

March 2013



Lansing Area Chapter Safari Club International Newsletter

13th Annual Fundraiser March 15-16, 2013 Eagle Eye Golf Club

Auction Items*

Exotics Hunt in Texas with W4 Outfitting
Whitetail Hunt in Saskatchewan with Northern Cree Outfitters
Black Bear in Saskatchewan with Hepburn Lake Lodge
Moose Hunt in Newfoundland with Steele Mountain Lodge
Fallow Deer or Mouflon Sheep Hunt in Spain
with Huntinspain (Alfonso Fabres)
Whitetail Bow Hunt in Missouri with Bow & Barrel Outfitters
African Plains Game Hunt with African Sports Hunting
Trophy Clearance Certificate from
Coppersmith Global Logistics
Turkey Hunt in Missouri with Bow & Barrel Outfitters
Bass Fishing on Lake St Clair with Capt Steve Jones Charters
Wild Turkey Hunt in Michigan with Roger Froling
Taxidermy Certificates from Natures Pride Taxidermy
Red Stag, Boar, and Dove Hunt in Argentina
with Pampa Outfitters
1 Week Luxury Condo Rental in Cabo San Lucas
2 Person Pronghorn Hunt in Montana with Trail Creek Lodge
Taxidermy Certificates from Dourlain Taxidermy
Pheasant Hunt Membership with 20 Birds in Michigan
with Omega Farms
Trijicon Rifle Scope
SCI Rifle of the Year
Ladder Tree Stand from Family Traditions
NRA Life Membership
2-SCI Life Memberships
Granite Ranch Vacation package from SCI Foundation-
"the AWLS Ranch"
African Plains Game Hunt with Marula Safaris
Trophy Clearance Certificate from Fauna & Flora
Rescue Membership from Global Rescue
Training Sessions from Front Sight
Tahr & Chamois Hunt in New Zealand
w/ Mt Cook Trophy Hunting
Fur Coat from Burtrum Furs & Leather
Goose Hunt in Michigan with Hilde Hunting Service
Pierce Rifle Action from Pierce Engineering
Duck Hunt in Ontario with Rob Stanley
Whitetail Deer Hunt with Whitehouse Whitetails
Cow Elk Hunt in Michigan with Walker Creek Ranch
Lake St Clair Fishing Trip with Rob Stanley
Pheasant Hunt in Michigan at Bear Creek with Ron Lanford's dog
Hawk
Sika Stag and Wood Pigeon Hunt in Ireland with
Celtic Field Sports
Youth Whitetail Deer Hunt in Michigan with Roger Froling
Cape Buffalo Hunt in South Africa with Diekie Muller Safaris

Raffle Items*

Winchester Featherweight 30.06
Remington Model 1100 Sporting 28ga
Kimber .45ACP Pistol
Browning X Bolt .300 WSM
Thompson .50cal Muzzleloader with Scope
Savage .17HMR with Thumbhole Stock
.45/70 BFR Revolver
10 Point Crossbow Package
Swarovski Z3 4-12x Scope
Stihl Farm Boss Chainsaw
GP 3250 Generac Generator
Masterbuilt Electric Smoker
Primos "The Club" Pop-up Blind
SKB Double Rifle Case
Mr. Buddy Propane Heater with 6 Propane Tanks
Ameristep Rapid Shoot Pop-up Chair Blind
Leupold RX 1000 Range Finder
Hunter Safety Harness
Cabela's Deluxe Vacuum Sealer
Primos Tri Pod Trigger Stix
Chef's Choice Knife Sharpener
Cabela's Bushnell Trail Camera
Garmin Oregon 450 GPS
Wild Game Action Camera
Fox Pro Spitfire Game Call
Cabela's Analog Ear Muffs
Toshiba 39" 1080p LED HDTV
iPad Mini

*Items subject to change.

President's Message

John Schneider on H.O.P.E.

Greetings:

February 6, 2013

I want to personally invite each and every one of you to come join me at our 13th annual fundraiser this March 15th and 16th at Eagle Eye. Come on Friday evening and meet our outfitters and other exhibitors. The dinner is free, so please bring your spouse and children and make it a great family night. Bring hunting friends who are not SCI members so everyone can see what we are all about.

Saturday, March 16th is our fundraiser. There is a form in this newsletter for you to fill out to purchase your tickets for the Saturday night dinner and auction. Come early on Saturday and purchase raffle tickets, see our gun raffle and talk with the outfitters to discuss your upcoming hunts. You can also talk with our other exhibitors, make your bids on the silent auction items, and decide what raffle items you want, depositing your tickets in the appropriate buckets!

Even if you are not a chapter member of SCI, please come and enjoy an evening with us. If you would like to become a member of the Lansing Area Chapter of SCI, we will pay your dues for the first year. Now that's a deal that would be hard to turn down!

I'm looking forward to seeing you March 15th and 16th at Eagle Eye.

Whole-hog generosity, times two

The word was that Bellingar Packing, up in Ashley, had some pork and a little beef for H.O.P.E. (Help Other People Eat). Now, H.O.P.E.'s main dish is, of course, the donated venison that it distributes to Lansing-area food banks and soup kitchens, but



founder and chief distributor, Tom Cullimore, isn't about to turn down farm-raised meat.

So, on Wednesday morning he and I took a ride to Bellingar's, where we learned that the meat-cutter had two whole hogs and a quarter beef for H.O.P.E. - nearly 500 pounds of meat in all.

It seems that the people who dropped the carcasses off for butchering never bothered to pick up the finished product. After giving the people more-than-ample notice, the Bellingar folks, satisfied that the people had no intention of retrieving the meat, offered it to H.O.P.E.

As I've explained in the past, Cullimore pays for the processing through donations to the program. On Wednesday, he pulled out his check book and asked Mike Bellingar (pictured above) how much he owed.

"Nothing," Mike said.

Cullimore's jaw literally dropped. "Huh ...?," he asked.

"Nothing," Mike repeated. "Isn't that the idea ... that we work together ...?"

With the back of Cullimore's truck loaded, he and I headed for the Williamston Food Bank, where the freezers were depleted of meat.

But not anymore.

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Dallas English
President - Lansing Area Chapter

Please send your photographs, hunting stories, fishing tales, comments, etc. to either

Dallas English (dallas51@hotmail.com);
Jim Houthoofd (jhouthoofd@neogen.com);
or Sally Ellis (sallyellis47@yahoo.com).

Grand Slam of Ham

Ed H. Edwards

Taking the four species of North American sheep is the ultimate achievement of many hunters. The author had a much different goal!

Collared Peccary

It was a standoff! Two “big” pigs we spotted had spooked and taken cover in a brushy dry creek. They eyed me from 30 yards head on and not presenting a shot other than between the eyes. I wanted a trophy mount and all I could do was wait until they turned and hopefully give me a shot. The excitement of spotting game on that cool, foggy Texas morning combined with



sighting my rifle on the pigs from a kneeling position made the short wait seem eternal. Finally the one on the left started to turn and the slight angle was all I needed to take a shot. The 130 grain Silvertip from my 270 put it down. The chosen pig’s running mate appeared to double in size as its back hair stood on end and it disappeared into the thick brush.

Grinning ear to ear I dragged my prize out of the creek bed and looked my trophy over. It had salt-and-pepper black and brown coloration with very course long hair and a light “collar” around its shoulder and neck for which the animal is named. One of the smallest big game animals, it weighted less than 50 pounds but made up for its size with nail-sharp $1\frac{1}{4}$ ” tusks.

I was happy with my Collared Peccary (often called javelina), the only native “swine type” animal in the Western Hemisphere and enjoyed the scenery and hospitality of my first guided hunt as much as the hunting activity itself. The hunt took place in South Central Texas near the neat little town of Freer between Laredo and Corpus Christi. Little did I know that morning hunt on Armistice Day of 1980 would be the first of multiple continent adventures hunting pigs and the eventual collection of four species.

Warthog

The summer of 1982 I was off to Zimbabwe with my wife, Carol, for a seven day plains game hunt with kudu being the primary trophy. In addition to kudu a good warthog was high on the list of available game I could hunt.

Life was more than a little sporty the week we visited the newly named country (previously Rhodesia). During our stay

three tourists were kidnapped (and never found), an assignation attempt was made on the new president, and military road blocks were constant.

Once we got out of Harare and into the country, the tension resided but we still had unexpected challenges including, but not limited to, more military checks, vehicle problems, trespassers, and much thicker-than-normal vegetation for the winter month of July.

The thick brush resulted in the spooky and built low to the ground warthogs being difficult to spot and evaluate. However, on the sixth day of the hunt, we changed properties and had no more than gotten out of the land owner’s yard and I had yet to chamber a round when a whopper of a warthog appeared slowly walking through the bush, alerted but not yet spooked. Clicking off the safety and tracking him with the crosshairs on his



shoulder, I just knew in a matter of seconds it would be all over except for the picture taking. Rather than the expected crack of the 270, a loud CLICK of the firing pin falling on air broke the morning silence. His tail came up like an antenna, and he wasted no time heading for cover and was gone in a flash. The tracker cut loose with several four letter words appropriate for the occasion, and I wanted to crawl into a hole!

The following and last day of the hunt I took a very nice kudu bull after a long crab crawl stalk and departed Zimbabwe without a warthog.

Two years later I was blessed to be back in Africa, this time in the game rich Kwando area of Botswana after Cape buffalo and plains game, including warthog. The late African winter drought conditions had game concentrated in the river delta and record class animals came easily, with the exception of warthog. Warthog were abundant; however, the hard rocky ground resulted in many with broken tusks, not to mention they are the favorite source of protein for the many lion and leopard in the area, necessitating a lot of looking around to find a good one.

It was early afternoon late into the hunt and I had killed all of the game I was licensed for, with the exception of warthog,

when my professional hunter, Cecil Riggs, released the clutch and we rolled out of camp in a bowl of dust. Soon we spotted a sounder of warthog in a recently burned field allowing a quick look over before they spooked and started to run for cover. "Front one," Cecil screamed! I remember swinging the crosshairs about a body length in front of it and squeezed off at the same time the warthog disappeared into the tall grass. The sound of the bullet finding purchase and the warthog jumping up and reappearing before expiring brought uncontrollable laughter to the trackers who were not used to witnessing unseen game shot!

Cecil started to instruct them to arrange for the customary "happy snaps" but I cut him off stating the safari was complete and to bring out the "cold" box and fix everyone up with a drink of their choice while I sat down and checked out this strange animal.

After a short rest, a cold drink, and the pictures taken, we returned to camp so the skinners could prepare the future trophy room addition. My taxidermist would later remark that my warthog "is so ugly it is cute" after finishing the mount.

Wild Boar

The wild boar is the oldest and most primitive of the Artiodactyla order and has spread its way onto every continent except Antarctica. Free range "native" boar can be found in Europe, Asia, and North Africa. In many parts of the world, man has deliberately introduced wild boar. In addition, domesticated hogs have escaped from the barnyard and gone feral to the extreme in many states including Texas, Florida, and California which have many outfitters and guides who specialize in hunting them. In addition Australia and Argentina have plentiful hunting opportunities for big feral porkers. My understanding is that domestic hogs evolve back to their wild genes after existing in the wild for a few generations and physical changes occur, such as the weight shifts from the hams to shoulders, the tail goes from curly to straight, and color becomes a uniform shade of dark brown to black. The hair, tusks, and nose all grow longer than their barnyard ancestors. The scientific name (*Sus Scrofa*) is the same for true "wild boar" and "feral hog" regardless of location.

My effort to collect a boar in its native European habitat has been fairly extensive, with great pleasure, but without any success whatsoever.

The first day I had the pleasure to hunt in Europe was a frustrating experience that came very close to ending in success. I was in Belgium on a driven hunt in a beautiful fern patched forest. By a pre-drive lottery I was posted to a "stand" and told to only shoot when an animal was past the stand markers.

As the commotion of barking dogs approached me, a pig came out of the thicket and stood broadside less than six paces away! I could have taken off a boot and hit him with it! However, since it was not past the markers, all I could do was watch it turn back against the drive and get shot by the neighbor of my host. The thought of having that boar so close yet so far still haunts me to this day even though it occurred in 1985.

Later I was able to stalk and shoot a very nice fallow deer and participate in a driven pheasant shoot and still consider this to be one of my most enjoyable trips ever, even though I was not successful in my intended quest.

Later trips were made to Spain, Russia, and Bulgaria with boar being the primary game hunted. Although I was able

to take other big game animals, the only boar I laid eyes on in all three of these countries were shot by other hunters.

The USA feral version has been more kind to me with successful hunts using many hunting methods including bayed



up by hounds, spot and stalk, and stand hunts. As a result I have taken several of trophy quality with nice tusks and all have provided outstanding table fare.

That being said my quest for a native range boar is not over and I'm hoping to try again in either Turkey or Poland. Also I would not turn down an opportunity to go for an overseas feral in Australia or Argentina.

African bush pig

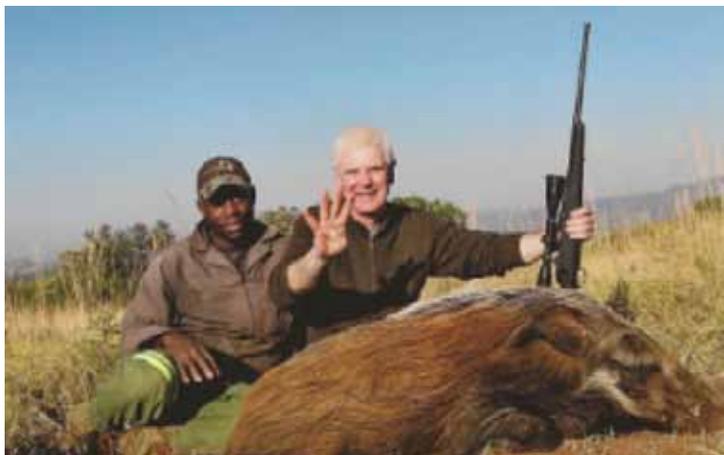
Bush pigs are known as the "ghost of the darkness" in Africa for good reason. They have similar habits as black bear in that they are even more so nocturnal and have fantastic sense of smell and hearing. Most successful hunts for both animals result from hunting over bait or with dogs.

Although bush pig are present in many of the areas of Africa I previously hunted, most of the professional hunters I have had the opportunity to spent time with seldom if ever laid eyes on one during daylight hours.

After many years of thinking about finishing a "grand slam of ham" I decided to research and determine if a bush pig specific safari was possible.

The internet is great for researching, and the Limpopo

area of South Africa came up as the best area for such a specialized hunt, and most operations list bush pig as an available game animal. Further, several long-term Limpopo operators donate hunts to SCI Chapter fundraisers I would be attending, and e-mails before the banquets indicated several had bush pig hunting techniques and welcomed the challenge of having me over to try for one. I was outbid at the Lansing Michigan Chapter but one week later at the Southeast Michigan Bow Hunters Chapter I had my hand up and felt a sense of relief when the auctioneer pointed at me and yelled, "Sold!" Prior to the banquet I corresponded with Evan Sloan of Charunga Safaris, and we agreed if I purchased his donated plains game hunt for two first timers to Africa, it would be possible to set up a bush pig hunt



for me as well.

Thirteen months after the auction we cleared customs in Johannesburg and were greeted by William Drummond of Charonga Safaris. On the four-hour drive to the lodge we talked about bush pig. He had more than casual experience, having personally taken 18 with archery equipment alone!

William and his friends had been setting baits on their properties, and trail cameras were set up on those that were being visited. The first night one site revealed two nice bush pigs came in to feed about 11 o'clock that night. The second and third nights the number increased to three, with feeding occurring between 7 o'clock and midnight, and every bite set out for them was gone the following morning.

Three nights' feeding in a row indicated they were comfortable with the set up, and we decided to hunt the next night.

The hunt involved as much coordination as any baited lion or leopard hunt. The landowner was a good friend of William and had set up a pop up camo blind complete with comfortable lawn chairs and a shooting rest for our use. The blind was of the XXXL size, big enough that we could bumble around like guests at a dull cocktail party. However it was set back in a cavity of very heavy brush and was not visible unless you knew it was there. A small light that could be controlled from the blind was set above the bait on a pole. The faint light does not spook the pigs since it resembles cloud movement changing the moon and star light. My old custom Ruger 270 wears a Leupold fixed 6 X 42 with extra heavy duplex crosshairs, making it fast for my old bifocal-assisted eyes to sight with in minimal light.

Our plan was to get comfortable about 5 o'clock in the

afternoon and it was agreed no talking or noise could be made during the hunt. William had a night scope to monitor the bait after dark, and he would nudge me when it was time to place my rifle on the rest. Once my safety came off he would turn the light up. At that moment I would line up the crosshairs on the center of the shoulder and break the sear of the Timney trigger with a gentle straight back squeeze to close the deal. It would be a slam dunk and nothing could possibly go wrong.

Soon the sun dropped making it as dark as your tonsils in the blind. Now all we had to do was wait out the cool caress of the relentless African night wind.

William checked the bait every 30 minutes or so with the night scope and we both dosed off more than once. At about 11 o'clock he nudged me and, making sure I was coherent, whispered in my ear to get ready. As rehearsed I picked up and placed my rifle on the rest and clicked off the safety. The light came on, and the faint outline on the pig was visible. I, however, could not see a darn thing through the scope! Thinking one of the scope covers had bumped closed, I felt to verify and they were open and I was close to freaking out! William sensed my problem and whispered "Aim at the light." In doing so I had to take the rifle off of the rest and bring it to my cheek rather than the other way around and, bingo, I could see! I returned to the intended task and pulled the trigger as soon as my sight picture lined up.

He calmly spoke again "It's down but reload just to be sure." We watched it for a few seconds but it was down for the count.

Departing the blind, carrying the rifle I had started my pig hunting with 32 years ago (the rifle I have used to hunt everything except Cape buffalo), I'm not sure of the best words to describe the many emotions I felt. Certainly, relief that the pig had not spooked off during my black scope ordeal was right up there. Closure is a word people nowadays seem to use in every conversation; however, in this case it is justified as we are talking about something I started before I was 30 and finished after I was 60! But the best has to be appreciation and patience of the many fine people who set up and did the real work on all of the wonderful hunts both, successful and unsuccessful.

After my emotions and nerves settled down, I took some time to check out my bush pig, and I have to say it is truly one of the most interesting specimens of game I have ever seen. It was covered with stiff auburn hair and a long salt-and-pepper colored main that gave it an exotic look. Like all wild swine the bush pig is a very solid built animal to be feared if wounded or cornered. Whoever came up with "pig iron" could not have created a better term.

Six months later I received my finished shoulder mount from HGI Taxidermy, and it sure felt good driving the nail in my trophy room to hang the final leg of my GRAND SLAM OF HAM!

MICHIGAN ELK AND CALIFORNIA DEER AN UNLIKELY COMBO

By Glenn Belyea

In late July we returned from visiting family and friends in Maine and picked up our mail being held at the local post office. Sorting through to find the bills and other important mail to deal with, we found a brown manila envelope from the Gaylord DNR office addressed to my wife, Maryanne. Thinking it was just another survey, we put it in the “get to later” pile. Several days later I opened it and couldn’t believe my eyes. I called to Maryanne and said to come quick and look at this. It was a notice that she had been drawn for a Michigan elk tag!! Not only was it a Michigan elk tag, it was a Michigan bull elk tag!!!! That to hunters is like winning the Lotto!!! We have been applying for many years, hoping to luck out, but with nearly 35,000 people applying each year, we really didn’t expect to ever be drawn.

Although I have hunted elk out west a number of times and was finally successful just last fall when I took a nice bull in Montana, Maryanne has never hunted elk. She was going to now!!!

Her bull permit was one of just 30, along with 70 cow elk permits the DNR gave out for the early (August-September) hunt. They also gave out a similar number of permits for the late (December) hunt. Little did we know how different these two hunting periods are. While the late hunt is in the core area of the Michigan elk range where most of the elk reside, the early hunt is restricted to the peripheral portion of their range where there are far fewer elk and they are widely scattered, making the hunt far more difficult. The early hunt was divided into three four-day periods: the 1st at the end of August, the 2nd in mid-September and the 3rd at the end of September, with hunters able to hunt any or all of these periods until getting an elk.

Included in the DNR packet was a list of Michigan elk guides. We immediately started talking with past hunters, DNR personnel, and anyone else who might have a knowledgeable recommendation as to a guide. We definitely wanted to use a guide. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity was far too important to try doing it on our own. We settled on Steve Beers, a highly recommended Atlanta resident who has been guiding for elk for several years.

On August 27 we attended the DNR’s mandatory elk hunter training session at a sportsmen’s club near Gaylord. This session gives DNR biologists and conservation officers a chance to go over all the ins and outs, dos and don’ts of Michigan elk hunting with the lucky 100 elk hunters. It is an interesting and worthwhile session and also when each elk hunter receives his/her elk hunting license. If you don’t attend, you don’t get an elk license—simple as that!!

With elk license in hand, we headed for Atlanta and the little cabin Steve has available for rent to his elk hunters. It is right across the drive from his house, so it is both comfortable and convenient.

Well, before daylight the next morning—opening day—we were on our way to check several sites where Steve had been seeing bull elk fairly regularly up until a few days prior when the weather turned unseasonably warm. It must have had a big impact on elk movement and behavior because we never saw an

elk that day. In fact, in spite of our best efforts, we never saw an elk in the entire four days of that first hunting period. We drove many, many miles checking gas well sites, clear cuts, DNR food plots, and everything in between. Elk are attracted to the gas well heads to lick the salt that forms on these pipes. Steve knew all the roads and where all these sites were located, but we just couldn’t find an elk. It became apparent that this early season elk hunt, except for a few elk staked out on private land, was a game of chance and random encounter. We encountered several other experienced guides with their hunters doing just the same. Everyone said just hang in there and keep at it; eventually good things will happen.

So where does the deer combo come in? Well, back in February we attended the SCI Convention in Las Vegas and, while there, I booked a three-day Columbia Black-tailed Deer hunt with Alfred Luis of Central Coast Outfitters in Santa Maria, California for September 11-14. Terry Braden and Tim Torpey had both hunted with him and gave him glowing recommendations. Never in my wildest dreams would I have envisioned this interfering with a Michigan elk hunt. With a deposit down and non-refundable airline tickets already purchased, we were headed to California. We would just have to miss a couple days of the September 14-17 second elk hunting period and hope it didn’t matter.

We arrived in Santa Maria early in the afternoon of the 10th, the day before the hunt actually was scheduled to begin.

Alfred met us there and we headed to his ranch. Since it was still early in the afternoon, Alfred suggested we change into our hunting clothes, go buy my California deer license and go scouting for deer. Alfred has the exclusive hunting rights on a 25,000 acre ranch along the California



coast—a truly beautiful place. By then it was late afternoon and with overcast skies the deer were already coming out. We saw numerous does, fawns and young bucks. Alfred decided to head over to an area on the ranch where he had been seeing a very nice buck. Although he had not seen it in a week or more, you never know! We hardly got in the area when we spotted the buck. He had three does with him so he was in no hurry to leave. After a short stalk through the coastal dunes and an 80 yard shot, I had my Columbia Black-tail. So much for the upcoming 3 day hunt!!!

With my Black-tail “in the salt,” as they say in Africa, we had a little celebration, but it wasn’t long before my mind and especially Maryanne’s began thinking about changing our return airline tickets and going home early so not to miss any of the elk hunting days. Between the rules and charges of United Airlines and the limited availability of seats out of the Santa Maria airport, we could not leave until Thursday, the day before the second elk



Lansing Area Chapter Safari Club International



13th Annual Banquet & Fundraiser

Saturday, March 16, 2013

Outfitters Night

Friday, March 15, 2013

Eagle Eye Golf Club
15500 Chandler Road
East Lansing, Michigan 48823 • 517-641-4570

Register:

Name: _____
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- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|-------|---|----------|
| 1. Saturday Banquet & Fundraiser Tickets: | \$65 Each | x | _____ | = | \$ _____ |
| 2. Table of 8: | \$480 per table | x | _____ | = | \$ _____ |
| <i>(Includes (8) Banquet Tickets, (8) \$20 Raffle Tickets and Special Seating)</i> | | | | | |
| 3. Chapter Sponsor Table: | \$675 per table | x | _____ | = | \$ _____ |
| <i>(Receives (8) Banquet Tickets, (3) Super Gun Raffle Tickets, (16) \$20 Raffle Tickets, Premier Seating, 1/2 page ad in auction book)</i> | | | | | |
| 4. Super Gun Raffle | \$40 each or 3 for \$100 | x | _____ | = | \$ _____ |
| 5. General Raffle Tickets \$100 Packet (6 Tickets \$120 value) | \$100 Each | x | _____ | = | \$ _____ |
| 6. General Raffle Tickets \$200 Packet | \$200 Each | x | _____ | = | \$ _____ |
| <i>(13 Tickets \$260 value)</i> | | | | | |
| 7. General Raffle Tickets \$400 Packet | \$400 Each | x | _____ | = | \$ _____ |
| <i>(30 Tickets \$600 value)</i> | | | | | |

Grand Total: \$ _____

Please List People's Names for Table

Print legibly (Name tags printed from list)

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ |
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hunting period opener.

With the time zone differences we arrived back in Grand Rapids at nearly midnight. We got home a little after 1:00 AM and even though we had much of our elk hunting gear and food all ready to go, it was still nearly 2:00 AM before we were able to begin the drive to Atlanta. We arrived just in time to unpack, get on our hunting clothes, and head out with Steve.

All this effort almost paid off. Almost!!! We pulled in to check a clear cut we always checked each morning and came up behind another guide's pickup. The doors were open and the guide and his hunter were right ahead standing over a huge 6 X 7 bull elk the hunter had just shot. The bull had been standing there when they pulled in. Just five minutes sooner and it could have been us!!

Back to the routine—driving all over checking well heads, clear cuts, and food plots. Several evenings we sat over areas with fresh elk sign. Several mornings we left extra early to arrive at distant DNR food plots at daylight. No luck. On the last morning of this second hunt period, Steve decided to try a totally different area, an area called “The Windings” southeast of Vienna Corners. We got there early and had to wait for enough light to see, which was well past legal shooting time. Then we began our driving and looking. After a while Steve turned onto a side road, but quickly stopped and backed out. It was still too early to go down this darkened road. We needed to stay more out in the open. We drove on and turned onto the next side road. A dark shape stood at the far end. Could it be? With binoculars we quickly determined it was a bull elk and a pretty good looking one at that. Remember what I said earlier about the hunt seeming to be a random encounter? We eased the truck forward, but decided we had better make our move. The road was a narrow dead end and with a couple of quick steps the elk could be out of sight. Maryanne eased out, loaded her .270, and took the 180 yard shot. With the bull nearly facing us, she shot him right in the chest. You could hear the bullet hit, but the bull barely flinched. Slowly he turned broadside and she hit him again in the shoulder.

Down he dropped!! Those 140 grain Swift-A-Frames did their job!! There was one loud whoop from one happy hunter!!!

After waiting to be sure he was down for good, we drove up and got our first close-up look. What a beauty!!! He was a heavy, perfect 5 X 5. We were all overjoyed and relieved. The hunt was over. Now the work began. Only someone who has downed a bull elk or moose knows the labor involved with handling them. Steve called a couple strapping friends to come help and after much effort we had it cleaned and loaded into his pickup. We were off to the Atlanta DNR office to get it officially registered and then to the local Atlanta newspaper for pictures. After that we headed to Millersburg and the Muy Grande Ranch. Our good friends, the Inmans, who own the adjoining



property, had suggested we hire Tom Selke, one of the Muy Grande guides, to skin and cape the elk. Perry Heleski, the owner of Muy Grande, had graciously offered to let us hang the elk in their cooler. Perry is not only a super nice guy, but a solid supporter of our Lansing Area SCI chapter. All this worked out perfectly, and after nine days in the cooler, the still 505 pound elk carcass was transferred by Tom to Dan Ferris, a highly recommended butcher in nearby Ocqueoc. Our freezer is now full of elk steak, burger, roasts, and sausage.

In checking with the DNR after the end of this early elk season, we found that while a total of 26 bull permits were filled, only 42 of the 70 cows were harvested. It is hard to believe, but the success rate on cows is always lower than on bulls. This is all the more reason to be one of the lucky hunters to draw a bull permit!! Keep applying. You never know!!!!