 2006, please note the criteria below:

The Young Hunter must be a current member of SCI, 15-21 years of age, complete the application posted on www.safariclub.org under Youth Hunter, compose a 500 word essay on the topic, "How I Am A Role Model for Hunting", complete a hunter safety education certification course, obtain a letter of recommendation from an SCI chapter, and obtain a letter of recommendation from a school administrator. Applicants are scored on 30 percent conservation work and community service, 25 percent hunting and outdoor experience, 25 percent role model for hunting (including essay), 10 percent SCI chapter recommendation and 10 percent is the Record Book Committee overall judgment. The two applicants with the highest overall percentage will become the 2011 Young Hunter of the Year recipients. All major award applications are due in the Tucson office by September 1, 2010.

The Marketing and the Record Book Committee formed a partnership with Cabela's to sponsor the award. The SCI and Cabela's Young Hunter Award applicants each receive a \$40.00 gift card and the award recipients receive a \$500.00 gift card.

The Record Book Committee is very proud of this award and the young men and women who have applied for the award over the years. I would like to get the word out to your chapter members encouraging more young hunters to submit applications. All the information required for the young hunter award is posted on the web site under the Record Book icon. Could you please forward this message to your chapter members or post it in your next newsletter?

Thank you, R. Douglas Yajko, M.D. Record Book Chairman

Take Your Best Shot at the Demmer Center

Pistol or Rifle Class Gift Certificate \$35 (can be split between two individuals)

Includes:

- 2 Hours of Range Time
- With 1 On1 Instruction
- Includes Use of .22 Rifle or Pistol
- 100 Rounds of Ammo
- Use of Safety Gear
- Targets



Archery Shooters Gift Certificate \$15

Includes:

- 2 Hours of Range Time
- 1 On 1 Instruction
- Use of Compound, Recurve Bow and Crossbow, Arrows, Bolts, & Quiver
- Use of Safety Gear
- Targets


**3365 East Jolly RD
Lansing, MI 48910
517.884.0550**



LAC/SCI supports P.A.T.H. for 10th year with \$1,000 donation


P.A.T.H. (formerly C.H.U.C.K./P.A.T.H.) is another organization the chapter is able to support because of the successful fundraisers we have each March.

Thanks for your support!



The
P.A.T.H.
Foundation

Passing along the heritage



Helped facilitate and arrange for 2 kids to participate in the Michigan Elk Hunt - 1 successful.

24 kids shot their first Deer - 04 Bucks 20 Does

Took 12 Kids on their first Fishing trip.

4 kids and 1 adult went on their first Turkey hunt. 3 Tom Turkeys were harvested.

Distributed approx 250 reels (and a few rods) to kids to help get them started fishing.

11 kids were taken on their first waterfowl hunts.

Purchased and donated plumbing supplies for the MUCC Youth Camp (\$2,000).

Acquired 8 shotguns and 11 bows and put them in the hands of kids who could not otherwise have afforded them - including the Goodrich Skeet Team.

A golf cart was purchased to transport physically handicapped hunters.

CHUCK was selected by MUCC employees as their "Charity of the Year."

Participated in the Lake Leelanau Kids Fishing derby.

Sponsored 3 Guns for Indian River Christian based youth outdoor program for at risk Kids.

5 scholarships were given to the Bath Archery for their after school program.

We would like to thank the following people for their continued support throughout the year:
Ray Underwood, Drew Barn, John Taylor, Randy Brown, Ken Kelley, Brian Horne, Terry Grabowski.

Contact:
Mike Ruhlig (248) 634.6064, Bob Knoop (313) 418.8883, Bob Garner (231) 342.6100
www.passingalongtheheritage.com

Alaskan Peninsula Brown Bear Hunt

By Dr. Jerry Schave

I was scheduled for a brown bear hunt with Ron Lind on the Alaska Peninsula for October, 2009. However, I tore cartilage in my knee during the summer and postponed the hunt until spring 2010. The surgery was done during December 2009. Hopefully I would be able to regain the strength in my knee in time for the May hunt. Little did I realize how difficult this spring's hunt would be. I had harvested a brown bear during a previous spring hunt and I felt I would be capable of doing another spring hunt.

Fall hunting is usually easier, as the bears are down from the mountains and feeding on salmon in the numerous streams emptying into Chignik Lake. This spring was to be a little different as the weather was still in the winter mode which meant the bears would still be traveling up and over the snow capped peaks and side hills of the mountains. It appeared it was going to be more of a goat hunt than a bear hunt. Trouble was I was nowhere near goat shape after surgery five months prior, and I didn't have the necessary crampons to insure safe passage up the icy and snow covered slopes.

Two hunters (Lynn and I) and two guides (Craig and Ilyea) were to hunt out of a cabin on the banks of a river entering Chignik Lake. The cabin consisted of plywood and steel roofing panels for sidewalls. The steel roofing had numerous holes from being nailed down during its previous use. As a result the cabin was not very airtight and was rather cold during the ever present windy conditions on the peninsula. Some days the wind would blow between 40 and 50mph and we even had 6 inches of snow one day. It made for a very uncomfortable stay in a smoke-filled cabin. The stove pipe leaked constantly and failed to maintain a draft so the fire would burn hot. We were forced to replace a number of stove pipes both in and outside the cabin on the day of the storm when we realized we would be unable to keep the cabin warm and smoke-free. Nevertheless, it was way better than spending time in a waterlogged tent.

Our method of hunting was to glass the various snow-capped peaks in hopes of spotting a bear coming over the top or side-hilling, hoping to find a sow to breed. To approach from below would require a one and a half to two hour climb to reach the bear. As a result you had to anticipate where to intercept the bear. Complicating things, the bear could either turn around, go back over the mountain or enter the alders where he would be invisible. We also had to cross snow chutes or avalanche slides to access certain areas. These were crossed by trying to match the stride of the bears where they had compacted the snow. The steepness of the slope meant you had to jam your toes into the snow going up and use your heels on the way down. Otherwise you faced the prospect of tumbling down the mountain. Like I said earlier it reminded me of a goat hunt without crampons.

The first afternoon Ilyea and I spent glassing various hillsides to see if we could spot a bear. We were rewarded when a small seven-footer crossed in front of us using a bear trail. It is always nice to see a bear even if you have no intention of shooting it. About 8pm we returned to camp to find Lynn and Craig glassing the mountain top from the porch of the

cabin. They had spotted a boar and sow resting among the rocks near the top of the mountain. The boar was judged to be a possible shooter, and they planned to climb up to the lower foothills in hopes the bear would start down. They then could reposition and attempt to intercept the bear. We, on the other hand, would occupy another nob and glass the surrounding hills for another bear. Neither of us had any luck that day, as the boar and sow moved from their beds for only 20 minutes during the eight hours we watched them. Lynn and Craig climb the mountain under our watchful eyes

On day two, we each returned to our respective area to glass the various peaks. About noon Ilyea and I saw two figures climbing the face of the mountain adjacent to where the boar and sow were bedding among the rock cliffs. We watched the two make slow progress up the mountain and eventually were 500 yards downwind and level with the bears. We were anticipating a ring-side seat to the conclusion of their hunt! They were milling around and looked unsure of their next move. Ilyea tried to signal them to head directly to the left to approach the bears. We watched as they headed in that direction and approached the edge of the avalanche chute where old tracks suggested a bear had previously crossed. We were puzzled as they hesitated when they were so close to the bears. Maybe the chute was too dangerous to cross! Eventually they started back down the mountain. We monitored their progress and when they were back at their boat, we left to meet them. Landing where their boat was tied up, we asked what had happened? They remarked that they couldn't find the bears and that they must have left sometime during their climb. We pointed to the adjacent face and remarked that the bears were still there and were visible from here with binoculars! They had climbed the wrong face!! We thought they had picked that face to take advantage of the wind direction and had only called off the stalk because of the danger of crossing the snow slide. Neither Lynn and Craig were very happy when they realized how close they had come to the bears after a three-hour climb. They had mistakenly thought a patch of brown grass viewed from below was the bears. They said they had crept among the rocks, guns ready expecting to walk right up to the bears. We were all laughing about the misadventure. However no one considered repeating the climb unless it came down to a last day bear. The weather that night and the next day ruled out any possible stalk. We spent the next day confined to the cabin as a storm swept through the area. The clouds were covering the snow pack and the visibility was minimal. The brutal wind filled the cabin with smoke no matter how we adjusted the draft on the stove. Luckily there were extra stove pipes so we replaced three that were rusted out. We joked about the "climb to nowhere" and how lucky the bears were.

By the following day the snow had stopped which meant all the tracks would be fresh and the bears would stand out against the background. We were headed back to our vantage point and the other hunters were going to explore another area. We talked about heading to Red Salmon Creek but Ilyea said the wind was wrong. Later in the day Ron motored past and then stopped on the way back to base camp. He mentioned the Red Salmon but Ilyea was not keen on the idea. Found out later that Ilyea had run a boat onto the river bank and into the woods trying to navigate the Red Salmon. The stream

was very narrow, shallow and had many turns. Accessing it with a jet drive meant you had to go wide open and hope to make the turns. Ilyea had not been able to do that on one occasion. Another boat that Ron had gashed when hitting a stump was there waiting to be picked up and repaired. Any mention of the Red Salmon created visible anxiety in Ilyea.

Eventually the wind shifted and we saw Lynn and Craig head to the Red Salmon. That night we talked about our respective days. They had attempted a stalk on a good bear only to have a larger bear (10 foot) chase that bear away and occupy his space. They were close to closing the deal but the bear had moved while they were climbing out of sight through the alders. We reported that we had watched the same boar in the cliffs roll and slide down the avalanche chute only to turn around and go right back up into the cliffs. Looked like the Red Salmon was heating up with activity; however, any mention of navigating the river caused Ilyea to proclaim the river evil and dangerous.

The next day found Ilyea and me headed back to our usual vantage point. Lynn and Craig went back to the Red Salmon. We saw several sets of bear tracks crossing the sides of the mountains on the opposite side of the river valley from us. We tried to follow the tracks across the avalanche slides, through the thickets and among the rocks. We were hoping to find a bear resting in a position to be stalked. After about three hours of glassing, Ilyea spotted a bear on the other side traveling in the snow below the top of the mountains. We could see he was following a set of old bear tracks. We wondered if he might be trailing a sow. He seemed to be pretty consistent in his rate of travel. I asked Ilyea what we would have to do to try and intercept the bear. He said we would have to motor down the river, navigating the shallows where the river dumped into the lake and then cross the lake to the opposite shore. Once there we would have to climb through the alders, hoping to reach the area above the alders before the bear passed by our line of ascent. We were looking at a time in excess of two hours to reach the level of the bear on the mountainside. We decided we had nothing to lose. Reaching the other side of the lake, we started our climb through the alders. Impenetrable would be an understatement! The branches varied in thickness from the diameter of your arm to the size of your leg. There was no pushing aside the branches to make for an easy climb. We stuck to the shallow ridge lines along the washes hoping to speed our progress. I struggled to reach the bear. We managed to close the distance to 500 yards where we spotted the bear resting on a rocky and grass-filled hillside. During our final approach, due to the steep angle of the climb, we were unable to see the bear through the alders. When we broke through the alders, the bear was no longer in sight. We had no idea where he had gone. We kept climbing by planting the toes of our boots in the snow of an avalanche slide. We hoped to gain some altitude in hopes of spotting the bear. We crossed another avalanche chute by attempting to step in some old bear tracks. There was no sign of the bear. Ilyea climbed down to where we had last seen the bear. The tracks were of a "ten footer" that had decided to reverse course and head back the way he had come. We followed hoping to catch sight of the bear, but it was hopeless as the bear was able to travel much faster than we could. A large bear can walk faster than we can jog, and jogging was not an option on this terrain. Now all we

could do was head back down the mountain. Digging our heels in the snow, we headed down a chute which made for easier walking until we reached the alders. Our rate of descent was good as long as we didn't lose our footing and end up tumbling down the side of the mountain. The snow gave way to a small waterway which drained into the lake. We followed as far as we were able and then it was back into the alders. We finally made it back to the boat with my leg muscles feeling like rubber.

We motored back to our look-out spot only to find Lynn and Craig there. Their luck stalking bears on the Red Salmon was no better than ours. Shortly after we arrived Ilyea spotted a large bear feeding on some grass near a small lake across the valley. We decided to try another stalk with Lynn and Craig spotting for us. They would watch the bear and call off the stalk if he left. We hopped in our boat and made our way across the river. I had traded my sheep boots for some stocking foot hip boots of Craig's that were a half size too small as I would need to cross a partially dried up stream periodically. The first part of the attempt was through some clump grass in a shallow marsh. I began to doubt the wisdom of another stalk so soon after the last climb. We made steady progress only to be signaled by Craig that the bear had left the lake bottom. We didn't understand their signal that the bear was now resting on the alder-covered hillside about 100 yards up from the bottom. We glassed everywhere hoping to spot the bear. After about 30 minutes we headed back. I told Ilyea my feet were killing me due to the small boots and I had no intention of crossing the marsh again. My knee was also an accident waiting to happen. I intended to walk out along the old stream bed to the boat. Imagine our surprise when we reached the boat in 20 minutes less time than the original stalk and the boat was resting only 100 yards down the shore. It seemed we had made a mistake crossing the marsh at the start of our stalk. Back at the knob, Craig informed us that the bear was resting on the hillside hidden from our sight. He even took a picture through his spotting scope to show his location. While waiting for us to complete our stalk, they had spotted 5 different bears across the valley where we had attempted our stalk that morning. Something too consider for the next day's hunt.

The four of us decided to occupy the same knob. Lynn and Craig hoped to spot some bears across the valley where they had seen the five the night before. We were looking at the marsh and small lake where we had stalked the bear yesterday afternoon. We were also checking out the rock face where a boar and sow had been bedded down during the past week. Lynn was first to spot two bears coming down the hill toward the grass flat where the bear had grazed yesterday. The guides felt the pair were a boar and sow with the boar not a very big bear. Lynn had spotted the bear so he had first option for a stalk. He hesitated in making a decision as this bear was third on his list of options. It would take an hour to reach the bears and no one was sure they would in the area for an hour. Next Craig spotted a bear across the valley where the five had been yesterday. Finally Ilyea saw a bear on the rock face of the failed attempt earlier in the week. Lynn had a number of choices to make as to what bear to stalk. The bear across the valley also looked small, nothing exceptional. The two on the flats would probably not stay long so that left the bear up the mountain. It was noon by this time and the bears on the

flats had left, staying just under an hour. Craig and Lynn decided to climb the mountain, only this time they were going straight at the bear from below. We would spot for them as they climbed. They left in their boat to access the base of the mountain. We kept watching for them as they climbed but were unable to see them. We knew they must be close to breaking out of the alders, as they had been gone for two hours. All of a sudden we felt the wind shift. Within minutes Ilyea spotted the bear going up and over the mountain top. The wind had betrayed the hunters. When they returned they told us they had been within 500 yards of the bear when they saw him raise his head and flee. They wished they had started their stalk earlier before the heat of the day and the resultant wind shift.

We maintained a vigil on the knob. In the back of my mind I wondered if a bear or bears might come out on the flats again. I almost wished we had made our way to the edge of the small lake and had waited. Naturally about 4pm a single bear came down the hill to the flats. Again we were undecided whether to attempt a stalk. The normal procedure was to wait for the bear to settle down or bed and make the decision easier for us. Lynn and Craig still wanted to spot a good bear across the valley. As it was, the bear made the decision for us by leaving for the alder-choked hillside next to the flats. He had stayed for less than an hour as was the case of all the bears we had seen over the last two days. Time passed and it appeared that neither of us was going to take a bear. We had each shot a brown bear in the past and were unwilling to take a small bear. We accepted the possibility that we could go home without a bear.

We headed back to the cabin at 8pm to eat and pack for the trip back to base camp. The plane would hopefully take us back to King Salmon the next afternoon. During the night the wind rattled the metal siding on the cabin. The next morning there were whitecaps on the river which meant the lake crossing would really be rough. We had to cross five miles of open water traveling into a wind approaching 40mph in two small boats powered by jets. To complicate matters, each boat had developed problems. Craig had lost a key component to his jet drive and was only able to idle when he reached the lake. We had carburetor icing problems which meant we had to stop periodically and allow the heat of the motor to melt the ice buildup. As a result we had to tow Craig's boat with a under performing motor. We had little if any ability to maneuver into the waves pulling another boat. Ilyea probed every pocket of shelter from the direct onslaught of the wind and waves. The return trip seemed to drag on forever plagued by icing issues and required stops along the shore before we could continue. The trip normally takes 30 minutes but we were hoping to come in under two hours. Thankfully we arrived safely at Ron's house.

Once there we exchanged stories about our respective hunts with the other hunters in camp. Of the five of us

hunting, no one had killed a bear. Brent, my previous guide, had recounted the story of the bear that stalked us on a past hunt ("The bear who chose me") and everyone wanted my version of the story. We marveled at the sound of the snow cascading down the mountains as a result of the frequent avalanches which could be heard from miles away. We were thankful that no one had been in the wrong place at the wrong time. We looked forward to better success when hunting brown bears in the future.

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More Bucky Nights in Montana

Jim Houthoofd

It was a bucky night as the wheels touched down in Billings, Montana (actually it was early afternoon). It seemed like only yesterday that I had been here to hunt with Paul Maliskey and Trail Creek Lodge.

In 2007, I was exposed to my first western hunt. It was a short trip of three days for antelope, but I was clearly not prepared. In spite of my shock at the wide open spaces and long shooting distances, Paul was able to get me in front of a nice pronghorn buck and an equally as nice pronghorn doe. In



2008, I was back with new equipment including a bipod. (Note to future hunters: Never go out west without a bipod. Shooting prone at 300 yards is a fact of life in the west due to the open terrain.)

2009 was a new year and we had waited patiently for our combination elk and mule deer hunt on the Cayuse Ranch. Paul Maliskey, owner of Trail Creek Lodge, normally has a waiting list and you need to sign up several years in advance to get a slot. On the Cayuse, they have a resident elk herd with a great success rate and an incredible chance at a big elk. We were finally here and ready to get our chance.

As we drove out into the cool crisp 19 degree morning air onto the Ranch (this is only early November – What do they do in the winter?), our first attempt to fill our tags would be for a old monster mule deer that Paul's father had seen a week ago. After glassing for a while we spotted the incredible buck. Following him around the rim of the canyon we seemed to lose him. We tracked him for what seemed like an eternity (in reality it was more like an hour) as he wove his way over, through and around the fingers of the rim.

As Helmut and Paul crested the hill they saw the bedded buck. He had a main frame 5 x 5 rack, a tall and wide rack with bonus points and junk all over the place. Later Paul would say he was at least a 7 x 7 maybe an 8 x 8. If we could shoot him, he would be the best deer of the season, maybe the best of Paul's career. The buck was wide and tall – and did I mention he was wide and tall? He had incredible mass. But the plump mule deer was up and gone before Helmut could get his gun to his shoulder (actually he kind of hopped). As the buck looked back briefly at 200+ yards, he sneered at the flatlanders. We later caught up with the buck in another canyon as he trotted and/or hopped off in the distance, leaving



Hail Mary shots in his dust.

Later that day we went up to the butte to check on the elk activity. By way of explanation, they have a resident herd of elk that come out of the mountains every night to dine on the green fields and gorge themselves. Each morning they return to bed down on the high ground. At one point, the sound of a bugling bull only 100 yards away got our blood racing through our veins. But the elk were elusive and at the end of the day there were no shots and no animals on the ground.

The following day we got up early to get some coffee and breakfast and got up to the butte. It was cold and windy but our hopes remained high. Our goal was to lay low and ambush the elk on their way back up the mountain. As the herd approached, we knew that something was wrong. Instead of traveling up the terrain in our direction, they were going far to the east, toward the edge of the property. We feared the worst.

Paul and I slipped out of our spot and relocated on the run across the side hill to a position 500-600 yards closer. I took a shot from my inhaler at some point along the way. They were just over the rocks now and below us, as I settled in on my bipod. We were in a panic to get ready and pick out the right bull. The elk were now confused and nervous as they smelled our scent rolling down the hill at just over 100 yards.

Shoot him, Paul said. "Which one?" was my response. "Right there! Shoot him now!" Paul responded. "I'm on him,"



I said. As I gently squeezed the trigger, the shot rang out! "Is he down? I lost him," I said to Paul, as I recovered from the recoil and looked through my scope down to where my elk used to be standing. "What were you shooting at? I think you

were on a different bull than me,” was his answer. As the herd ran away, it sounded like buffalo stampeding over the plains.



Fortunately, we saw that a bull was on the ground, where the herd had been. He looked wide and full of points and I knew that I had been very lucky.

Helmut kicked the dirt and grumbled under his breath as he came down to see my bull on the ground. The elk herd had left, and he had not gotten a shot. Not only that, but they had crossed a couple of fences and were not even on the property anymore. He was at a low point. Although he faked pleasure at seeing my bull on the ground, he was very down. Things changed, though, and only a few minutes later, another guide who had been sitting in a pickup two miles away watching us called and asked whether we had seen the group of eight bachelor bulls making their way in our direction. After a few minutes of glassing we located the small group and sent Helmut and his guide Billy after them.

We watched Helmut and Billy in our binoculars at over a mile or two away as they wove their way through the dips and valleys, keeping out of sight of the bulls. All attention was on them as they made their final approach and we watched their progress at a distance. Finally they belly crawled up a steep hill, inching their way to the top and it appeared that the bulls got up before Helmut shot. But a few seconds later we heard the shot and we saw the farthest bull on the right side go down. A couple finishing shots later, and Helmut was putting his tag on a monster bull. The plump old elk “green scored” at over 330 inches and was beautiful.

High fives, low fives and every happy dance imaginable was performed that morning and in the subsequent hours. We had two beautiful elk. It was hunters 2, elk 0 on the 25,000 acre Cayuse Ranch in Big Timber, Montana. Later we had a great celebration and a bucky night!

Craig Mohney is a quiet guy but he came along on the trip without much arm twisting. He is a hard core whitetail deer hunter and his objective was to score a heavy horned monster whitetail in the river bottom. Confusion led to delirium as he saw hundreds of deer walk by his stand. To say that his senses were alive and overloaded would be an understatement. The first day he mentioned a split main beam 160 inch buck that had been wandering around, just out of bow range, but unfortunately he was not seen after the first day. When asked how many bucks he had seen that day, he would say “Too many to count, maybe 100?” I think that Craig couldn’t decide

upon wide or tall or maybe both, or maybe there was a bigger one just around the corner. In the end he took a beautiful deer, but he would say that he passed on several that were bigger.

Later that week, Helmut, Billy, Paul and I loaded up in the pick up truck to hunt at the J-9 Ranch, about 10 miles from the lodge. Beginning in the early morning we split up into two groups on foot and we glassed the canyons, dips and valleys in search of a nice mule deer. Paul and I followed a small group of about a dozen deer most of the morning. From a distance, we could make out a really nice buck with a couple smaller bucks and about 9 does. From a mile or two he looked impressive, but we never really could get within 500 – 600 yards of the wily buck and his harem. After trying to figure out where he would pop up next and peeking over the top of many cliffs, we finally got lucky. A couple does trotted by with Mr. Big in tow. I didn’t need an invitation as my 30-06 rang out down into the canyon. He was a great bruiser of a deer with long beams and great mass.

A few minutes after my shot, Helmut’s shots rang out. I could hear him at a little over a mile away putting some lead into the air. A call on the cell phone to Billy confirmed that Helmut had extended his string of good luck. Helmut had scored a nice 4 x 4 buck.

One Final Note: Paul Maliskey donated a hunt



for each of the last three years to the SCI Lansing Chapter Fundraiser and offers a really good opportunity for Montana hunting. You can see his operation and his successful hunters in the photo section at www.trailcreeklodge.com People like Paul help us to achieve our fundraising objective, with their very generous donations, so that we can fund many worthwhile projects. They can be called true humanitarians and conservationists. Paul has a beautiful spot in Montana that everyone should experience at least once. It is near Yellowstone, with inexpensive flights into Billings or Bozeman daily, and it is within view of the mountains. I would strongly urge you to check it out.

In the end, the hunters got the best of the elk and mule deer (actually Helmut and I didn’t ruin Paul’s outstanding record or break anything) with some great animals and a great time at Trail Creek Lodge. We will probably try to get back next year to see our friend and Owner - Paul, Guides - Chris, Barry, Jason, Billy, Corky and resident butcher - Steve for more bucky nights...


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Your Lansing Area Chapter Board voted to make a **Chapter Life Memberships** available to our members. To be eligible the member must first be a **National Life Member**. The cost was set at \$500, with a senior price for persons over 60 years old set at \$350. We have had many people take advantage of this so far.

If you are already a national life member and have an interest in a chapter life membership, feel free to contact me. Obviously you also have the option of becoming both a national and chapter life member at the same time.

Jim Leonard
517-323-3361