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OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF SCI CHAPTERS IN WISCONSIN AND ILLINOIS  
JULY/AUGUST 2024

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# HUNTERS

Official Magazine of SCI Chapters in Wisconsin and Illinois  
July/August 2024

**On the cover:** Jessica Braun used her Serpent Arms air shotgun to become the first woman in modern history to harvest a Wisconsin turkey with an airgun. See page 32. And see Jeff Champeau's free-ranging success on page 12.

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## SCI Region 16 Report

by *Charmaine Wargolet,*  
*Regional Representative*

**H**appy summer everyone! It's a beautiful season to be living in Wisconsin so I hope you get lots of time to enjoy the great outdoors.

This past May 8-11th a group of us attended the SCI National Board meeting in Washington D.C. Marla and Dale Rimkus from the Illinois/Chicago chapter and Dean LePoidevin and Monte Whiteaker from the Wisconsin chapter and of course, myself. Thursday the 9th was Lobby Day which is spent visiting with Congressmen and Senators and their staff people, to talk about the issues that are important to the sportsmen and women in their state. There were four main issues, three of which have passed the house and we wanted to encourage the Senate to take them up. Not sure how successful they will be in the current Senate, but we hold out hope that in time we might have a more favorable majority.

The first bill, **H.R. 7408** The American's Wildlife Conservation Act would modernize the Endangered Species Act to promote state led wildlife management.

**H.R. 764** is the Trust the Science Act which was introduced by Congressman Tom Tiffany from Wisconsin and a Colorado Representative. It requires reissuance of regulations removing the gray wolf from the list of endangered and threatened wildlife under the



Endangered Species Act, completing over 20 years of bi-partisan efforts to delist recovery wolves.

**H.R. 615/S 1185** The Protecting Hunters and Anglers Act would prohibit the banning of lead ammunition on public lands without sufficient scientific justification.

**H.R. 6492/S 873** The bipartisan Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act works to make it easier for disabled hunters to go afield, improve and build shooting ranges, and reduce barriers for America's hunters to access public land.

This is a nutshell description of these bills, but we also asked our lawmakers to keep an eye on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as they have been closing an enormous amount of public land in Alaska to hunting. Once again, we need the Service to leave the wildlife management of a state to the state departments that are much more

knowledgeable about their wildlife's sustainability.

At the end of Lobby Day there was a reception at our very own SCI Hunters Embassy! It is located just three blocks from the white house, and two blocks from the Senate buildings. Our D.C. staff holds informational seminar luncheons for staffers and representatives, opens the Embassy to "friendly" Congressmen or women for their election fundraising events, and so much more! If you ever get to D.C., you have to visit the Hunters Embassy. SCI is a force to be reckoned with in Washington!

There are other exciting things going on, like our National Headquarters being moved to San Antonio Texas and some special news coming July 1st. Be sure to read all about it in the July issue of the Safari Times newspaper from National.

Well, I'm off to enjoy some good ol' Wisconsin sunshine, so as always, shoot straight, be well, and God bless.



*Charmaine, Congressman Tiffany, Dean and Monte visit in DC.*

## Who Has Grit and Patience?

by *Izaak Walton League of America*

**W**omen who go hunting and fishing are more likely to exhibit confidence, grit, patience, happiness, and health. That's one of the insights shared by Dave Chanda, president and CEO of the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation.

RBFF seeks to attract more people to fishing and boating, and one of the Foundation's demographic targets is women. Chanda described the group's Take Me Fishing campaign, including the Spanish-language version, Vamos a Pescar.

There are firearms in nearly half of households in the U.S., noted Bill Dunn, vice president for marketing at the National Shooting Sports Foundation. That includes a lot of new gun owners, and training is a top priority for the new owners. He proposed a "plus one" program to include these new owners in visits to shooting ranges. Visit [www.nssf.org](http://www.nssf.org) for more details.



*Dave Chanda of ASA and Bill Dunn of NSSF visited and discussed SCI and Outdoor Heritage Education Center's success at recruiting new hunters and anglers with SCI Life Member Mark LaBarbera at the national IWLA convention.*



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# Wisconsin Chapter Report

by Dean LePoidevin, President

As the incoming president of the Wisconsin Chapter of Safari Club International, it is my pleasure to submit my first article to HUNTERS Magazine. Special thanks to outgoing president Sean Coykendall for his many years of support and more to come. While I may be new to my position, I have served on the board for more than five years as advertising and marketing lead, and the last two as president-elect. In that time, I have been busy getting to know chapter members, our valued sponsors and the hunting and fishing communities in Wisconsin, all of which have helped me prepare for the coming two years as president.

A few weeks ago, I visited Havenwoods State Forest in Milwaukee to witness firsthand how our SCI sponsorship dollars are invested in area youth. The Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo (MOHEE) offered about a thousand area youth the chance to shoot a bow or cast a lure under the supervision of trained instructors. SCI chapter logos stood out on sponsor signs. The event was broadcast live on channel 6 throughout the morning, letting parents, teachers and viewers across southeastern Wisconsin know the value of firsthand outdoor skills education.

# Badgerland Chapter Report

by John Martinson, President

For the good of the Chapter, I made a tough decision to step down from the President's position and switch to the Treasurer's position of SCI Badgerland. Reason being is that I'm a nervous person by nature and I have a difficult time with public speaking in a crowd. With our hard working, over-achieving Stacy Davis stepping down as well we couldn't find a board member to volunteer to replace her.

We have a new President! Settle down; not for the country but for SCI Badgerland!

Randy Mayes graciously accepted the President's position which he has done a stellar job at in the past. Steven Cripps accepted the Secretary's position

In the recent past, I was able to join chapter board members Monte Whiteaker and Charmaine Wargolet on a trip to Washington, DC, to attend the annual SCI Lobby Day on May 9. While there we had the honor of speaking with Wisconsin legislators, including several members of the house and senate. Our mission was to discuss upcoming pieces of legislation that affect members across the state, including the potential delisting of wolves and a proposed ban on lead ammunition. I am happy to report that our representatives are well informed about these important topics and fully support SCI's position on each.

All chapter representatives then attended a reception at the newly acquired SCI "Hunter's Embassy" conveniently located just three blocks from the house, senate, and US capital buildings. The new building will serve as Safari Club International's home base in our nation's capital, helping SCI stay in close contact with legislators and their staff members, fighting daily for our rights as conservationists. Stay tuned for details on how you can show your support of SCI's legislative initiatives by purchasing a personalized brick paver that will be placed at the entrance of the Embassy.

By the time you read this article, we will have completed our first annual SCI WI golf outing at the Legend at Brandybrook golf club in Wales, WI, on

replacing our valuable Dale Hudak, and Clint Woodman agreed to stay on until 2025 with the Vice President's position.

Bottom line is the chapter could really need some help with filling officer positions and please consider applying for a position on the board and hopefully an officer position for the health of SCI Badgerland Chapter.

I personally would like to thank all of SCI Badgerland members for helping me with the president's position these past two years. I'm proud of so many members who have supported SCI's mission of preserving hunters' rights and conserving wildlife along with humanitarian efforts.

You should get this Hunters magazine before Saturday August 3rd, so please



June 3rd. You may still have time to join SCI members and their guests at our 35th Annual Sporting Clays Event to be held at Wern Valley Sportsmen's Club in Waukesha, WI, on Saturday, July 13. Lunch and an SCI event t-shirt is included with each sporting clay event registration. There will be raffles for guns and prizes, and awards for top shooters in several categories. The public is encouraged to attend, and walk-ins are welcome to join the fun. See details at the SCI WI website.

This is truly an exciting time to be an SCI WI member and to get involved in our mission to support and secure our right to hunt and fish in the state and throughout the nation. Visit [www.sciwi.org](http://www.sciwi.org) for more event information and details on the many benefits of membership. I hope to meet each of you at one of our monthly membership meetings and our annual Banquet and Fundraiser on February 14-15, 2025.



join us for our annual Badgerland Chapter Shoot for Adventure sporting event open to the public. We encourage youth and adults to join us for some fun and adventure. We also will have raffles and serve lunch at Rio Conservation Club, W5950 Gorman Rd., Rio, WI 53960. The event is from 9am to 4pm.

Thanks! Have fun and safe adventures!

# Northeast Wisconsin Chapter Report

by Kathryn Thede, President

Hello! My name is Kathryn Thede and I am the new president of the Northeast Wisconsin chapter of SCI. You may recognize me from the membership booth at EXPO (I am the one who bakes the cookies.) I have been asked to tell you a bit about myself.

I live near Shiocton with my husband, Brythe, and our three pups (Paisley, Maverick, and Heston). I work for a school district as a special education paraprofessional. Kiddos are a passion of mine.

I am also pretty active in our church's youth ministry, our Tuesday night Jesus and Me club, and I co-direct our Virtual Bible Study program. By the time you are reading this I should be a certified hunter's education safety instructor as well. I am also a member of the American Legion Auxiliary and a lifetime NRA member.



New NE WI Chapter President Kathryn Thede presented outgoing President Marty Witzcak with a Vortex spotting scope as a token of the chapter members' appreciation and thanked him for his service.

We have a grown son, Zach, and a daughter-in-law, Jodi. I love to do all things crafty, fish and of course hunt! I love making things from scratch and we try to be as self-sustainable as possible. We are trying to EIEIO through this life. We have a few farm animals, garden, and add fish and meat we've gotten hunting as well.

Now for a bit of hunting background on myself.

I grew up on a farm in Northwestern Wisconsin (I am the oldest of eleven). Growing up, I had taken hunter's safety at the same age everyone else did. I hunted a few times with my dad and then as a teenager I was scheduled to work most hunting seasons. Fast-forward to December 1999 when I met the man who

would become my husband. Our second conversation began a little like this: "Before this relationship goes any further, I need to know what your thoughts are on hunting and fishing." I answered honestly and a few dates later we attended our first Deer Classic/hunting expo together. I didn't know at the time just how life changing those conversations and expo dates would be. We got married in 2001 and started looking into a honeymoon, which began my love of hog hunting! The next year at expo we talked to a guy from Montana (Dave Potts from Sage and Sun Outfitter) and got to know two guys (Mark Snyder and Walt Janke) pretty well.

Over the next few years, we hunted with Dave a few times and saw Mark and Walt out there, either heading out as we were arriving or vice-versa. Soon we noticed them talking about SCI. It seemed like a good cause, a fun way to meet people, of course talk hunting and dream about hunts we didn't think would be obtainable for a young family that just bought a house and had blue collar jobs. We were asked if we would volunteer and jumped on the wagon!

That first event we met Buzz (he was full of so many adventures and stories to tell) and Zoom (this man was so passionate about all that SCI is). It was amazing to hear and learn about so many sides of hunting I had never even thought of! Brythe signed up and our family of three became active volunteers whenever SCI needed us. This organization became almost a second family to us. Locally it was a wealth of information when we were looking for our next hunt, needed information on overseas travel (we had never been on an airplane before), things to look for when selecting an outfitter, advice on what to bring, and just friendship in general. EXPO became our family tradition. When our son, Zach, was dating it was only natural that she come along and helped.

As a family we have hunted in several states(some numerous times!) and abroad in Scotland and South Africa.



After recent elections of directors and officers, the SCI NE WI Chapter's Board of Directors represents a great combination of skills, experience, and viewpoints.

Fast-forward several more years to 2019, I finally agreed to serve on the board of directors (after years of being asked). My name was on the ballot, and I was elected! It has been a learning experience, but I am so proud to be a part of this organization and all that our chapter does! When I was asked if I would be interested in becoming president-elect, I was so humbled and honored. I hope to help continue the legacy that has long been our chapter of SCI; to continue to build enthusiasm in what being a member entails, and to inspire others to mentor, be mentored, and share in our passion for hunting and hunting related activities. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I know that our members are what makes SCI what it is!

In other related news, we had our May member meeting/Annual meeting at Mark's East Side in Appleton. The meal was delicious and the conversations enticing. We were able to do a summary of our year in review. It is amazing all that our chapter has accomplished. At that time, we also voted for board members, new recruits and those willing to put in another term, and we say goodbye to those who have put in their time. It is with the utmost respect, gratitude, and well wishes that we thank Walt Janke, Cal Ort, Marty Witzcak, and Gary Knaack. These four men have done amazing things for our chapter. They have offered years of friendship, expertise, mentoring, a love of hunting, and a dedication to SCI's mission. Thank you just doesn't seem like enough for the years you've put in, you will definitely be missed. We hope to see you around!



# Lake Superior Chapter Report

by Scott Olson, President

Hello fellow SCI members! Wow, the winter/spring of 2024 was a busy banquet season. I try to attend as many events as possible, with the intention of meeting other members as well as garnering new ideas for my local chapter's event too. It is interesting how different chapters have different styles. Spending time with like minded conservationists is always a good time. The Lake Superior Chapter held its annual fundraiser in early April at the Grand Casino in Hinckley, MN. We had nearly 400 guests in attendance both nights. Tom Miranda was our guest speaker both nights. Tom entertained the guests with stories of his amazing career in the hunting and trapping business. As a fellow Midwesterner, Tom's easy going nature made guests feel comfortable visiting him. The board of directors along with some great volunteers all worked hard to put on an awesome event. Emcee, Steve Kaner and auctioneer, Bruce Brock work so well together, its nearly worth the ticket price just to watch them work.

Some highlights of our event included a Sables Wine and Cheese event, sponsored again by my wife and chapter treasurer Lisa Gingerich-Olson of Coppersmith Logistics/HuntingTrophy.com. Forty-seven ladies and 3 brave gentlemen enjoyed a variety of wines from a local vineyard while trying to win a variety of prizes. The ladies get very competitive when it comes to winning those raffles! The chapter hosted a variety of seminars

Saturday including Tom Miranda, long range hunting, care of your trophy during and after the hunt, and planning your first safari. Friday morning, we hosted a sporting clays competition at Wings North and the weather cooperated this year!

The chapter will host its second annual golf event in August at the Black Bear golf Course in Minong. Proceeds from the event go towards youth projects. In September, we will host the annual youth pheasant hunt at Wings North. Youth with firearms safety certificates enjoy a round of trap, a

guided pheasant hunt and lunch, all free of charge.

Our board is already planning for 2025, which will be the chapter's 25th anniversary. We have some big things planned for our silver anniversary.



# Legislative Update

by Dan Trawicki, SCI Lobbyist

While it may at times feel like we are fighting uphill battles in trying to get pro hunting legislation, we recently have had some success! For a good portion of last year and the end of the legislative session this year, we have been working diligently on several bills to enhance our hunting opportunities.

**SB 587** which had a companion Assembly bill as well, would allow muzzleloaders that breech load. Essentially, before this all muzzleloaders had to be loaded down the front of the barrel. There are now out there (and have been for some time) muzzleloaders that have a loading chamber much like a bolt action rifle. The accuracy has been very good, and it gives our hunters a chance to hunt with this type of weapon if they already have it, or if they were looking to purchase one.

**SB586** Which also had an Assembly bill companion would allow the use of air rifles for hunting in Wisconsin, including big game. Air guns have recently been gaining popularity, for the obvious lack of recoil but also the superb accuracy. Young hunters like them because they are relatively easy to shoot, and again no recoil. One unintended consequence of this bill is that it provides convicted felons a chance to own this weapon and hunt with it. The air guns are not classified as firearms. While the argument could be made against felons possessing this type of weapon, they already can own and possess air guns, they just have not been able to hunt with them. I am not envisioning felons using air guns to commit crimes.

On March 14, Governor Evers signed both bills into law. While I for one have

been critical of the Governor and his policies on hunting and the outdoors, I support his signing of the two bills and thank him for doing so. Joel Kleefisch and Kyle Schmidt from Wisconsin chapter and Bow chapter went to Madison for the bill signing. It was nice to see them both there representing Safari club. We were one of the leading supporters of both bills, and it was nice to have the victory!

There are several other issues we are currently working on. You may remember a bill was introduced to allow

bucks during this time period. While it is still legal for us to harvest bucks during the Youth hunt if we wear orange it not legal during the other hunts mentioned. The reason suggested, is bowhunters may shoot a buck with a rifle and register it as a bow kill. That can happen at any time and does not seem to be a valid reason for this prohibition. Again, we are not asking for anything extra, just reinstate what we had previously.

Lastly, as you recall Joel Kleefisch and I met with the current Railroad commissioner to discuss crossing issues and problems once again. I for one have fought this fight for many years and attended many committees. Commissioner Vruwink was open to our meeting and communication. Also in attendance at the meeting was the policy advisor to the commissioner and a department of transportation advisor. They agreed to review the current crossings and look at

possible alternatives. I recently received the complete packet of affected areas from George Meyer. While George had retired and SCI Life Member Mark LaBarbera stepped in as Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, he remained active and has always been willing to listen and help when needed. While George and I have not always been on the same side of an issue, I respect him and want to publicly thank him for finding and providing the needed statistical data. The next step will be providing this information to the commissioner and try to come up with a comprehensive plan to move forward.

I had a great time meeting with everyone at all the chapters' banquets and will continue to keep the wheels turning on the issues mentioned.



SCI Lobbyist Dan Trawicki arrowed this chocolate Manitoba black bear with Wekusko Falls in June.

the hunting of sandhill cranes last year. This bill never went anywhere and had little legislative support. We have been working with several other hunting organizations to get a legislative study committee authorized on sandhill cranes. This is the very first step towards an eventual season. It's a difficult year to try this. There were fewer committee authorizations, as the new districts were keeping legislators home campaigning. We were however able to secure a chairman, and bi-partisan group that agreed to participate. As of this writing, we have made the initial cut, and are hopeful we will be selected. We also have begun the initial stages of reinstating buck hunting days for our bowhunters. Before the holiday hunt and late season doe hunts, bowhunters were allowed to harvest



Education:

# SCI WI Chapter Supports Random Lake Conservation Fair

by Natalie Weeks

The 6th Annual Random Lake Conservation Fair was a hit, bringing the community together for a fun-filled day of outdoor activities and learning. Around 600 attendees showed up to the Random Lake High School in late April to participate in various activities aimed at getting people of all ages interested in conservation activities.

Among the popular activities were the WHEIA pellet rifle shooting range, trout fishing with American Outdoor Experiences, and archery, making the most of the lovely spring weather and hanging out with fellow nature lovers. Both newbies and seasoned pros had a blast honing their skills and getting in on some friendly competition.

A standout moment at the fair was a fascinating talk about owls by the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center. Spectators were totally engrossed by the live owls and the information shared about these majestic nighttime birds. The talk really

shed light on the role of owls in the ecosystem and why it's important to protect them and conserve their habitats. The fair also had myriad booths where local conservation groups and organizations dished out knowledge on sustainable practices. They covered everything from establishing proper river flow for maintaining trout populations and protecting wildlife to sustainable farming practices and utilizing nature as a mental health outlet. Visitors left with new info and practical tips to bring into their daily routines.

The event's success wasn't just about the big turnout and all the activities, but also the money raised. The fair managed to collect enough funds to make sure that next year's American Wilderness Science Class can go on their annual Pheasant Hunt at the Highlands Club in Cascade, WI. This tradition is a key part of the class's curriculum, giving them hands-on experience in wildlife management and conservation practices as well as a capstone for their Hunter Safety Certification unit.

I am over the moon about how many people showed up and how enthusiastic everyone was. The funds we raised are a big help in supporting our educational programs and spreading the word about conservation in the area. I am really grateful to everyone who got involved and pitched in to make this event a success. The Wisconsin Chapter of Safari Club International stepped up in a big way to make this event a success financially. Thanks to the chapter, this was the first year that the event was already funded before we opened the doors to the

public. The event was able to raise funds for our hunting trip plus a few extras next school year. In a world of education budget cuts, being able to rely on private clubs is of the utmost importance to the sustainability of this class. Each school year I



am able to certify 15-20 new hunters and have the opportunity to take them all hunting. Being able to get them in the field is huge for hunter recruitment. Additionally, even if some of the students never pick up a hunting pack and call again, they have the



background knowledge and life experience to be a positive voice for the lifestyle and industry after taking this class. The Random Lake Conservation Fair is a big deal for the community, helping foster a love for the outdoors and a real understanding of why conservation matters. Plans are already in motion for next year's fair, and it looks like there'll be even more activities and chances to learn for everyone who comes along. For more info about the event and upcoming conservation activities, check out the Random Lake Conservation Fair's website at [www.randomlakeconservationfair.com](http://www.randomlakeconservationfair.com)





Hunt Report:

# ARGENTINA

by Jeff Champeau

I met Juan with the outfitter Cerrio Indio at the international SCI show in Nashville, Tennessee. We talked to Juan regarding hunting with him in Argentina. After meeting with him my wife Polly and I decided to book a hunt with him. I left for Argentina on April 19th 2024 flying into Buenos Aires. Juan picked me up at the airport and we drove 6 hours to get to the hunting area.

The house I stayed in was nice and large with a fireplace in every room. The house was 35 minutes away from where I hunted. The house that is on the hunting concession is currently being renovated.

The ranch is 20,000 acres, all free range.

The first two days I hunted for Water Buffalo and Axis Deer. The first day I hunted with Juan. The rest of the week I hunted with Gonzalo who is the owner of the outfitter. We made lots of stalks but could not get close to any of the game we were hunting. The 3rd day I

shot a very nice Water Buffalo with my crossbow. The next day we hunted for Axis deer but could not get close enough for a shot. The fifth day we drove to a different ranch 45 minutes away to hunt Blackbuck. I shot at one 78 yards away and totally missed it. I cranked up my crossbow and set it down to put an arrow in it and the bow blew up on me. If I would have been holding onto the bow it would have broken both of my arms. I was really upset because I wanted to use my crossbow to take all the animals. I used one of Gonzalo's guns and shot a Blackbuck.

The next day we spent all day stalking Fallow Deer. After about 2 miles and a lot of crawling I shot him at 241 yards with another one of Gonzalo's guns (308 rifle). Gonzalo said he would give me a discount on a Red Stag. I said OK but it has to be a big one as I had already taken a Red Stag in New Zealand. The one I shot was huge, Gonzalo said it was one of the very, very biggest Red Stags that has been

taken on the concession in a very long time. I was leaving at 2:00 the next day and again Gonzalo said he would give me a discount on an Axis Deer. We had a little bit of time to hunt in the morning. We went back to the ranch and I shot a nice Axis Deer.

The cooks and the food were outstanding. My guides were very knowledgeable of the game and how to hunt them. We also had two younger men to help us and skin out the animals I shot. It was another 6-hour drive back to the airport. I just talked with Safari Club record book officials and the Water Buffalo I shot will be the free range new number with bow and in the top 10 for all methods. And the stag, as of press time, will be number four all-time gun kill free range.

If you are interested in hunting with Cierro Indo outfitters you can contact them at [safaris@cerroindio.com](mailto:safaris@cerroindio.com). If you have any questions, you are welcome to call me, Jeff Champeau at 920-619-1192.





# JACOB RAM for JAY

by Jay Trudell

It wasn't my intention to shoot a Jacob Ram, but it sure worked out well. The Lazy CK ranch is a destination that my wife, Cheri, and I had traveled to the year prior to this September. Our goal on the first trip was to harvest an exotic or a whitetail with my bow. Unfortunately, I came home empty-handed on that trip. It happens, even on a Texas hunt with lots of animals! Hunting is never a guarantee, but we very much enjoyed the trip. We saw lots of awesome trophy animals and the accommodations, well...we had our own fully furnished little bungalow and the homecooked meals were excellent! The lodge had a full game room with a big screen, a pool table, and shuffleboard, and trophies all over the walls. Outside had a big firepit and a nice pool area for relaxing after your hunt. So, we decided to make another trip to The Lazy CK.

We flew into San Antonio, which is a great destination on its own. There are a lot of things to do there, and we always

plan on arriving a day or two ahead of a hunt just to spend time seeing sights. The riverwalk area of San Antonio is beautiful! We enjoyed the walks along the river, shopping, and dining in all the nice restaurants. One spot I highly recommend is the Buckhorn Saloon! Super cool spot with good food and a neat old museum, full of Texas history and taxidermy. Being a taxidermist myself (we own Trudell Outdoor Adventures and Taxidermy Studios), it really grabbed our attention. The Alamo is right there too, which is another must-see San Antonio sight. So, we spent a couple of days exploring and relaxing, and then it was off to The Lazy CK for the hunt.

The drive from San Antonio to The Lazy CK was a very scenic hour and a half. Upon arrival, we were met by our guide, Adam, who'd guided us the year before. He got us settled and, after a snack, it was time to head out for the evening hunt. We saw animals the first night, but not one I wanted to shoot. The

next morning was a little slow, so we did a little spot and

stalk. I almost got a shot at a coyote, but unfortunately there was just too much brush to get a good crack at him with my bow. We ended up calling it a morning and went in for breakfast. On our way to the lodge, we spotted a herd of Jacob Rams. There were about eight in the herd, and one jumped out as one I really liked. His horns stood tall, and he had a cool white and brown spotted coat. After glassing them for a bit, we decided they were in an area where we could find them again, so we headed in.

The interesting thing about the Jacob Ram (or Jacob Sheep) is that it's a biblical animal. It's believed that the sheep spoken about in the book of Genesis are, in fact, the spotted, four-horned rams we know today as Jacob Sheep, and why they're appropriately named as such. The Bible says, "Jacob removed all the male goats that were streaked or spotted, and all the speckled or spotted female goats (all that had white on them) and all the dark-colored lambs, and he placed them in the care of his sons." They are unique and colorful animals!

At breakfast, we informed Cheri about the herd of rams, and she was excited to come along for an afternoon

stalk. So, we set forth to try to find the herd again. As Adam had thought, they hadn't gone far. It was hot and, with their full wool coats, they had bedded in a shady area. We parked and the stalk was on!

We slipped up behind them and either the swirling wind or their eyes caught us, and they were off.

The fortunate part was that they didn't run far, and we were able to slip up on them again.

Well, this happened a few times until we hit a spot where they thought we were gone. This time, we were ahead of them and in some cover. They started feeding and, to our surprise, they were headed our way, so we just waited. I was blessed on this hunt, as there were eight rams and the ram I was after led the way right to me. He came across in front of me broadside at about twenty-five yards.

I got drawn without spooking him and let the arrow fly.

I hit him right behind the front shoulder – perfect! Off they went, with my ram lagging the herd a bit, so I felt good about the shot. They got out of sight in the brush fast, so we went after them. We came around a corner and could see the seven rams a long way out without the ram I shot. We followed his blood to a big bushy area. I went in and didn't see him right away; he was still on his feet. He tried to turn on me, probably to give me some horn.

I got another arrow knocked and gave him a fatal second shot. We pulled him out of the bush, and upon inspection, I still can't believe the first arrow didn't kill him faster. Boy, I'll tell you, they are tough animals!

We did our photo shoot and celebrated with a wonderful dinner!

In the moment, sometimes you don't even realize what



you're being blessed with. SCI lists this species as a multi-horned sheep, but as I now know, there's so much more to them. It's fun to do research, find the

origins, and learn about the animals we pursue. I'm blessed to have been able to pursue and harvest one of God's special and unique animals.





# SCI is Key to MOHEE

SCI Wisconsin, Badgerland, and Southeastern Wisconsin Bowhunters Chapters continue to be major donors that make it possible for the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo to expand and welcome record numbers of student, teachers, and chaperones.

In addition to the Poynette MOHEE which the Outdoor Heritage Education Center charitable nonprofit organization started 10 years ago in May 2014, OHEC added a second MOHEE annual event in

Milwaukee as of May 2023. The additional location makes it easier to reach more students who historically have not had such outdoor opportunities.

MOHEE volunteers could not keep growing this event without growing support from these SCI chapters (and hopefully others) plus consistent support from Founding Sponsors like Dane County Conservation League and National Wild Turkey Federation and major collaborators like Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. In recent years, Izaak Walton

League of America's Wisconsin Division and the IWLA National Endowment have contributed greatly to the event, along with many smaller donors who have a cumulatively positive impact on helping OHEC reach more people.

Volunteer Mark Jablonic, Past President of the Northeast WI SCI Chapter, shares his experience after working with youth and educators at this year's MOHEE. His chapter this year kicked in to help OHEC with a number of projects, including MOHEE.

## MOHEE Milwaukee, As I See It

by Mark Jablonic,

How old were you when you first learned to fish, to climb a tree or to shoot a BB gun? I personally did all these things at a very early age. I know that I wet my first fishing line when I was like 4 or 5. My 3 ½ year old grandson was doing it last year. Sometimes we take for granted some of the activities that we do because of where we live or how we were raised and by whom. On May 8th, at the annual Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo in Havenwoods State Forest in Milwaukee, I found a lot of enthusiastic urban kids, who, for the most part, have never participated in those types of activities that we may take for granted.

If you're like me, and you're not familiar with Havenwoods, it's a hidden gem. It is Wisconsin's only urban state forest. It is 237 acres of grasslands, woods and wetlands. It was the perfect setting for city kids who have probably never been in that open of a space before. Outdoor Heritage Education Center's Executive Director Ruth Ann Lee and OHEC Founder Mark LaBarbera, an SCI Life Member, preregistered about 1,300 participants mostly from southeast Wisconsin and the Milwaukee Public School system.

If you have been to a MOHEE day, you know what a wonderfully controlled chaos it is. By that I mean, you have huge numbers of super excited kids, doing things they have never done before; they really enjoy doing these activities and they can't wait to try new outdoor skills and move on to the next activity. I admire the chaperones and teachers who corral this energy and

keep them on task and moving forward so they can get to all the areas of interest.

This is not a simple, quick walk around and you're done in an hour field trip. Each site was designed for the kids to learn. A sampling of the activities:

- Dog Training
- BB guns
- Sensory Safari trailers
- Fly-tying
- Archery
- Forestry & Fire Prevention
- Casting for fish
- Learn to hunt
- Game farm birds
- Trapping and skinning
- Kayaks
- NWTF Turkey calling
- Tree stand safety
- Water and Conservation

Diane Brusoe, Fish, Wildlife and Parks Division Administrator for the DNR, attended the event again this year, along with many natural resources professionals from her Division and others. Law Enforcement, for example, had wardens, trainers, and R3 staff who specialize in recruiting, reactivating, and retaining hunters, anglers, etc. Many of them were peppered with questions all day. I think Diane's people were as excited as the kids.

Competition amongst the kids was strong and contagious. At the dog training booth, they raced to see who could "fetch" the birds and return first. At the area for rod and reel casting for "fish" (where I even taught a boy how to cast his line) there was a lot of pride for those who "caught" a fish. The lines to shoot bows and BB guns at the booths

were constantly long with a lot of "I did better" heard. These areas were constantly crowded. Kayla, with the DNR office in Green Bay, was instructing kids at the archery booth. This was her third MOHEE and she was having fun. I would have liked to talk to her more, but she had to keep the kids moving.

When talking to chaperones, I learned to keep my questions short and fast because the students were quick to interject themselves into the interview.

Hannah, from the Wauwatosa Montessori school was there for her first time after another teacher, who had attended last year, told her about it. She would like to come back, and her students agreed.

Jay, with Maple Tree Elementary in Milwaukee, was coaching his kids on how to cast their lines at the fishing site. None of his kids had ever fished before, but hey were having fun.

Tiffany, from the Morris School in Milwaukee was leading her female charges to the next booth when I caught up to them. They were split on their favorite areas for that day. Some liked the dog training, some liked the archery best and others preferred the animals in the two OHEC Touch of the Wild Sensory Safari trailers. It didn't matter which area the students were in, everything was interactive, every activity was designed to get the kids involved, everything was a learning experience.

We need this next generation. We need to cultivate this learning and fun in them to carry on long after many of us are gone. SCI support for the events is likely to continue as it grows, and the funding makes a huge difference.

# Best Field Trip Ever!

*Oh heck, yes, students, educators, natural resources agencies, and conservation groups love and praise the annual Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo R3 experience.*



Most Photos by Chico La Barbera





# Recruiting & Retaining

This year's two MOHEE events served an amazing 4,823 guests, a new record!

It may seem like fun and games, but the Outdoor Heritage Education Center organization, which owns and operates these free Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo events, and its many collaborators, volunteers, and partnering organizations are actually using proven scientific methods, best practices in education, and strategic planning to recruit and retain future hunters, anglers, trappers, and other outdoor enthusiasts.

OHEC Executive Director Ruth Ann Lee is a life-long educator. She and OHEC Founder Mark LaBarbera explained that the Outdoor Recreation Adoption Model (ORAM) relies on three key steps to recruit future license buying conservationists who will one day replace those of us who grew up hunting and fishing. When we are no longer able to participate, it will be these future hunters and anglers who fund fish and wildlife conservation programs through their license fees, stamps, permits, equipment purchases, and donations.

The continuum that begins with someone who doesn't know about our favorite nature-based recreation and ends in the future with them being active conservationists who love to hunt and fish involves the ORAM and these first three steps:

1. Awareness
2. Interest
3. Trial

OHEC and its MOHEE allies know that success depends on creating Awareness among students in a way that generates interest in these outdoor activities. Forget the stereotype of urban students not being aware of fish and wildlife pursuits or that rural students, of course, are more likely to enjoy hunting, fishing, and trapping.

Not true!

Social scientists and fellow sportsmen alike have seen that students from farm country and small towns can be as unfamiliar with outdoor sports as students from Milwaukee, Madison, Green Bay, Wausau, Eau Claire, and other cities.

To create awareness, OHEC created MOHEE as a free field trip that brings students--along with parent chaperones, and teachers--to a special location where they can sample dozens of hands-on activities like archery, shooting bb guns, duck and turkey calling, and spin-casting. Havenwoods State Forest in Milwaukee and MacKenzie Center in Poynette, just north of Madison, are great properties to host the event because they have woods, prairies, ponds, open spaces, and other amenities that can accommodate the largest free outdoor skills field trip in the United States. Both

venues belong to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, which has been a fantastic partner in this world-class educational endeavor. With great sponsors, partners, and venues, MOHEE achieves economies of scale that make it possible to create the kind of event schools want to attend. In turn, with so many schools attending, MOHEE is able to create Awareness among students about these outdoor lifestyles and career opportunities.

Awareness needs to be created in a way that leads to interest. Anyone can be made aware of something. The key is to do it in a way that makes guests want to learn more. With plenty of thought and strategic planning, activity leaders get creative as they try to

generate Interest, the second key step for the ORAM.

Take for example the Dog Demos.

Lauren Vraney brings her hounds to MOHEE. Visitors love to touch and hug her hounds. She also brings bear and raccoon hides, scents, and displays. She lays a short scent trail that leads to a coon skin in a tree and explains to onlookers what's happening as her champion hounds call out loudly as they follow the trail and excitedly discover the treed hide. Lauren's simulation helps visitors experience the exciting, heart-pounding reality that comes with the sights and sounds of hound hunting. Lauren's narration helps newcomers understand that hunting is so much more than harvesting an animal; it is the total experience.

Nearby, Dan Bubolz and his team from the Wisconsin River Chapter of the North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association, engages students in a simulated waterfowl field hunt that showcases retrievers. Again, the students are







Busloads arrived at Havenwoods and MacKenzie Center and carloads of parent chaperones followed. Friends of Havenwoods and Friends of MacKenzie gladly helped welcome them. The DNR and Friends recognize that MOHEE not only helps students and their families

If you don't see your local school or community on the list, please email [RuthAnn@OHECYes](mailto:RuthAnn@OHECYes) so she can recruit them to future MOHEE events. Sponsors and donors of any size can use that email too. She also asked that you please mark your calendar for MOHEE Milwaukee May 7 and MOHEE Poynette May 14-15, 2024.



**O**HEC's Ruth Ann Lee offered free 2025 Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Sports Show tickets to visitors and volunteers who wanted to visit OHEC's Touch of the Wild sensory safari trailers at Wisconsin State Park next March, courtesy of USA Today Ventures' Stephen Buzza and his team.

**T**V cameras from the CBS network affiliate in Milwaukee and Fox 6 helped generate more publicity than ever for MOHEE, its organizers and key supporters. In addition to positive social media and print media, plus special MOHEE segments on Dan Small's "Deer Hunt Wisconsin" TV specials on Bally Sports, the highlight of this year's MOHEE media coverage came from Brian Kramp at Fox 6 TV in Milwaukee. His reports were picked up by sister

Dampf mic'd up WI SCI Chapter President Dean LePoidevin and other leaders for six live broadcasts from MOHEE. It was a rare but satisfying moment to see the pro-hunting words and images being broadcast to the viewers throughout Milwaukee, heavily populated southeastern Wisconsin, and across the state.





# WCC & Friends Support MOHEE

Every year, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress through its Friends group run by Rob Bohmann, Tim Andryk, and Ed Harvey, with a lot of fundraising help from SCI member Scott Gunderson, raise thousands of dollars to support the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo. Hundreds of delegates see the most recent MOHEE video played at the state convention. It brings to life the

sights and sounds of this nation-leading free outdoor skills field trip and its efforts to recruit, retain, and reactive hunters, anglers, and other outdoor enthusiasts. And the delegates buy raffle tickets for great prizes donated in support of MOHEE. Like SCI, the Friends of WCC leadership continues to make a big difference in MOHEE's success.







# Cheyenne Ridge is Pheasant Paradise

by Brandon Goodwin

The pointer walked with his head low, swinging from side to side, following a scent only those of the canine persuasion can detect. Suddenly it froze, staring intensely into the tangle of corn stubble a few yards ahead of me.

I yelled "On Point" to alert the others and took a step forward and was rewarded with the sound of rapidly beating wings as the rooster busted from cover with the familiar "Kau, Kau, Kau, Kau" as he was trying to quickly vacate the area.

I kept my eye on the wily bird as the distance between us increased while I raised the shotgun to my shoulder and felt the stock find its home against my cheek.



Photo by Koerner, Tom, USFWS

I flipped the safety off as the bead on the end of the barrel came to rest just under the fleeing rooster.

I squeezed the trigger and felt the recoil of the shotgun and quickly recovered to see the crumpled mass of feathers dropping from the sky in a slow arc back to earth.

This same scenario played out again and again over the next two days at what can only be described as the "Pheasant Hunting Paradise" at Cheyenne Ridge Signature Lodge.

I had purchased this 2-day 3-night hunt for four hunters at the Illinois & Chicago Chapter of SCI yearly fund-raising banquet. I eagerly anticipated the passing of the months until at last the time to depart had come. My wife and I and two friends from Atlanta made up our group and, as they flew, we drove from Seneca, Illinois to the outskirts of Pierre, South Dakota. Upon arrival, we were met by Property Manager, Executive Chef, and good friend Mr. Sean Finley, one of the nicest people you will ever meet. As he introduced his staff it was apparent, he surrounds himself with courteous,







knowledgeable, like-minded individuals. We were escorted to our room and told that there would be a briefing an hour before dinner. We freshened up before making our way to the briefing which was an explanation of all the amenities which were numerous: Great Room, Ice Bar, Game Room, Spa & Fitness Center, Board Room, Gun Lockers, Pro Shop, sporting clays and World Class Culinary Professionals.

Cheyenne Ridge also has won Beretta's Trident Award twice and in 2017 was named Sporting Classics

Lodge of the Year! The guest rooms are large and private with plenty of room for gear. The dining room is huge with rows of tables so you can mix and mingle with the other guests, as Sean and his staff prepare 3 amazing dining experiences daily for your enjoyment. The lodge experience alone is worth the cost of the hunt, but the hunting, well that is priceless.

After breakfast on day one, all the hunters in the lodge met for a safety briefing and explanation of the day's

events and assignment of guides to the group. A waiver is signed, and you are told which shuttle bus to place your gear in for the short ride to the hunting area. Most hunters bring their own shotguns, but Cheyenne Ridge has a large supply of Beretta shotguns that you can use if you prefer to travel without the hassle of having a firearm with you. To my surprise, they had ammo cans full of shells for us to use and in whatever caliber you required. Once you arrive at the designated hunting location, you can fill your pouches with shells and make ready while the dogs are released from the trailer behind the shuttle bus. We lined up at the end of a corn stubble row with grass on either side and the dogs quickly began their pursuit of the pheasants. Again and again, the dogs moved forward, and the smart pheasants ran or tried to exit the corn only to run into one of us acting as side blockers. Once we were spotted, they used their most effective defense and that was to leap into the air and try to out distance us before we could shoot. More pheasants lost this race than escaped, and by the end of the morning hunt we were well on our way to the 20 bird per hunter limit. We loaded up the dogs and headed back to the lodge for



a hearty lunch and some down time before the afternoon session began.

The afternoon was just as special as we hunted a different patch of ground that had a pine tree row and some CRP. The action was just as spectacular as the morning and in a couple hours we reached our limit. I have to say that every piece of ground we hunted was different in not only location but vegetation as well. They do an excellent job of mixing up the hunts to give you the full experience. Once back at the lodge a quick shower and hanging out with all the other hunters prior to dinner was the order of the day.

The lodge is located on a ridge top overlooking a beautiful valley; the sunsets are breathtaking. Hors d'oeuvres are placed out for your enjoyment as you chat with new and old friends

prior to Sean's announcement that "Dinner is served." I will tell you that the dinners we experienced were nothing short of amazing. The salads, meats and other dishes were as good (or better) than any high-end restaurant I have ever dined in. We even had a vegetarian member in our group, and



We retired back to the Great Room or Game Room for the remainder of the evening, and once you call it a night, a cozy room with a soft bed sends you off to dream land quickly until the alarm sounds to repeat the entire experience again the next day. On the morning of departure, Sean makes sure that you have a wonderful breakfast and has his staff assist you with your luggage, in our case to load in my truck, and for the others in a shuttle bus for the ride to the airport. They also make sure your birds go with you; they have a freezer where you can pick up the vacuum sealed birds in a convenient collapsible cooler bag to take with you on the plane or in your vehicle. Every aspect of your time there has been thought through and well planned by Sean and his staff. This was my first trip to Cheyenne Ridge, but I can assure you it will not be my last.





# Travel tips

by Tony Caligiuri

Hunting big game in North America often involves lengthy airplane rides to western Canada, Mexico, and Alaska.

Along with the logistics of a long flight, today's big game hunters have to export their rifles into a foreign country and get them there in perfect shape. Though the paperwork can seem overwhelming at first, contrary to popular belief, the task is not insurmountable. The first step is to buy a quality hard case and fit the rifle to the interior. Hard cases are available in a variety of materials including aluminum, various plastics, rigid vinyl, and even stainless steel, but the industry standard for protection remains in cases that are injection molded from high impact polypropylene copolymer.

Injection molded polypropylene allows for a case to be molded with round corners, contoured handles, built in wheel housings, and a molded in gasket channel that keeps the contents dry and dust free. On metal cases or cases made from plastic panels, all of the above has to be welded or bolted on after the fact and is subject to breaking off when you need them the most. More than anything, injection molded cases allow the manufacturer to work with heavy, dense resins that are almost indestructible. I know that heavy goes against the grain of every big game hunter who has ever cut off his toothbrush handle to save an ounce of weight in his backpack, but in the case of travel cases, heavy is good! A hard case's main function is to absorb impact should the case ever be thrown,

dropped or otherwise mishandled, and basic physics tell us that weight is the best way to counter impact. As such, a heavy travel case is the simple secret behind protecting a firearm.

Elite military and law enforcement units around the world know that "secret," but as big game hunters, we have a fixation on the "lighter is better" theory. Consider the fact that heavier rifles absorb more recoil. The same principal applies to a hard gun case. Simply put, nothing will protect a rifle more than the weight of the case, so for starters, plan on something that weighs a minimum of twenty pounds empty. Having been in the hard case business for more than two decades, I have personally been involved in hundreds of tests both in our factory and at independent testing facilities where we have dropped, banged, and otherwise abused rifles and scopes in various hard cases. In all the tests, the heavier the case, the less damage to the optics. In addition to the structural integrity, look for a case that has a rubber gasket, comfortable handles and latches that will stay closed when a rogue luggage handler having a bad day gets his hands on it.

The Boyt H Series, Cabela's Amour Extreme, and Bass Pro Shops Red Head Premium line cases are all injected molded from variants of high impact polypropylene and all feature lifetime warranties and are made in the United States. Personally, I like a case with padlock bosses over a case with built-in locks for the simple reason that a high quality padlock is generally more secure, and since I am prone to losing small things like keys, they can be cut off and replaced if necessary. Many built-in case locks can be pried open with a screwdriver while a quality pad lock will require substantial

more effort to cut or break. The word "airline approved" gets thrown around quite a bit, but to my knowledge, there is not a list of approved cases on file with any of the major airlines. TSA regulations state the firearm must be in a secured case, and the word secured can be pretty subjective depending on the agent and airport, so be prepared for the worse and hope for the best. For example, some cases, will pry open at one end or another even if the case is locked with a padlock. To meet the secure definition of TSA, the case needs a padlock at either end. Most agents will never check it, but they do in Anchorage, and take it from personal experience, it is no fun to have to jump in a cab with all of your luggage, race to a hardware store and then get back to the airport to go through the check-in process all over again. With regards to the case's interior, rifles and optics are much better protected by foam that is profile cut for a specific rifle and scope rather than egg crate foam where the rifle simply cradles between the layers. This will better protect your optics, including all the scope components, so you won't have any nasty surprises when it comes to opening the case. Some people choose to keep their optics in a separate case, which is perfectly reasonable if you are going on an extended trip and have the opportunity to re-calibrate the sights.

Cutting foam gets a bad rap because many hunters have had tough experiences with cutting cheaper, low-density foam. Quality high-density foam actually cuts crisply and is easily facilitated with a new utility knife blade sans the handle. Be sure and cut out a designated pocket for the bolt, as it needs to be removed for travel and cutouts for any other pieces of gear that will go into the hard case as well. Make sure that you have a minimum of three inches from the edge of the foam top to bottom and side to side when tracing around your rifle. Once my rifle is fitted to the case, I tape around my turret caps to keep them from getting intentionally or accidentally turned during any inspection processes where they might be out of my direct control. Once your case is fitted, locked and secure, you are ready to fly anywhere in the United States on virtually every domestic carrier. Big game hunts to

Canada or Mexico will require some additional paperwork.

## In Canada

When flying to Canada, big game hunters generally have a choice of Edmonton, Calgary or Vancouver as an initial entry point into the country. After traveling through all three on numerous occasions in the past few years, I can say that Edmonton is by far the best gateway airport when coming into Canada with a firearm. The customs agents are very hunter friendly and take a genuine interest in making sure you get through the import process in an expedient manner. The entire process takes about fifteen minutes start to finish. In Vancouver, I have waited up to two hours to get a firearm processed and during heavy cruise ship schedules, which often coincide with many August big game seasons, customs can be backed up even more. Calgary is a little better, but the process does not seem to run as smooth as it does in Edmonton and generally involves a longer waiting time. The actual import process for bringing a bolt-action hunting rifle into Canada is relatively painless.

You can download a Non-Resident Firearms Declaration form at several websites including [www.canadawelcomesyou.net](http://www.canadawelcomesyou.net). Fill out one form and make three copies but do not sign it until asked to by the customs officer in Canada. When you arrive simply state on the declaration form that you are traveling with a firearm, pick up your rifle at the oversize baggage belt and you will be directed to an area where a Canada customs official will check your rifle against the form and point you towards a cashier's window where you will pay a \$25 fee (credit card or Canadian cash only) and then be on your way. If you travel frequently to Canada with firearms you may want to consider applying for a Canadian Possession and Acquisition license (PALs). The process is a little more involved and requires passing a



Tony Caligiuri packing out his sheep.

firearms safety test, but it is valid for five years and only requires a one-time fee. Technically, a rifle in Canada needs a trigger lock during transport along with the hard case, although this rule is not uniformly enforced, just the same, I always have one on my rifle just in case.

There are other things you need to consider when traveling around Canada too. For example, did you know that if you have any convictions on your Canadian Criminal Record (CCR) you can be denied entry to the US? It is therefore in your best interest to avoid any dangerous or illegal activities while in Canada. While pardon services are available to suspend criminal records in Canada, it is still important to avoid getting a conviction in the first place. If you would like to learn more about the Canadian pardons and waivers process, the Federal Pardon Waiver Services website is a useful resource and explains the legalities surrounding Canadian criminal records in detail.

## In Mexico

Bringing a rifle into Mexico is a little more complicated but not really difficult. I have cleared Mexican customs with a firearm more than 20 times in the last 15 years and have only had a few minor issues. The big difference between Mexico and Canada is that in Mexico, your outfitter will have to apply for your gun permit well ahead of your arrival.

Regardless of what your outfitter may tell you, never under any circumstances should you attempt to enter





Mexico without a copy of your gun permit. The actual permit will be waiting for you at the military desk when you arrive at the airport but having a copy pretty much assures you that your paperwork is in order and all pertinent information is correct. Like Canada, the arrival city is very important to the process. I have entered Mexico with firearms at Guymas, Nogales and Hermosillo. They are very accustomed to dealing with firearms in Hermosillo and while I did not have problems at the other entry ports, it is always quick, easy, and less painless in Hermosillo. Regardless of your arrival city in Mexico, absolutely never bring ammo in a caliber different from your rifle and do not bring in any

more cartridges than your permit allows, as both are serious offenses in Mexico. In Canada and Mexico both, you should always keep your permit and a government form of identification on your person at all times you are in possession of your firearm. It is not uncommon, if not a bit unnerving to have Mexican authorities stop you while hunting to check your firearm's permit. If you don't have it with you, expect a long sorting out period and a possible trip back to Hermosillo. If all of this seems complicated, keep in mind that the U.S. export process proposed by our own government just a few short months ago was much more complicated and invasive (not to

mention more expensive) than what Canada or Mexico requires for importation. Thankfully, the new process has been put on hold at least temporarily but we are still on seat edges waiting for what happens next. For the upcoming fall season (unless something new is proposed in the next month or so), all that is needed is the U.S. Customs Form 4457, proof of ownership slip that is easily obtained from any U.S. customs agent in most major cities. Lastly, if you don't want to tackle any of the above on your own, there are any number of reputable folks out there who will help you for a small fee, just Google "traveling with guns" to get more information.

## Nat'l Bowhunter Education Fdn. Supports OHEC

RAPID CITY, SD –National Bowhunter Education Foundation (NBEF) is sponsoring Outdoor Heritage Education Center (OHEC). The Wisconsin-based charitable nonprofit OHEC brings traveling conservation exhibits to schools, clubs, county fairs, sports shows, and other venues. Each year over 150,000 visitors interact with the free, hands-on exhibits. OHEC is celebrating 25 years of outdoor education success and relies upon volunteers and sponsors to spread its conservation messages.

"NBEF is happy to support educational organizations like OHEC," said NBEF Executive Director Marilyn Bentz. "We share a common mission to educate and encourage people to participate in conservation efforts. OHEC's traveling Touch of the Wild sensory trailers offer a particularly engaging opportunity to get people of all ages excited about animals and conservation. OHEC reminds visitors that, unlike a museum, its exhibits can be touched."



"OHEC is excited to begin working with NBEF. NBEF does so much to support ethical hunting and conservation efforts," explained OHEC Executive Director Ruth Ann Lee. "We appreciate its support. People will see NBEF's whitetail 3D shot placement model in our exhibits and the NBEF logos on our growing fleet of trailers scheduled for events throughout Wisconsin."



### About NBEF

The National Bowhunter Education Foundation offers bowhunting instructional items, books, videos, 3-D models, apparel and tools for bowhunter education classes. Helping bowhunters become safe and successful hunters and stewards of the sport are important NBEF missions. NBEF provides the bowhunter certification standards and class content that some states and certain circumstances require in order to bow hunt. NBEF provides instructor training and certification.

NBEF oversees the International Bowhunter Education Program and works with the International Hunter Education Association and state agencies to coordinate a unified program. NBEF also oversees the International Crossbow Education Program and works with state agencies responsible for crossbow education to develop comprehensive online crossbow safety courses that teach students important laws and

regulations, game identification, and safe, responsible handling of crossbow equipment. NBEF, like OHEC, is a 501(c)3 corporation that is not a membership-based organization. Tax-deductible donations are welcome. Learn more at [nbeef.org](http://nbeef.org).

### About Outdoor Heritage Ed. Ctr.

OHEC was founded in 1998 by Mark LaBarbera to connect people and resources. OHEC volunteers and donors have helped launch clay target teams, school archery, explore bowhunting programs and learn to hunt opportunities in a number of Wisconsin schools. OHEC is an active leader in recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3) efforts that fit with its mission to help pass along our outdoor heritage to future generations who are losing touch with the natural world, and to increase the public's understanding, appreciation, and sense of stewardship for natural resources and related activities like fishing, hunting and other shooting sports. See [www.OHECyes.org](http://www.OHECyes.org) or email [RuthAnn@OHECyes.org](mailto:RuthAnn@OHECyes.org).

## Conservation Leasing is in BLM Rule

by WY Wildlife Federation

The Bureau of Land Management operates under a multiple use and sustained yield mandate, which means that lands administered by the agency, all 245 million acres of them, are managed to balance development with conserving natural and cultural resources. Recently, the BLM released the Public Lands Rule which seeks to codify and advance the principles of multiple use and sustained yield, and give the agency the tools they need to maintain resilient ecosystems. The rule seeks to accomplish this through conserving intact landscapes, promoting habitat restoration and emphasizing the use of the best available science in decision making.

Through this rule, the BLM looks to put conservation on par with extractive uses in part by offering land for mitigation and restoration leasing. Restoration leases are designed to restore degraded lands while mitigation leases are designed to offset impacts of other authorized projects. While the agency considers conservation within its multiple use framework, it has not specifically leased lands for that purpose.

To effectively implement these leases, the Public Lands rule establishes a process through which the BLM may approve or deny a lease application. The agency will consider many factors when determining if a lease should be authorized, including the success potential of the proposal, compatibility with existing uses, and collaboration with local land managers/owners and/or permittees. Additionally, the BLM has the authority to set bonding and terminate or suspend a lease if the permittee, for example, is not in compliance with the terms of the lease.

Leases are generally valid for the time required to complete a project, but restoration leases must be renewed every ten years and will not be renewed if the goal has been achieved. In contrast, mitigation leases are valid for the time that the project would have impacts. For example, if a proposed solar development would negatively impact a bird species, the BLM can determine that mitigating the impact is appropriate and would consider a

mitigation lease from the developer for the duration that the solar development would have impacts. Additionally, lease holders are required to assess their activity and submit an update report to the BLM annually.

While mitigation has taken place in the past, it is generally done on private lands and not the public BLM lands. Further, it is important to note that restoration and mitigation leases will not interrupt existing authorized uses, state or Tribal land management or valid existing rights. If the proposal is determined to disturb these uses, the lease will be denied. Further, land leased for conservation purposes may subsequently be leased for other uses as long as those uses are compatible with the restoration or mitigation work.

### Who Can Apply?

Leases are available "...to any qualified entity that can demonstrate capacity for implementing restoration or mitigation projects." The rule explicitly

states that individuals, businesses, NGO's, tribal governments, conservation districts and state fish and game agencies are eligible to pursue a restoration or mitigation lease. Further, leases will not be offered to foreign entities.

### Will Hunting Access be Compromised?

Thankfully, no. The approval of a lease does not mean that the lessee has exclusive rights to the public lands encompassed in the lease. Also, "casual" use of the public lands would be allowed to continue including research and recreational use, such as hunting and fishing.

BLM lands encompass valuable wildlife habitat and are invaluable to hunters and anglers across Wyoming and the West. This rule is designed to conserve and restore these important areas while facilitating extractive uses that local communities rely upon for their livelihood.

## Deer Hunt Wisconsin TV Wins Best of the Midwest Media Fest



Deer Hunt Wisconsin TV special again wins Best of the Midwest Media Fest top award of excellence competing with hundreds of producers across 13 states. Sponsors include SCI WI and Badgerland Chapters.



# Betty J. LaBarbera

Mom died May 29, 2024. A week earlier, she and I had fished a local pond owned by Matt and Molly Andrews in Cuba City, Wisconsin. I grew up fishing with mom and dad who instilled a love of the outdoors that led to a career in the hunting and fishing media business, including editing SCI HUNTERS magazine every two months for the last 10 years.

For Betty to be able to fish with limited mobility and strength at age 97, we had to adapt. I built a step to get her up to the next step and the rails on my Ram pickup. We loaded both a walker and a wheelchair and next thing you know we were driving through a field down to the grassy shore of Andrews' pond. Betty was smiling from ear to ear when I picked her up at St. Dominic's Villa at Sinsinawa, where she had moved in December after about three years of living with me and Coni. The Dominican Sisters, workers, and other Villa residents clearly had been told that Betty was going fishing because as I wheeled her out, they wished her good luck fishing.

Within five minutes of casting her baited hook into the small pond, Betty had a bite. I'll remember that familiar smile like hundreds of other times when she would catch the first fish on our other outings.

"How many fish have you caught today?" she asked, already knowing the answer.

After catching a few more, she said, "These fish are kind of small compared to what I usually catch." At 97, she still had the wise-cracking sense of humor that her family and friends had come to love back in West Allis when she worked at Allis-Chalmers and then raised a family in the same house where she and dad spent their honeymoon in 1950. She said dad was the wise guy, like when they were first introduced at A-C and she asked, "How do you do?" and he answered, "How do I do what?" Betty would tell the grandkids and great grandchildren two things:

"I got even with him; I married him;" and

"I thought at the time that it would be a cold day before I would marry Joe LaBarbera, such a wise guy." They married on a cold day in December.

Betty was born on January 4, 1927, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Stephen and Marvelle (Hoffman) Berke. She graduated from West Division High School in

Milwaukee. Betty was united in marriage to Joseph LaBarbera on December 2, 1950, at St. Michael's Church in Milwaukee. He preceded her in death on July 8, 2001. She then dedicated herself to raising four children in a tiny home on 113th Street with no closets, one bathroom with no electrical outlets, and rooms so small you had to go outside just to change your

### Cherish Wisconsin: Tradition and family

By Mark LaBarbera

As the days get longer and the sun begins to melt the ice once and for all on Long Lake in the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest, my 88-year-old mother begins her spring ritual. She tries on her Cabela's rain gear, checks the line on her Zebco rod/reel combo and starts reminiscing about her cherished childhood memories at her favorite place in Ford du Lac County. She smiles as she recalls riding horses with farmer Brown's boys where the state park campground and hiking trails are now. She remembers rowing the wooden boat while trolling for perch and fishing from the old mill dam near where the Milwaukee River is born.

All of us grew up with her stories, and now our children have come to know what Grandma Betty, after more than 80 years on this earth, cherishes most. It's this collection of memories from times spent at a special place with special people.

No matter what kind of outdoors enthusiast you are—hiker or biker, hunter or angler, kayaker or birder, skier or all of the above—Wisconsin provides endless opportunities for each of us to connect with nature in a profound way. These experiences instill in us an appreciation for our state's woods, wildlife and waters, and a commitment to ensuring that the

legacy of enjoying our natural areas continues for generations to come.

The Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund helps cover costs for critical habitat management, including important waters, throughout the state. Setting land aside so it won't be developed is the first step in protecting it, but making sure those lands and waters stay healthy requires careful management, including controlled burns, invasive species control, trail maintenance, and biodiversity projects.

For my part, I give to the Cherish Fund because, in a way, it helps ensure that my mom can continue to look forward to her spring fishing tradition. And because Cherish is a permanent endowment, I know that someday when Grandma Betty and her stories are just happy memories for my own kids, Cherish will still be there, providing the resources to protect the legacy she left behind.

I'm not surprised that hunters and anglers are a generous bunch. We are proud of what this state offers, proud of what may be a family tradition of enjoying time together outdoors, and proud to protect what we cherish most in Wisconsin.

Mark LaBarbera is a member of the Long Lake Fishing Club, founder of the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo and Treasurer of the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin.



Last year's hunting, fishing, sports and conservation patron licenses have just expired and for the next few months, hunters and anglers renewing our licenses have a unique opportunity to help protect the special places we most enjoy. When we buy our licenses and renew our boat, ATV or other registrations, we'll be asked whether we'd like to donate at least \$2 to the Cherish Wisconsin Outdoors Fund. Friends and I have started answering, "Yes, but make it \$4." If you cherish Wisconsin's outdoors and natural resources, I hope you'll do the same.





mind. We didn't think we were poor, but we did eat a lot of fish and game, including roadkill Dad would pick up. I don't mind admitting it. Betty loved spending time at the family cabin at Long Lake, where she enjoyed fishing. Betty lived in that home for over 70 years. She especially loved socializing with her neighbors and friends, like Pam Ziolecki who watched over Betty, doing whatever was needed. Above all, Betty cherished time spent with her family, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is survived by her

children, Mike (Jill) LaBarbera, Eau Claire, WI, Sue (Jerome) Hinderman, Cuba City, WI, Mark (Coni) LaBarbera, Hazel Green, and Joe LaBarbera, St. Augustine, FL; eight grandchildren; and eleven great-grandchildren. She was also preceded in death by her parents; a great step-father Al Gaertner, and two sisters, Joanie Berke and Gloria Berke.

Obituaries can never fully capture the impact that a person has had on so many people in so many ways during

their lifetime. As SCI members know, it's possible that the ripple effect of your life and legacy could be felt for generations to come. We also know that very few of us will live to 97, and we rarely know how much time we will have on this earth to hunt and fish with family and friends. So, let this obituary serve as a reminder for you as writing it has been for me to take every opportunity to spend time outdoors with loved ones, and let them know how you feel about them. I'm glad I did that with mom. Thanks for letting me share this with you. Mark LaBarbera



In lieu of flowers, a Betty's Youth Fishing Fund has been established at OHEC (Outdoor Heritage Education Center nonprofit organization), 2955 Kennedy Rd., Hazel Green, WI 53811.



# Historic First

The first woman to harvest a Wisconsin turkey with an air shotgun is Jessica Braun.

Governor Evers signed the bill this year authorizing air guns for big game as well as turkey. Jessica's father-in-law, Joel Braun, owns Serpent Arms of Juneau, Wisconsin, maker of the air shotgun and a

new air rifle for deer and other big game. By the way, Jessica shot this 22-pound bird in May and it had one-inch spurs and a 10.5-inch beard. Joel shared this other photo of a bobcat that also walked down the same Marquette County trail.



facebook

Jessica Braun  
6h · 🌐

After unexpectedly cutting my morning sit short (sick kid pickup) I didnt think anything would transpire for the rest of the day. I decided to run out for a quick evening sit. I took my Serpent Arms 28 gauge Air Shotgun out for the first time now that Wisconsin has legalized the use of an air shotgun on turkeys. I was able to call two toms in and took this nice 10.5" longbeard.



# Randy's Fan Club

by Mark LaBarbera  
“Five jakes and a tom walk into a field,” Randy Christiansen said. It sounds like the start of a joke.

Punchline: “Only five jakes walked out.”  
No joke. My friend Randy is serious about hunting wild turkeys. And he enjoys mentoring others as much or more than hunting solo.

Throughout the Wisconsin spring turkey hunting season, I watch for regular updates from Randy and the hunters, young and old, who benefit from his skills and generosity. Randy's “fan club” includes new hunters that he recruits, as well as experienced hunters that he reactivates and retains as turkey enthusiasts because he helps them get







their first bird ever or their first bird in many years.

His guests gobble up his tips and expertise from his near daily adventures in the turkey woods and fields near Prairie du Chien. He works at Bass Pro Shops/Cabela's and does seminars there also, as well as at conservation group events, like the annual Grant County Outdoor Sports Alliance's Youth Outdoor Skills Day at Southwest Tech in Fennimore. And when he's not working, hunting, or talking turkey, Randy spends hundreds of hours creating beautiful and functional turkey-related products, from turkey spur necklaces to display mounts that respectfully showcase memories of the hunt.

Here are photos from a few of the recent 2024 spring turkey adventures from Randy and his fan club.



## Mentors: Spread the Word

For SCI members and others who mentored new hunters who bought a Wisconsin turkey license for the first time this year, we hope you had an exciting time hunting in Wisconsin. Although our spring hunting season may have come to an end, it's never too early to start getting ready for the fall. Please encourage your students to join you

for upcoming seasons for other species.

Mark your calendars for the opening of early teal and goose, both opening on Sept. 1, the squirrel and archery deer seasons, opening on Sept. 14 and the first trapping seasons, which open on Oct. 19.

Please help them improve their skills before your next hunt? Suggest

enrolling in any of the DNR's upcoming hunter education programs covering a range of topics, including beginner wing shooting, archery classes, how to hunt public land and more. They learn more, sign up, and check out the DNR's Events Calendar at [DNR.wi.gov](https://publish.illinois.edu/huntrapillinois/). Discover Illinois learn to hunt opportunities at <https://publish.illinois.edu/huntrapillinois/>



**Whitetail Sanctuary Solutions Tip:**

**It's Time to Think About Your Food Plots!**

*by Michael Murphy*

It is almost here, Food Plot planting season! In the Midwest the best time to plant food plots is between August 15th and September 1st (unless planting corn or beans). If you have sandy, rock, or heavy clay soils you should never plant before September 1st to avoid drought, which will affect the germination of the seed.

**Food Plot ABC's to Success!**

- Create Small (6,500 square feet) Internal Food Plots near bedding and Stand locations to be used as an attractant.
- Open up the woods canopies at these locations to allow sunlight to your new internal food plots. Use the material cut down (small logs and limbs) to create high quality bedding areas that will last a very long time.
- Properly preparing your seed bed, understanding your soils PH, controlling weeds, and planting good high-quality seed will make a Huge difference in the production of food plots. (Thick, dense, and great quality vs. thin, weedy and of poor quality.)
- Do a soil test at new food plot sites. Use a freezer bag and take 6 random samples and take a sample from that to send in (this will result in a more accurate soil sample).
- Follow the improvements suggested from your soil test service provider.
- Do not over lime. Most food plot seed grows best in neutral soil,

around 7 PH. Lime raises the soil PH level. If you "over lime" the soil will take the acidic soil (below PH of 7) and raise it to an Alkaline soil (above PH of 7). Most seed is not grown for Alkaline soils, which could affect your germination. Consider liming three months before planting; especially if using Ag Lime because it takes longer to breakdown than pelleted lime does.

- Weed Control: Apply first application of Roundup or similar product six weeks prior to planting. A new food plot location most likely will need two applications of weed control before you plant. Apply the second application of Roundup or similar product a minimum of three weeks prior to planting. This is important to apply this second application at least three weeks prior to planting especially if it is dry. Residual weed killer may remain in the soil past 1-1/2 to 2 weeks if the soil is dry. This will result in poor germination.
- Plant high quality, HIGH PROTEIN Seed to provide a food plot which will build a bigger, stronger deer herd. Read the % protein for each seed.
- Deer need 16-17% protein in food for optimum growth. I recommend 1-1/2 to 2-3/4 times that level for your food plots. This will create a stronger, healthier, bigger & better genetic deer herd.
- A few of my favorites include:
  - Clover (Perennial) 30-35% Protein



- Chicory (Perennial) 44% Protein (Kale/Chicory)
- Winter Greens (Brassicas) 25-36% Protein
- Winter Peas 20-30% Protein
- Oats – Very high sugar content when 6-9 inches tall

➤ Each small internal food plot should be planted with the same five seed mixes. This allows for multiple locations with the same food available. This will prevent deer driving others out of specific site if the same food source is in all locations. This also allows for many options for choosing a stand on a given hunt.

I would be happy to provide an individualized plan of your property to attract and retain trophy bucks on your property! Happy and safe hunting from your SCI fellow member at whitetail-sanctuarysolutions.com



*Let's build your Dream*  
 *Whitetail Sanctuary!*

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## SHOOT FOR ADVENTURE! OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

**SCI Badgerland Annual Sporting Clay Shoot  
August 3, 2024 | Rio Conservation Club - Rio, WI**

### Big Five Gun Raffle

**SCI-Badgerland "Big Five" Raffle**  
Safari Club Inc. - Mukwonago, WI 53149  
Drawing: August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 at 4:30 pm - at Rio Conservation Club

1<sup>st</sup> PRIZE: Browning F-Bolt Max Long Range 6.5 750  
2<sup>nd</sup> PRIZE: Tikka T3X Roughneck 12 GA. Over/Under  
3<sup>rd</sup> PRIZE: Weatherby Game-Speering 12 GA. Over/Under  
4<sup>th</sup> PRIZE: Savage 111 Long Range Turret Mag.  
5<sup>th</sup> PRIZE: CZ-Sharpshooter 12 GA. Case Hardened Slide, Side  
Tickets \$20 each / 3 for \$50 / 5 for \$100  
License #000111229-A-22007

- Sporting Clays Course
- \$35 Entry; \$25 Re-Entry
- Youth: \$20 Entry; \$15 Re-Entry
- Other Fun Shooting Games
- Great Lunch
- Quality Guns To Give Away
- Wine Tasting
- Shooting 9am - 3pm
- Prize Drawings Start at 4pm

**Visit [SCIBadgerland.com](http://SCIBadgerland.com)  
for event & ticket info!**

**For Pre-Registration call  
Joe K. at (608) 566-9534**

**Rio Conservation Club:  
W5950 Gorman Rd., Rio, WI 53960**

