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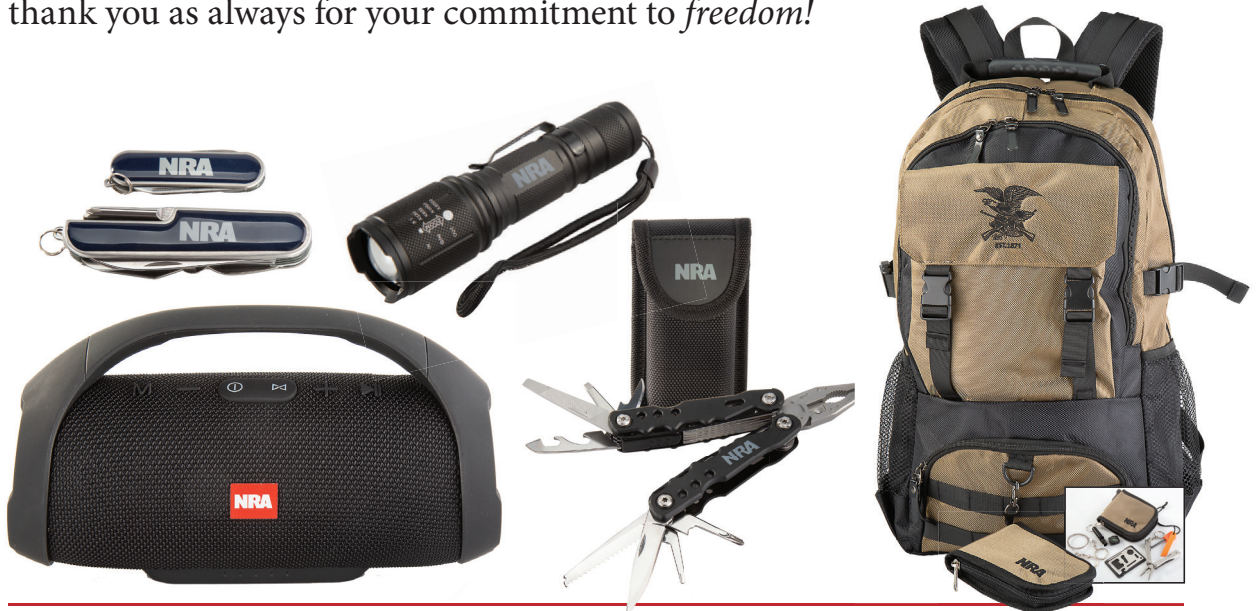
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50 YEARS

NRA Official Journal of the National Rifle Association

March 2023

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ALL SEASON
LONG

RUN-AND-GUN TOMS

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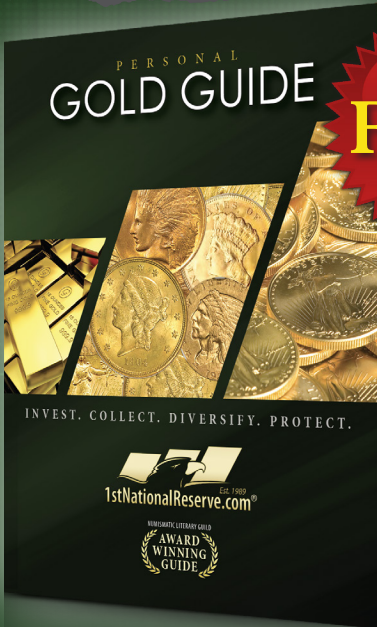
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COVER STORY
RUN-AND-GUN TOMS

They call Minnesota *L'Etoile du Nord*, The Star of the North, and by late spring up there tom turkey libidos have just about run their course. At this point running and gunning pays dividends so long as you don't run out of patience or land to hunt. It's all enough to remind the author that the best tool in a turkey hunter's vest is persistence.

BY BRYCE M. TOWSLEY

36



PHEASANTS WHERE THE COLD WINDS BLOW

In Kansas last fall the author embraced the fervor of pheasant hunting amid runners underfoot, cackles, heart-racing flushes and shouts of, "Hen!" But the winds Dorothy and Toto knew all too well made an upland hunt in the Midwest just a bit disagreeable to a gentleman from the Deep South.

BY TONY KINTON

42



WHY BLACK BEARS GET UNDER MY SKIN

In spring or fall, on the coastal plains or in the Catskills or in the boreal forests of the West, hunters become excited at the sight of a black bear. So it's easy to understand why a 16-year-old in Upstate New York became hooked on hunting them.

BY PHILIP MASSARO

46

**A HUNT AGAINST THE CLOCK
HALFWAY ACROSS THE WORLD**

Almost immediately upon beginning a hunt for bezoar ibex that was years in the making, the author and her husband were disappointed to learn global animal-rights extremists had won a court battle to close hunting in Turkey. With mere days to find and tag trophies before their dream hunt ended, the duo learned just how important our NRA is in the fight against anti-hunters.

BY KAREN MEHALL PHILLIPS

52



SPECIAL REPORT

**THE CDC ISN'T ABOUT SCIENCE—
IT'S ABOUT GUN CONTROL**

Rochelle Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told CNN in 2021 that the supposed public-health agency would increase its focus on violence committed with firearms. The truth is the CDC has been a fundamentally anti-gun institution for decades. Against this bias, your NRA-ILA continues to work with pro-gun lawmakers in our decades-long fight against gun-control advocacy and scientific censorship.

BY JASON OUIMET

18

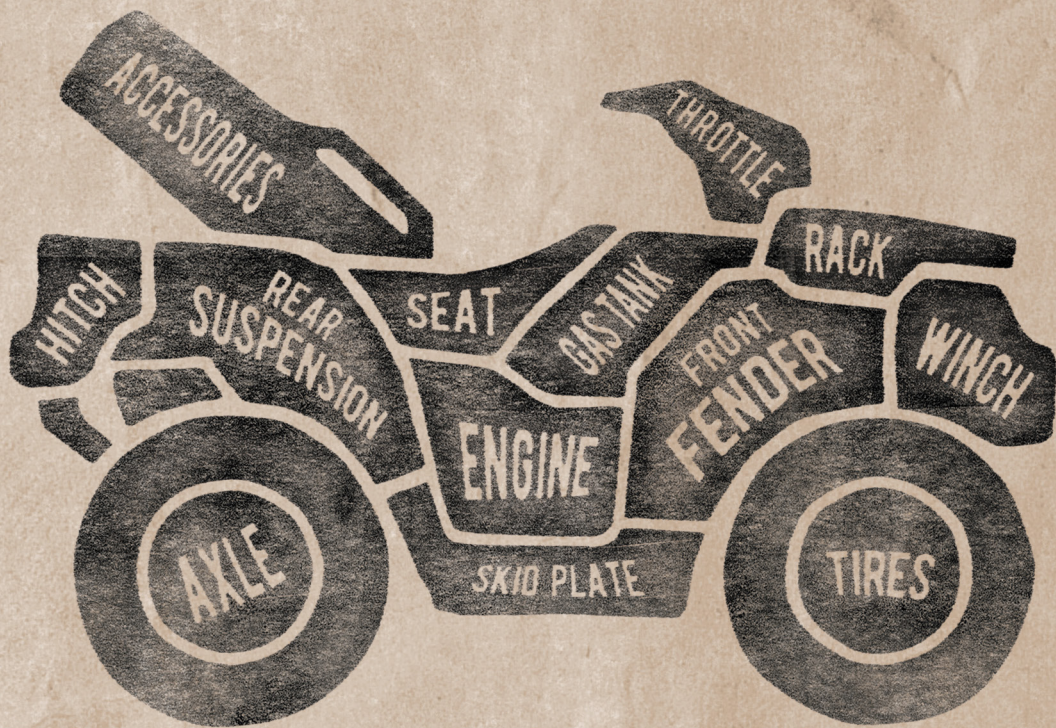
The NRA, the foremost guardian of the traditional American right to "Keep and Bear Arms," believes every law-abiding citizen is entitled to the ownership and legal use of firearms, and that every reputable gun owner should be a member of the NRA.

Wayne R. LaPierre, Executive Vice President

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FIRST LIGHT

ANTI-GUN OREGON MEASURE 114 ON HOLD ... FOR NOW

A ballot initiative passed in Oregon last year had gun owners worried about their inability to purchase firearms this year. Then, amid an NRA-backed lawsuit, an Oregon Supreme Court ruling upheld a lower court decision putting the measure on hold. Now Oregon gun owners hope the injunction becomes a permanent win, but the battle is not over.

BY MARK CHESNUT, NRAHLF.ORG

22

JOIN THE HUNT

THESE YOUNG HUNTERS SHOW US HOW IT'S DONE

The Boone & Crockett Club's Generation Next Youth Awards, amid the organization's 31st Big Game Awards, included a remarkable 132 great animals entered. Among the black bears, pronghorns, mountain goats and mule deer were eight typical and eight non-typical whitetails taken in nine different states.

BY CRAIG BODDINGTON

26

KNOW-HOW

PICK A SNOW GOOSE GUIDE

The spring snow goose migration is a sight to behold. If you're in the right spot you may see flocks drop from the skies by the hundreds and even thousands. But finding that spot is time-consuming, which is why many hunters hire outfitters. Here's how to vet them so you get the most bang for your buck.

BY JOE GENZEL

28

TURKEY SEASON PLAYBOOK FOR THE LONG GAME

Turkey seasons are generally long enough to offer hunters a glimpse of the birds' evolving habits throughout spring. The trick is to change tactics as the mood of the birds changes, so you can hunt long into spring.

BY MARK KAYSER

30

BUILD A BETTER ARROW

Like bullets, not all arrows are created equal. The best arrow build will allow you to be more accurate in the woods next fall.

BY JACE BAUSERMAN

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The items and information offered or detailed in this publication are intended for, and directed and offered to, only those at least 18 years of age or older and who are in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.



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Now, there are abalone pendants in sterling silver fetching in excess of \$1,000. But who wants that price tag in their future when our *Abalone Butterfly Effect Pendant* will bring just as much joy without the buyer's remorse. In fact, chances are good that giving her this pendant will change your life for the better, creating a romantic chain reaction beginning the minute she opens the box.

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AMERICA UNDER ATTACK

EXPOSED: The Left's Plan to Destroy Democracy and Install a Socialist Regime

America's next presidential election could be her last. Democracy as we know it obliterated at the hands of Democrats who pose a deadly threat to our freedom. If you think you already know everything Biden, Pelosi, Schumer, and their cronies have done to drive a stake into the heart of America . . . you don't know half of it. Now one man reveals the left's horrifying plan to turn America into a socialist nation.

What he discovered will rock you to the core. In an attempt to save America from their deadly clutches, he's revealing it all in his latest blockbuster release, *The Final Battle: The Next Election Could Be the Last*.

Will America Be the Next Great Nation to Crumble?

New York Times bestselling author David Horowitz, author of *Dark Agenda: The War to Destroy Christian America*, exposes the left's sinister strategies to achieve their anti-American goals — from using racism, white supremacy, cancel culture, critical race theory, the FBI, voting processes, our children's schools, and more as their weapons of mass destruction.

Horowitz exposes the outrages already committed — and those yet to come. In *The Final Battle*, you'll discover . . .

- **How Democrats have dubbed the mere act of challenging a vote as treason. Their skewed viewpoint is revealed. Page 13**
- **The TRUTH about the "Stop the Steal" rally — shocking facts you haven't seen anywhere else. Page 17**
- **Biden's Department of Education bribed schools to continue to push an anti-American curriculum and racism. Page 52**



DAVID HOROWITZ is a noted conservative commentator and *New York Times* bestselling author. He is the founder of the David Horowitz Freedom Center in Los Angeles. His center focuses on restoring America's popular culture consistent with our traditions and values.

Critics Call *The Final Battle* 'Devastating' to the Democratic Party

"David Horowitz exposes the outrages perpetrated by the Biden administration and the Democratic left."

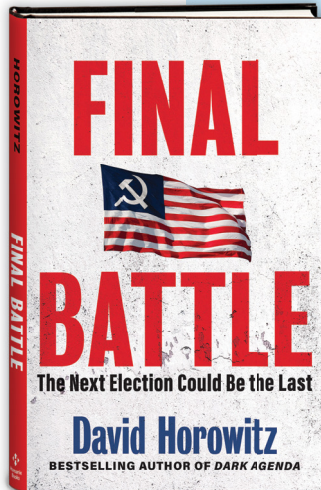
— **Dinesh D'Souza**, *New York Times* Bestselling Author

"The most devastating indictment of the Democratic Party that has yet appeared, and an ominous warning about what the future may hold."

— **Peter Schweizer**, *New York Times* Bestselling Author

"*Final Battle* may be the most devastating book-length indictment of the Democratic Party yet written. This is nothing less than a handbook for the salvation of the United States of America."

— **Dennis Prager**, Radio Talk Show Host



- **Illegals and crime: numbers that'll make you want to barricade your doors. Page 69**
- **How Biden and his band of fools are using the military to change the electoral map in violation of our laws. Page 85**
- **Why demonizing police officers is so critical to the Democrat agenda. Page 108**
- **"Tax cuts for American workers and families" — no such thing. Page 149**
- **Why the "Equality Act" is nothing more than a cover for totalitarianism. Page 157**
- **How virtual learning exposed the critical race theory horrors taking place in**

American schools today. Page 193

- **The secret memorandum that could have innocent parents arrested for federal crimes. Page 197**
- **Proof the Democratic Party is on a mission to dismantle America's political system. Page 203**

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Another One Joins the Hunt!

I believe it was in the September 2021 issue of *American Hunter's* "Says You" column when you published my letter regarding "blood rituals." In it I mentioned my two daughters being blooded with their first harvest of a whitetail deer. Then there were my five grandsons following suit with their first harvest and the youngest, waiting impatiently for his turn! Well this year in the Pennsylvania mentored youth season my youngest grandson followed in his brothers' footsteps. He harvested his first whitetail doe hunting with his father and was proudly marked with its blood. They are all still enthusiastic hunters. Expose the very young to America's great outdoor adventures before other distractions are allowed to take its place. After all, it is "in the blood."

Glenn Miller, Bethel, Pa.

Mr. Miller, your letter drove me to some searching. In fact it was not September 2021 but November 2020 when we published your letter about your two daughters and your six grandsons and their young hunting careers. Now more than two years later, it's valuable to us all to read again the words of wisdom you pass down to each of your grandsons: "I explain to each boy that this animal that was just harvested was born on this land, it lived here freer than he ever could, the land provided for the deer's needs, and now the meat from this deer will help provide for his family. Such is part of the facts of life."

Congratulations on raising a family of hunters. Ours is a pastime as old as humankind. It's heartwarming to see a 21st century family perpetuate the tradition.—JSO

TREESTAND FALL SURVIVOR

Thank you for the article on treestand falls ("Treestand Falls: Do They Require Formal Investigations," "First Light," October '22). I am a survivor of a fall while tending a stand on what I call COVID day, March 15, 2020. I had a full-body harness and will never know what actually failed as the "alarm bells" came on very quickly. My strap on the tree just unravelled in slow motion. After impact my safety straps were twisted around me and I could not move. Thankfully I was close enough to my house and my wife was outside. She saved my life and untangled me only to discover I could not move from the waist down. She got the EMTs on site in no time, and somehow after receiving pain shots, they put me on a board and I got the feeling of pain back!

I had three surgeries and received 5 pounds of metal in my legs. Recovery took 13 weeks in a bed and a lot of time in therapy while progressing from a wheelchair to a scooter, and then to crutches and eventually walking again. We have spent countless hours trying to understand what went wrong and have come to understand that I am perhaps still here as an example to pass along safety awareness.

In my opinion, the two most risky times in a stand are when you are setting them up and taking them down. I am forever blessed to still be a husband and father who is also still hunting. Now when hunting, I just work on my "ground game," including elk hunting again in Colorado! The lessons I learned and would like to pass along are: take advantage of every safety-related precaution there is; never get in a hurry; and never, ever work on a treestand alone. Had my accident been investigated, perhaps there would be a different view for something to learn.

Tom Burrell, Coloma, Mich.

LOOK AT THAT!

Thanks for your great magazine; really enjoy all the articles. I hope to see an answer in the letter section regarding a photo in the November 2022 issue, p. 43 ("The Buck Pole," November '22). The image shows a deer fawn in an upright, lifelike position, in the lower lefthand corner. Can anyone explain?

Teresa Clayton, via email

Ms. Clayton, we saw the fawn in the photo; don't have an answer for you. I suppose it became habituated to the humans. I have seen such a thing many times, whether it is deer, bears or smaller critters.—JSO



Mr. Miller's letter from Pennsylvania is motivating. It is January as I write this and winter in Virginia and, though this may be the March issue, I realize turkey season is months away. So I am left to reminisce on my hunts in 2022. It was a great year, and, frankly, even if I hunt only one deer in 2023, it will also be a great year. That's because I am blessed to be an American hunter.

No other country in the world is home to so many hunters. South Africa, England and New Zealand are all home to many fervent hunters; France supports a thriving hunting economy; and Finland supports the highest number of hunters per capita of any European nation. But none of them match our numbers.

American hunters thrive because the American experiment endures, warts and all. Our Constitution enumerates our right to keep and bear arms. It's true the Second Amendment is not about hunting; it's about the God-given right to self-defense. But it's also true, I think, that without the Second Amendment there would be no American hunting.

Remember this over the next two years as we await the next presidential election. Remember our fellow hunters in any of the nations mentioned above do not live under the U.S. Constitution; their ability to own guns or to hunt is threatened via fiat all the time. Then in two years vote your guns and vote your hunting license. Anything less is, in my view, kicking yourself, your progenitors and your successors in the teeth.

J. Scott Olmsted
Editor in Chief

The editors welcome your letters. Mail them to:
Says You, American Hunter, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400.
Or email us at americanhunter@nrahq.org. Letters may be edited for the sake of brevity.

NRA HUNTER'S CODE OF ETHICS **1.** I will consider myself an invited guest of the landowner, seeking his permission, and so conducting myself that I may be welcome in the future. **2.** I will obey the rules of safe gun handling, and will courteously but firmly insist that others who hunt with me do the same. **3.** I will obey all game laws and regulations and will insist that my companions do likewise. **4.** I will do my best to acquire those marksmanship skills which ensure clean, sportsmanlike kills. **5.** I will support conservation efforts which can ensure good hunting for future generations of Americans. **6.** I will pass along to younger hunters the attitudes and skills essential to a true outdoor sportsman.

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In the blockbuster film, when a strapping Australian crocodile hunter and a lovely American journalist were getting robbed at knife point by a couple of young thugs in New York, the tough Aussie pulls out his dagger and says "That's not a knife, THIS is a knife!" Of course, the thugs scattered and he continued on to win the reporter's heart.

Our Aussie friend would approve of our rendition of his "knife." Forged of high grade 420 surgical stainless steel, this knife is an impressive 16" from pommel to point. And, the blade is full tang, meaning it runs the entirety of the knife, even though part of it is under wraps in the natural bone and wood handle.

Secured in a tooled leather sheath, this is one impressive knife, with an equally impressive price.

This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

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"This knife is beautiful!"

— J., La Crescent, MN



"The feel of this knife is unbelievable...this is an incredibly fine instrument."

— H., Arvada, CO



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Studies indicate that firearms are used more than 2 million times a year for personal protection, and that the presence of a firearm, without a shot being fired, prevents crime in many instances. Shooting usually can be justified only where crime constitutes an immediate, imminent threat to life, limb, or, in some cases, property. Anyone is free to quote or reproduce these accounts.

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On the evening of Jan. 3, authorities were called to a residence in Merced, Calif., responding to reports of an assault. A homeowner found a man sitting in a vehicle that was stuck in the mud on his property. The property owner tried to help the stranded driver get unstuck, when suddenly the stranger became angry and grabbed an axe from the trunk of his vehicle. According to officials with the sheriff's office, the driver allegedly began swinging the axe in a threatening way and the property owner, who is a concealed-carry permit holder, shot the axe-wielding man in self-defense. Upon arrival, deputies assisted the assailant, who had a non-life-threatening gunshot wound, until the paramedics arrived. (yourcentralvalley.com, Fresno, Calif., 1/3/23)

On Dec. 13, 2022, in Eastpointe, Mich., an unreported number of suspects allegedly approached the driver of a Dodge Charger Hellcat and attempted a carjacking, whereupon a shootout occurred between the assailants and the Hellcat's driver, who was a concealed-pistol license holder. One of the suspects—a 27-year-old man—was wounded before driving away in a stolen Chevy Impala. He later showed up at a local hospital with a gunshot wound to the leg, but left before authorities could arrive. Police officers and special investigators were able to track the stolen Impala to a home, where they then witnessed the suspect driving it away. Authorities were able to arrest the suspect without incident. During the execution of a search warrant, authorities found evidence of the attempted carjacking inside the stolen vehicle. The suspect was taken into custody and charged with assault with intent to murder and felony firearm possession, with a bond set at \$750,000 with GPS monitoring. (foxnews.com, New York, N.Y., 12/18/22)

A suburb in Vancouver, Wash., which was usually considered safe, turned into a crime scene on the night of Dec. 15, 2022, when a man broke into a second-story window and got into a confrontation with the homeowner. The homeowner, however, was able to defend himself, shooting the intruder, who was later pronounced dead at the scene. During an investigation, police spoke with a neighbor who said the same man allegedly tried to unsuccessfully gain access to her home prior to this incident. He had tried repeatedly to break in through her door, but when she opened it, he claimed he thought his mother lived there, and then tried again to enter. She was able to close and lock the door, however, and the man apparently then turned his attention to the neighboring residence. No charges have been filed against

the homeowner who defended himself against the intruder. (foxnews.com, New York, N.Y., 12/15/22)

The day after Christmas 2022, a tow-truck driver in Detroit, Mich., was targeted by an armed robber. At around 9:30 in the morning, the armed suspect approached the driver, attempting to rob him. The driver had his own firearm, however, and he shot the assailant, resulting in his death. Reports were unable to indicate whether this armed citizen's company supported his self-defense, but the owner of another tow-truck company indicated that this incident highlights the problem of many in the industry not allowing their drivers to be armed due to concerns with insurance. (wxyz.com, Detroit, Mich., 12/26/22)

An evening of bingo in Pensacola, Fla., took a strange twist on Jan. 4. Two women attempted to walk up to the doors of the bingo hall, seeking jumper cables to help start one of their vehicles. The women noticed a man and woman standing outside of the business and asked them about jumper cables. The couple responded negatively, and when the victims tried to go around the couple to enter the building, the woman who'd been standing outside attacked one of them. At this point, the man drew a handgun and allegedly hit one of the women on the left side of the head. He then reportedly pointed the firearm at the women and started firing in their direction as they were trying to run away. One of the victims ran back to her vehicle and left the scene. The other woman was able to run into the building. When the assailant attempted to follow her into the bingo hall, however, two armed citizens were able to stop his attack and hold him at gunpoint until deputies arrived. The suspect was booked and held on a \$156,000 bond. (wkrg.com, Pensacola, Fla., 1/4/23) *ah*



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CDC: The Centers For Disinformation And Censorship



By Wayne LaPierre
Executive Vice President

NRA members have long known that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been on a multi-decade mission to paint gun ownership as a “disease” that needs to be eradicated from American life.

I remember back in the ‘90s when Mark Rosenberg, director of the CDC’s National Center for Injury Prevention, was quoted in *The Washington Post*: “We need to revolutionize the way we look at guns, like what we did with cigarettes. It used to be that smoking was a glamour symbol—cool, sexy, macho. Now it is dirty, deadly—and banned.”

We know the CDC is little more than a propaganda mouthpiece working hand-in-hand with anti-gun activists.

The CDC recently deleted a reference to a study it had commissioned that showed Americans used firearms up to 2.5 million times a year to defend themselves and their loved ones from criminal attacks.

Why? Because anti-gun activists told them to, according to email correspondence that has now been made public.

“[T]hat 2.5 million number needs to be killed, buried, dug up, killed again and buried again,” anti-gun zealot Mark Bryant of the so-called Gun Violence Archive wrote to the CDC. Bryant went on to complain how this inconvenient truth was used by pro-Second Amendment advocates and elected officials to fight back against unconstitutional restrictions on gun ownership.

This unseemly (at best) partnership between a federal agency that is supposed to conduct unbiased research into public-health issues and anti-gun activists evidently started in late 2021, when President Joe Biden’s White House and Illinois Senator Dick Durbin’s office put the two in touch.

“We are planning to update the fact sheet in early 2022 after the release of some new data,” Beth Reimels, associate director for Policy, Partnerships and Strategic Communication at the CDC’s Division of Violence Prevention, said in an email to the activists. “We will also make some edits to the content we discussed that I think will address the concerns you and other partners have raised.”

Gary Kleck, professor emeritus at Florida State University’s College of Criminology and Criminal Justice and author of the defensive firearm-use study, told multiple outlets, “CDC is just aligning itself with the gun-control advocacy groups. It’s just saying: ‘We are their

tool, and we will do their bidding.’ And that’s not what a government agency should do.”

All of this on its face shows us that the CDC—which is supposed to be a clearinghouse for factual, scientific research—is anything but that. Furthermore, it lays bare what we NRA members have always known: The arguments in favor of gun bans and gun control are so flawed and fragile they can’t withstand the light of truth.

And that truth is simple: Firearms in the hands of law-abiding Americans save millions of lives every year. They prevent countless rapes, armed robberies, muggings and murders. That is a fact. And no matter how much the CDC, gun-ban politicians, the media and all of their enablers try to censor that fact, the National Rifle Association will continue to get the truth out far and wide.

That’s why every month, and for decades now, NRA publishes the real-life stories of armed citizens in the pages of this magazine. These stories rarely make it beyond the back pages of local town papers. We publish them on our social-media pages and on our website, and we inject them into the national conversation despite the continuing efforts of the gun-control lobby to cover them up.

Armed citizens like Shay Lindberg, who used her lawfully carried firearm to stop a criminal monster from abducting her child earlier this year. According to the police sergeant on the scene: “It certainly looks like the big turning point here, the pivotal piece to keeping her child safe, was the fact that she was lawfully armed with a handgun, and she produced it and told them ‘let go of my kid.’”

Stories like the one from Gilmer County, Ga., just a couple of months ago—when an armed thug tried to rob a convenience store, but was thwarted by not one, not two, but three lawfully armed customers on the scene. These brave armed citizens stopped a potentially deadly crime, and helped the police take another menace to society off the streets.

As NRA members, you and I are constantly facing off against anti-gun forces that have more money, more power and more media organs at their disposal. But never forget that we have the most powerful weapon of all: Truth. And, as long there is a strong National Rifle Association of America, the truth will never die.



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The Miracle of Hemp in a Pill?

New hemp technology is 450% better for discomfort relief than regular hemp oil

Americans are rejoicing about a brand-new technology that gets the goods on the health benefits of hemp.

A next generation hemp technology is now available across the nation and can be purchased without a prescription.

And the best part, it comes with a new delivery system that's 450% more absorbable than oil.

So you can say good-bye to pills, oils and creams.

Canna LS contains pure "full spectrum hemp," which works to relieve joint discomfort, restore sharp memory, and support a healthy normal inflammatory response, to name a few. And since it has no THC, it heals without the "high."

Exciting new scientific research shows that hemp contains special molecules called cannabinoids which bind to receptor sites in the brain and body. When taken orally, hemp activates these receptors.

Why This New Technology Is Better Than Hemp

Unfortunately, most hemp found on the market can't deliver a fraction of these results. "The problem is, most hemp formulas come in oil form," according to Chief Technologist Mi Hwa Kim of The Green Gardener. "Oil doesn't breach the cell membrane, which is where the real healing happens. Our body is 80% water, our cells 90%. And you know what they say about oil and water — they don't mix."

This is why **Canna LS** contains a unique "water soluble" system. The technology is shown to improve absorption

in the cells by 450%, quickly boosting the body's cannabinoid levels.

"The other problem is that most of these formulas only contain a single compound extract," says Ms. Kim. "Hemp's full spectrum of cannabinoids are shown to work synergistically. In short, they work better together. It's called the "entourage effect." Most miss out on the full effects because they are missing some of the best rejuvenating compounds within the hemp plant. This is why we've made **Canna LS** with "full spectrum" hemp." "Finally, most hemp formulas are made on foreign farms with pesticides, or grown using non-organic seeds and processes. We've grown the hemp in **Canna LS** at a 100% organic American farm, under strict agricultural guidelines. It's grown without pesticides or GMOs. And it's grown to contain no THC."

How It Works

The key to hemp's health benefits is the Endocannabinoid System, a network of receptors in the cells. The system is there to maintain homeostasis (balance). In response to toxins in our body, it releases cannabinoids to set things back to their natural state.

"It's really an amazing God-given system that's been completely over-looked," says Ms. Kim. "Our bodies are practically designed to work with the compounds in hemp, which is why we needed a technology like **Canna LS** that unleashes its full potential."

Over time, with aging, the endocannabinoid system

eventually burns out. Fewer cannabinoids are released, so the body's levels deplete. The result is, all sorts of symptoms of aging like age-related memory loss, blurry vision, joint discomfort, and much more.

"This is why there's almost nothing hemp can't do and no health concern it can't address," says Mi Hwa. "The trouble is, most hemp formulas are just not absorbable enough for the cell, so they fail to activate the endocannabinoid system. This is why they don't deliver anything close to the full range of potential results."

Fortunately, **Canna LS** is clinically shown to enter the cell membrane 450% more powerfully. This is how it boosts cannabinoid levels fast, helping to relieve joint discomfort... re-store foggy memory... and support healthy blood sugar. And what most people really love is that the "pearl" gel is easier to take than taking a pill or oil.

Not Yet Sold In Stores

Full-spectrum hemp, like **Canna LS**, is available nationwide. However, several major pharmaceutical companies are currently testing hemp in clinical settings, which means it may require a prescription in the future. It's advised to get **Canna LS** while you can.

Taking All The Risk Off Consumers

A large percentage of men and women using **Canna LS** experience truly amazing results. That's why it's now being sold with a guarantee that goes way beyond the industry standard. "We can only make this guarantee because



we are 100% certain our customers will be satisfied," says Ms. Kim. We want to take full risk off consumers. So in addition to offering substantial discounts for first-time customers, we also make them a huge promise that ensures they don't have to risk a cent."

Here's how it works: Take **Canna LS** exactly as directed, and you must be thrilled with the results! Otherwise, simply return the bottles and any unused portion within 90 days of purchase.

Where To Find Canna LS

To secure the hot, new **Canna LS** formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-877-703-4818** TODAY. "It's not available in retail stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer." Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Canna LS**, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back."

Call NOW at **1-877-703-4818** to secure your supply of **Canna LS**. Use Promo Code **AMHUCA223** when you call. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered!



By Charles L. Cotton
President

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The Groundwork Is Done— Now It's Up To Us

Before I get into the subject matter of this article, let me note that I have been a lifelong gun collector, competitive shooter and hunter. I love informal shooting—what many of us call “plinking.” I've also been a firearms instructor for more than 40 years, and I enjoy introducing others to the shooting sports. I hope I'm able to use firearms for sporting purposes for many years to come. That said, the highest and best use of a firearm is the preservation of innocent life. That is the focus of this article.

In January, I wrote an article titled “*Bruen*: A Sea-Change Moment.” That article discussed the impact that the Supreme Court case titled *NYSRPA v. Bruen* (decided in June 2022) had on Americans' right to carry self-defense firearms outside their homes. The article also included a brief, high-level discussion of just some of the long-term work that went into making *Bruen* possible.

The NRA has worked for decades to get us back to what the Founding Fathers intended when they drafted the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The *Bruen* decision has taken us very close to that position with its requirement that all gun laws be evaluated in light of what Congress considered appropriate and widespread in 1791. And numerous laws and regulations have already been struck down by state and federal courts since the *Bruen* decision was handed down! Many more cases have been filed and are working their way through the courts. Some states, however, are trying to ignore *Bruen*, just as they did *Heller* and *McDonald* for more than a decade, but the SCOTUS has changed since 2008. No longer can states thumb their noses at the highest court in the land, as they are now learning.

However, while firearm laws are changing, this will not immediately change the threats of crime and violence that Americans are facing, and it is now up to us to do our part. Law-abiding Americans must make use of the Second Amendment and prepare for the day we all pray will never come. Otherwise, all that has been accomplished in the courts and in our legislatures will be relegated to little more than an academic discussion. The NRA's efforts—your efforts—were never intended to be just a legal/legislative chess game for our intellectual amusement.

Violent crime in the United States is escalating due in large part to left-leaning judges and prosecutors being unwilling to do their jobs and put criminals behind bars.

Personal-recognition bonds once unheard of in crimes of violence are now commonplace. People charged with murder, rape, armed robbery and other heinous crimes are released on these “PR bonds” without paying a dime. Not surprisingly, many commit further crimes of violence before the courts get around to finally bringing them to trial.

All of us must take every reasonable step to avoid becoming a victim. One very helpful course is the NRA's Refuse to Be a Victim program. This is a non-shooting class that gives practical and useful suggestions that help us avoid being a target for violent criminals. Even without taking this course, we all know many common-sense efforts that can reduce the likelihood of us becoming a victim.

Despite our best efforts, however, it's not always possible to avoid violent criminals. That's where the Second Amendment has a direct impact on the daily lives of Americans. Every person who can legally carry a self-defense handgun should do so. Obviously, you need to comply with the laws of your state, which means getting a license to carry a handgun if required. Whether or not a license is required, be sure to learn your state's laws concerning: 1) where you are not permitted to carry your handgun; 2) use of force in self-defense, defense of others and defense of property; and 3) how to interact with law enforcement, etc. If you are not familiar with firearms, then get training from an NRA Certified Instructor! Training certainly includes the safe and efficient handling of firearms, but it's much more. For example, you should also learn how to secure your self-defense handgun from people who should not have access. With Second Amendment freedom comes a duty to be a safe and responsible firearm owner.

Let me suggest an easy analysis you can conduct that, hopefully, will encourage you to take action to protect yourself and your loved ones. Every time you watch the news or hear of someone being killed or brutalized by a violent criminal, ask yourself this question: “Would the victim be alive today if he/she had a self-defense handgun, had it readily available and was proficient in its use?” In many cases, the answer is yes. At the very minimum, they would have had a fighting chance. *Bruen* did the groundwork—now it's up to us to act.

American Men Rejoice as They Rediscover Their Freedom With a New Prostate Pill that Relieves the “Urge to Go”

- Improve prostate function by an incredible 92%
- Support the complete emptying of your bladder by 51%
- Reduce night-time trips to the bathroom by 54%
- Increase your “stream power” (that starts fast and goes for a long time) by 241%

Personal freedom and independence is the ultimate symbol of a man's confidence and “can do” spirit. Yet for many guys, frequent urination, a constant “urge to go” and a bladder that's never quite empty, prevent them from making plans and achieving their goals.

But thousands of men nationwide are now reporting they found relief from these occasional problems thanks to a major breakthrough in nutrient technology.

Prosta-Vive LS is the new prostate pill sweeping the nation. Men say they feel they're now having strong, complete, effortless urine flow they enjoyed in their 20s and 30s.

The key to its success is a new nutrient technology that makes the key ingredient 1000% more absorbable, according to a study by endocrinologists at Washington University in St. Louis.

Nick Summers is the spokesman for Primal Force Inc., the firm in Royal Palm Beach, Fla. that makes **Prosta-Vive LS**. He reports demand is surging due to word-of-mouth and social-media.

“We knew **Prosta-Vive** really worked to ‘support healthy, stronger urine flow,’ Summers stated. “But no one could have predicted the tens of thousands of men looking for a truly supportive prostate pill.”

NEW PROSTATE FORMULA DRAWS 5-STAR REVIEWS

It's not the first time Dr. Al Sears, the Florida-based MD who designed the breakthrough formula, has shaken up the status quo in men's health.

A nationally recognized men's health pioneer and the founder of the Sears Institute for Anti-Aging Medicine in Royal Palm Beach, Fla., Dr. Sears has been featured on ABC, CNN, and ESPN.

He's authored more than 500 books, reports, and scientific articles, many focusing on prostate issues that may affect virtually all men sooner or later.

“By age 60, I find about half of my male patients feel the need for prostate support,” Dr. Sears

explains. “By the time they reach age 80, it's over 90 percent.”

Prosta-Vive LS has reportedly made a life-changing difference for these men. One appreciative thank-you letter came from Jim R, a patient.

“I had immediate results,” Jim R. wrote in his thank-you note. “I slept through the night without going to the bathroom.”

“Last night was the most amazing of all,” he added. “I slept for 10 hours without going to the toilet.”

Results like these explain the flood of phone calls the company's customer service department is handling from men who want to know how the new formula works...

PROSTATE PILL BACKED BY CLINICAL RESULTS

Prosta-Vive LS's extraordinary success is being attributed to advanced innovations in nutrient technology.

Most prostate pills rely on either outdated saw palmetto ... or the prostate-soothing compound Beta-Sitosterol.

But Dr. Sears cites growing evidence that saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol work much better together than either does on its own.

In fact, a recent clinical trial involving 66 men taking a combination of saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol reported “significant” improvement across the board.

Among the results: Fewer of those occasional late-night wake ups, a stronger stream, less starting and stopping, and complete emptying of the bladder.

That's why **Prosta-Vive LS** includes both saw palmetto and Beta-Sitosterol, to ensure men get the extra prostate support they need. Frustrated men say it's giving them tremendous support.

But there's another key reason **Prosta-Vive LS** is helping men get back control in the bathroom.

YOUR PROSTATE IS HUNGRY FOR HEALTHY FAT

The other key innovation in

Prosta-Vive LS is its addition of healthy omega-3 fatty acids.

“It turns out what's good for your heart is also good for your prostate,” says Dr. Sears. “That's why I put heart-healthy omega-3s in a prostate pill.”

Researchers have long known Beta-Sitosterol has a great potential to support healthy prostate function.

But Beta-Sitosterols are “hydrophobic” -- they don't mix well with water. And that can make them much harder for the body to absorb.

That's where long-chain omega-3s come in. The latest research shows they boost Beta-Sitosterol absorption by 1000%.

Dr. Sears explains, “Most people only get trace amounts of Beta-Sitosterol because it can be hard to absorb. In this respect, the long-chain fatty acids in **Prosta-Vive LS** are a real game-changer. They supercharge the absorption.”

This improved absorption is proving to be a revolutionary advance. **Prosta-Vive LS** is changing men's lives, quickly becoming the No. 1 support supplement for supporting men's prostate health nationwide.

Now, grateful men are calling almost every day to thank **Prosta-Vive LS** for supporting a renewed sense of empowerment over their own lives.

One patient, Ari L., wrote, “I used to get up on occasion at night to go to the bathroom. Now I only get up once... and I feel it has supported my prostate, keeping my PSA levels in the normal range.”

Patients report they have more energy, sleep better, and no longer feel embarrassed by that occasional sudden need to use the restroom.

Thanks to **Prosta-Vive LS**, thousands of men feel more confident about their urinary health and are no longer being held hostage to pee problems and feel more confident about their urinary health.

They say they're getting great sleep and finally feel back in charge of their own lives.



FAST-ACTING PROSTATE RELIEF: New prostate pill relieves all four of the most troublesome prostate concerns, including “stream power” and night-time trips to the bathroom.

HOW TO GET PROSTA-VIVE LS

Right now, the only way to get this powerful, unique nutrient technology that effectively relieves the urge to go is with Dr. Sears' breakthrough **Prosta-Vive** formula.

To secure a supply of **Prosta-Vive**, men need to contact the Sears Health Hotline directly at **1-800-347-3580**.

“It's not available in retail stores yet,” says Dr. Sears. “The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer and we're racing to keep up with demand.”

Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Prosta-Vive's** effectiveness that all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. “Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you your money back,” he says.

Given the intense recent demand, the Hotline will only be taking orders for the next 48 hours. After that, the phone number may be shut down to allow for restocking. If you are not able to get through due to extremely high call volume, please try again!

Call **1-800-347-3580** NOW to secure your limited supply of **Prosta-Vive** at a significant discount. To take advantage of this exclusive offer use Promo Code: **AMHUPV223** when you call.

Canada Illustrates The Reality Of The Gun-Control Agenda



By Jason Ouimet
Executive Director,
NRA-ILA

YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE NOT ENOUGH.

If you want to **DEFEND** your right to own and carry a firearm ...

If your **FREEDOM** to hunt and shoot is important to you ...

Then you need to **SUPPORT** the NRA Institute for Legislative Action.

We are the only arm of NRA specifically charged with defending your Second Amendment freedoms on Capitol Hill, and in state legislatures and courtrooms across America.

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Learning from one's own misfortunes is smart, but it's wiser to learn from—and avoid—the misfortunes of others. For American Second Amendment supporters, the Canadian experience provides a chilling and instructive lesson in what gun controllers really want: the end of civilian firearm ownership.

For many Americans, Canada is as familiar and relatable as neighboring states of the Union. Canada and the U.S. share a border, a common language, cultural touchstones and various commercial and sporting pursuits.

That last category includes a shared love of the outdoors, and especially of hunting and trapping. As with America, much of Canada's expansive wilderness was settled by hardy hunters and trappers who braved the country's wild frontiers in search of fortune and adventure. The gun is an inseparable part of both national stories.

But America and Canada also share a similar cultural divide when it comes to guns. Guns are a common and uncontroversial facet of life in both countries' rural communities, where they are used not just to harvest wildlife but also to provide a safeguard against predators when police protection is scarce. The politics and culture of firearms in both countries' cities are very different, however. Canadian and American urban elites—who get their meat from grocery stores and restaurants and who take routine police patrols for granted—consider firearms dangerous, unnecessary and counterproductive.

Nor are the elites on either side of the border willing to tolerate these differences. Rather, they blame firearms themselves, and not human agency or the social dynamics they themselves promote, for the criminal misuse of guns. They associate firearms with cultures they do not understand and—let's be honest—consider to be inferior. Firearms are also linked in their minds with infamous crimes. And, having no other reference point for the gun's place in society, they reflexively call for firearm bans in response to these events.

That's the generous explanation. There are also politicians in both countries who use gun control as a tool to subjugate their political opponents, much as King George III did in the American colonies.

Despite the similarities, we can see very different outcomes in the two countries. Canadians have essentially lost the right of armed self-defense, and are frighteningly close to losing the freedom to possess firearms at all. America, meanwhile, has the highest per-capita

gun-ownership rate in the world, with the right to keep and bear arms shielded—at least theoretically—from urban elites.

An article published last December in *The Washington Post* opined that Canada's progressive Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has a "gun-free Canada within his reach." It noted how Trudeau's father, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, "was the first to begin the process of systematically banning entire categories of firearms," with 1969 legislation that allowed the executive branch to declare certain firearms "prohibited." A mass shooting in 1989 was then exploited to further clamp down on legal firearm ownership, prompting a needs-based licensing system that presumptively banned firearm acquisition for self-defense. Justin Trudeau capitalized on another mass killing in 2020 to accelerate the banning of "military-grade assault-style" long guns in Canada under existing law. He then promoted legislation in 2022 that would expand this bogus and misnamed category, coerce surrender of non-conforming guns and institute a "freeze" on handgun ownership. Trudeau later went even further, introducing amendments that would essentially grant the government control to ban what few hunting guns had remained legal.

Unlike Canada and the other commonwealth realms, however, the U.S. liberated itself from Britain's monarchy in the Revolutionary War. This experience led the founding generation to enshrine the right to keep and bear arms in the nation's organizing charter. Like Canada, the U.S. Congress passed major gun control in the 1960s. But this sparked renewed efforts by pro-gun Americans—led by the NRA—to promote responsible firearm ownership and to ensure the original understanding of the Second Amendment was expounded in scholarship and eventually preserved in judicial rulings.

Now, U.S. Supreme Court precedents protect the individual right to keep and bear firearms, in and outside of the home, for the core purpose of defense, and allow only such regulation as is consistent with the founding era's legal history and traditions.

Yet, there are American politicians, like President Joe Biden himself, who see our neighbor to the North's policies not as a warning, but as a roadmap. Only the dedicated and vigilant activism of informed gun owners, channeled through organizations like the NRA, stands in their way.

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By Jason Ouimet
Executive Director,
NRA-ILA



The CDC Isn't About Science — It's About Gun Control

In August 2021, Rochelle Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told CNN that the supposed public-health agency would be increasing its focus on violence committed with firearms. Referencing the agency's approach to the issue, Walensky said, "it's pedal-to-the-metal time." In an attempt to allay legitimate concerns about the agency's new emphasis on guns, the director claimed, "I'm not here about gun control."

Hogwash.

As it turns out, the CDC is "about gun control."

According to emails obtained by internet firearm publication *The Reload*, from 2021-2022, the CDC collaborated with gun-control advocates to suppress scientific research demonstrating the widespread use of firearms for self-defense.

In early 1993, Florida State University professors of criminology Gary Kleck and Marc Gertz sought to measure the prevalence of defensive-gun uses (DGUs). The pair designed the National Self-Defense Survey and polled Americans by telephone on whether they had used a gun for self-defense.

The researchers published their results in an article titled "Armed Resistance to Crime: The Prevalence and Nature of Self-Defense with a Gun," which appeared in the Fall 1995 edition of the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*. The key finding was that the survey data indicated "each year in the U.S. there are about 2.2 to 2.5 million DGUs of all types by civilians against humans."

These results created a serious problem for gun-control advocates and their allies in the social "sciences." Most firearm-related social "science" research focuses on the purported costs of widespread gun ownership and makes little attempt to examine the benefits. Kleck and Gertz's research showed that there are significant benefits to civilian gun ownership. This scrambled gun-control advocates' lazy and one-sided cost-benefit calculation, and provided

law-abiding gun owners with a powerful talking point in the fight to secure their rights.

In early 2022, reference to the 2.5 million DGUs appeared on CDC's website in a document titled "Fast Facts: Firearm Violence Prevention," as an answer to the questions "What is defensive gun use? How often does it occur?" However, in May 2022, estimates of the prevalence of DGUs were removed from the fact sheet.

According to *The Reload*, this suppression of science occurred following a lobbying effort by gun-control advocates. *The Reload* article explained, "The lobbying campaign spanned months and culminated with a private meeting between CDC officials and three advocates last summer." Illustrating the level of influence the anti-gun activists were able to exert, the piece noted, "Introductions from the White House and Sen. Dick Durbin's (D-Ill.) office helped the advocates reach top officials at the agency ..."

Focusing their censorship effort on the DGU research, a Sept. 16, 2021, email from Mark Bryant, the executive director of the Gun Violence Archive, to CDC officials stated, "[T]hat 2.5 Million number needs to be killed, buried, dug up, killed again and buried again." Bryant also whined that the Kleck-Gertz study "remains canon by gun rights folks and their supporting politicians and is used as a blunt instrument against gun safety regulations every time there is a state or federal level hearing."

In a Dec. 10, 2021, email referencing a Sept. 15, 2021, meeting with gun-control advocates, a CDC official noted that the agency would "make some edits to the [fact sheet] content" to address the advocates' concerns.

And this isn't the first time CDC has buried scientific research demonstrating the widespread use of firearms for self-defense.

Following Kleck and Gertz's landmark study, from 1996 to 1998, CDC used its Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) to survey Americans about



Rochelle Walensky, the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, told CNN that the supposed public-health agency would be increasing its focus on violence committed with firearms.

DGUs. Specifically, the CDC survey asked respondents, “During the last 12 months, have you confronted another person with a firearm, even if you did not fire it, to protect yourself, your property, or someone else?”

Despite conducting this interesting research, the agency didn’t report on their findings at the time. The CDC survey data finally came to light in 2018.

Analyzing the CDC survey along with his own research, Kleck found that the CDC data indicated that there are likely more than 1 million DGUs per year. In a September 2020 paper titled “What Do CDC’s Surveys Say About the Prevalence of Defensive Gun Use?,” Kleck explained, “Even when CDC, an organization perceived by some to be strongly ‘anti-gun,’ devised and conducted the surveys, their survey results implied huge estimates of defensive gun uses—over a million per year, far more than the number of violent crimes in which offenders used guns.”

Adding further weight to the Kleck-Gertz study and CDC’s BRFSS findings of widespread defensive gun use, a 2021 survey conducted by William English, a Georgetown University political economist, placed the number of DGUs somewhere in between what the Kleck and CDC surveys indicated. In a research paper summarizing his findings, English noted, “The survey further finds that approximately a third of gun owners (31.1%) have used a firearm to defend themselves or their property.” The economist went on to explain that the survey “estimates that guns are used defensively by firearms owners in approximately 1.67 million incidents per year.”

Addressing the CDC’s suppression of scientific research at the behest of gun-control advocates, Kleck told *The Reload*, “CDC is just aligning itself with the gun-control advocacy groups... . It’s just saying: ‘we are their tool, and we will do their bidding.’ And that’s not what a government agency should do.” Kleck also called the agency’s actions “blatant censorship.”

Explaining how CDC’s suppression of DGU data hurts public understanding of the firearms issue, Kleck added, “You can’t understand any significant aspects of the gun-control debate once you eliminate defensive gun use... . It becomes inexplicable why so many Americans oppose otherwise perfectly reasonable gun-control measurements.

It’s because they think it’s going to lead to prohibition, and they won’t have a gun for self-defense.”

Walensky may have branded her August 2021 announcement as some sort of shift in agency policy, but the truth is that the CDC has been a fundamentally anti-gun institution for decades. Starting as early as the mid-1980s, CDC officials began to express an interest in gun control to the press. In 1989, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* quoted a CDC official as stating, “We’re going to systematically build a case that owning firearms causes deaths. We’re doing the most we can do, given the political realities.”

CDC IS JUST [...] SAYING: ‘WE ARE THEIR TOOL, AND WE WILL DO THEIR BIDDING.’
— Gary Kleck

The agency’s campaign against gun ownership accelerated in the 1990s, with CDC officials participating in several gun-control conferences alongside anti-gun activists. In 1994, CDC National Center for Injury Prevention Director Mark Rosenberg told *The Washington Post* of his intent to transform public perception of firearms in the same manner as had been done with cigarettes, by making guns “dirty, deadly—and banned.” In 1995, a CDC-funded newsletter engaged in overt gun-control advocacy by directing readers to “make your support for federal, state, and local gun laws known to your representatives.”

All of this taxpayer-funded anti-gun political advocacy prompted Congress to act. In 1996, working with NRA-ILA, lawmakers added an appropriations rider to federal legislation making clear that “none of the funds made available for injury prevention and control at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may be used to advocate or promote gun control.”

The irony of CDC’s recent behavior will not be lost on astute gun-rights supporters. Gun-control advocates have spent the better part of the last three decades making the erroneous claim that NRA shut down firearms research.

For instance, in a 2012 opinion piece for *The Washington Post*, Rosenberg whined that “the National Rifle Association moved to suppress the dissemination” of CDC firearm research. As is clear from the text of the appropriation rider, the provision prohibits advocacy, not research. However, given the revelations in *The Reload* emails, Rosenberg’s former employer is actually attempting to “suppress the dissemination” of scientific research.

The lack of outcry from gun-control advocates and public-health officials over the CDC’s censorship of DGU research is enough to give a discerning observer the impression that the anti-gun criticism of NRA was never about protecting the agency’s ability to conduct and disseminate objective research.

On Dec. 22, 2022, Senators Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and Bill Cassidy (R-La.) wrote to the CDC demanding answers about the removal of DGU data from the CDC’s website. The letter demanded that the agency provide the senators with a recording of the Sept. 15, 2021, meeting that took place between the CDC and gun-control advocates, information on the CDC employees involved in the decision to remove the data, and information on any White House or other executive branch involvement in the influence campaign.

The senators called the agency’s behavior “a dereliction of duty.” Moreover, the lawmakers made clear that the “CDC must return to providing transparent and data-driven reporting on DGUs, and to provide Congress and the American people with an explanation of why the CDC allowed gun-control advocates to censor valid research and reporting conducted on the subject of defensive gun use.”

As of press time, CDC’s response to the senators has not been made public. NRA will continue to monitor this latest chapter in the CDC’s decades-long campaign against gun owners. We will also continue to work with pro-gun lawmakers in our decades-long fight against CDC’s gun-control advocacy and scientific censorship so that law-abiding Americans aren’t forced to fund government advocacy aimed at undermining their Second Amendment rights. **ah**

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ANTI-GUN OREGON MEASURE 114 ON HOLD ... FOR NOW

By Mark Chesnut, NRAHLF.ORG

Oregon hunters faced with the impending inability to purchase a firearm of any kind because of a restrictive, arguably unconstitutional ballot initiative that passed last November have received a reprieve—at least temporarily.

In November, voters approved Measure 114 by about a 1 percent margin (50.6 to 49.4 percent). In a nutshell, the measure creates a government registry of firearm owners' personal information and firearms, requires a permit to purchase a firearm, imposes an indefinite delay on background checks and

bans any magazine with more than a 10-round capacity.

While the measure was set to take effect Nov. 8, a National Rifle Association-backed lawsuit brought on behalf of several parties, including the Oregon State Shooting Association, the NRA's state affiliate, sought to delay implementation based on several factors. And after initially pushing back against any delay, the state of Oregon capitulated, admitting that it did not have the proper systems in place to implement the law. Ultimately, on Dec. 7, the day before the law was to take effect, the Oregon Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling putting the measure on hold. The ruling was in response to a

petition filed by the state's Justice Department asking the Oregon Supreme Court to vacate a lower court's decision.

One of the main sticking points with the measure is the fact that the permit to purchase is a misnomer. As the NRA Institute for Legislative Action (NRA-ILA) noted in a news story announcing the lawsuit (see sidebar), the process requires individuals to complete several burdensome tasks to acquire a permit, but it does not actually permit them to then purchase a firearm. In fact, the measure's text specifically states: "A permit-to-purchase issued under this section does not create any right of the permit holder to receive a firearm."

"It's difficult to imagine that no one

Photo: Mitch Kezar / WindigoImages.com



NRA-ILA

NRA-ILA BACKED LAWSUIT FILED CHALLENGING OREGON MEASURE 114

On Dec. 1, 2022, an NRA-backed lawsuit was filed challenging Ballot Measure 114, which voters passed by a slim margin last month. Measure 114 creates a falsely labeled “permit to purchase” a firearm requirement and bans standard capacity magazines, which it also falsely labels as “large capacity,” both of which are unconstitutional.

The permit to purchase is a misnomer. It requires individuals to complete several burdensome tasks to get, but it does not actually permit them to purchase a firearm. The measure’s text makes that crystal clear: “A permit-to-purchase issued under this section does not create any right of the permit holder to receive a firearm.”

Even worse, there is no system in place to obtain the permit. The lawsuit points out this flaw. In effect, it is now legally impossible for law-abiding citizens to exercise their rights in Oregon to acquire a firearm—a fundamental right preserved by the Second Amendment.

But that’s not all. Measure 114 also

mislabels magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition as “large capacity magazines” and outlaws them. These magazines “are commonly owned by millions of Americans for all manner of lawful purposes, including self-defense, sporting, and hunting.” These commonly owned magazines cannot be outlawed under the Second Amendment. Indeed just last summer, the United States Supreme Court reversed and remanded two other cases that the NRA brought challenging similar magazine bans in California and New Jersey.

The case was brought on behalf of two individuals, Mazama Sporting Goods, the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the Oregon State Shooting Association, which is the NRA’s state affiliate. It is captioned *Eyre v. Rosenblum* and was filed in the United States District Court for the District of Oregon.

Please stay tuned to nra.org for future updates on NRA-ILA’s ongoing efforts to defend your constitutional rights.

“How can it be that Oregon has no system in place for issuing any permits, despite that the law was to take effect Dec. 8?”

realized the problems embedded in this ballot measure,” said Jason Ouimet, Executive Director of the NRA Institute for Legislative Action (NRA-ILA). “It’s a great example of what happens when people with no experience with an issue attempt to restrict the constitutional rights of law-abiding Americans.”

How can it be that Oregon has no system in place for issuing any permits, despite that the law was to take effect Dec. 8? Oregon’s law-abiding hunters and others seeking to purchase a firearm would not have been able to do so after that date had the law’s implementation not been delayed.

The NRA-backed lawsuit challenging the new law points that fact out in no uncertain terms. “One might think that a state bent on imposing such a novel and burdensome permitting regime would at least take the time to make sure it had the infrastructure and resources in

place to ensure that it would operate as smoothly as possible,” the lawsuit states. “But Oregon is not even willing to do that. Instead, the state has rushed the effective date of its new law to Dec. 8, 2022—before the vote on Measure 114 has even been certified, and before the mechanisms to comply with it will be anywhere close to in place.”

The lawsuit also calls onto the carpet Measure 114’s restrictive magazine ban. Lawful Americans own some 115 million such magazines, accounting for about half of all privately owned magazines in the United States. As the lawsuit tracks, “These magazines are commonly owned by millions of Americans for all manner of lawful purposes, including self-defense, sporting, and hunting.”

This case is yet another example of why gun owners must be vigilant in monitoring the issues impacting their constitutional freedoms. “Americans in

every state should take heed because what happened in Oregon is an example of what happens when anti-gun lawmakers abuse democratic processes,” said Ouimet. “Billionaires like Michael Bloomberg are always waiting to finance these types of initiatives to get bad measures passed that fail to garner support in legislative chambers. The Oregon initiative was financed by a small group of billionaires and now the entire state of Oregon is left to clean up the mess.”

Stay tuned as the battle over Measure 114 continues in the courts. In the meantime, Oregon gun owners have some hope that the injunction is a first step toward a win. “The state of Oregon agreeing to be bound by our preliminary injunction is concession that there are grave problems with this ballot measure,” added Ouimet. “The harder they look, the more they will realize that this ballot measure should never be a part of Oregon law.” **ah**

Henry Repeating Arms Donates \$50,000 To First Responders Children's Foundation

Henry Repeating Arms has announced a donated \$50,000 to First Responders Children's Foundation (FRCF). FRCF was founded in 2001 in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 for the 800 surviving children who lost a first responder parent on that tragic day. Since then, FRCF has grown to be a national nonprofit focusing on four key program areas: scholarships for children of first responders injured or killed in the line of duty; Financial Assistance Grants/Line of Duty Death Bereavement Support; a Mental Health Resiliency Program; and First Responder Community Engagement.

"The primary focus of our Guns for Great Causes program has always been about children, which is why we are extremely proud to help support such an esteemed and worthwhile organization," said Henry Repeating Arms CEO and Founder Anthony Imperato. "No one does a better job of meeting the real financial needs and taking care of the children and families of our fallen heroes." The donation is part of a \$1 million pledge made to celebrate the company's 25th anniversary through its charitable branch, Guns for Great Causes.

"FRCF is deeply grateful to Anthony Imperato and Henry Repeating Arms for their generous commitment to supporting first responders and their children. This donation will help to



support our mental health resiliency program, which provides confidential, trauma-informed counseling at no cost to children of first responders," said FRCF President and CEO Jillian Crane. "Henry is an iconic American family-owned business supporting the first responder community since day one. This partnership will make a real difference in the lives of first responder families."

Henry's Guns for Great Causes has helped a wide variety of beneficiaries, including individual families of sick children going through medical treatments, children's hospitals, military veteran organizations, law enforcement and first responder groups, and wildlife and habitat conservation agencies.



MEMBERS' BEST

THIS IS THE FINAL CALL! Your last chance to submit entries for this year's Members' Best collection is fast approaching. There's no better way to commemorate your best hunts of the year than in the pages of this magazine. Whatever the trophy, whatever the species, if you've got a story and photos you're proud of, we want to see them.

To enter, send us a picture and a 200-word description of when, where and how you filled your tag by March 1, 2023, and we'll consider it for the annual celebration of our members' best moments. Remember, your photo could land on the June cover, so send us your best. High-resolution trophy shots with clean backgrounds and good lighting are ideal.

Email entries and accompanying high-resolution photos (1MB or larger) to americanhunter@nrahq.org. Mail entries to: American Hunter, Members' Best, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please include your name, address, phone number and NRA membership number. Photos will not be returned.

Type Two Double Eagles 1866–1876 By Dr. Michael Fuljenz

(\$29.95, softcover, 117 pages, 1stnationalreserve.com)

Written by Dr. Mike Fuljenz, *Type Two Double Eagles 1866–1876* is an expanded edition subtitled [A Numismatic History and Analysis] and is the benefit of Fuljenz’s more than 50 years studying Type Two Double Eagles

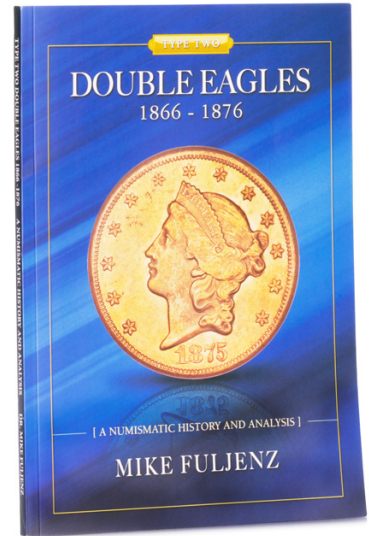
In its 117 pages, the author takes the collector and investor through each of the 31 known variations of the Double Eagle. Not only does each coin have its own entry, which includes high-resolution color photographs of the front and obverse, each entry discloses the total number of coins produced and provides a chart about its relative rarity today. The year-by-year analysis of coins from each mint is particularly useful.

In addition to the specifics on the Double Eagles, there’s also quite a lot of information of interest to coin collectors and investors, including “Certified Grades,” “Assigned” and “Uncirculated Grades,” fully explained. Plus, the glossary of terms is helpful. A bonus chapter is included on the story of our national motto, “In God, We Trust.”

Fuljenz is an NRA Golden Ring of Freedom member and the exclusive rare coin and precious metals expert of NRA’s

American Rifleman. He was named by the congressionally chartered American Numismatic Association as the 2021 Numismatic Dealer of the Year. Fuljenz is a member of the Professional Numismatists Guild and its Accredited Precious Metals Dealer program. The company is recognized by Professional Coin Grading Service; Numismatic Guarantee Company; National Coin and Bullion Association; and the NRA Business Alliance.

The price for *Type Two Double Eagles 1866-1876* is \$29.95 postage paid. A complimentary copy of the book also can be obtained for anyone purchasing a PCGS or NGC-certified gold coin with an account representative from 1st National Reserve at 800-321-8700 or 1stnationalreserve.com/nra.



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YOUNG HUNTERS SHOW US HOW IT'S DONE

Boone and Crockett's Generation Next Youth Awards

By Craig Boddington

Young Ross Potter was hunting in his home county in central Missouri on a November day in 2018, clear and calm with a couple inches of snow on the ground. About 8 a.m. he raised his .308 and fired one shot at a huge whitetail—wide, heavy, lots of points, almost matching double drop-tines.

Potter's buck had a typical 180-inch frame with over 41 inches of non-typical points. Officially measured at 222 $\frac{3}{8}$ Boone and Crockett points, this big non-typical ranks 28th from Missouri. That's the final official tally, but it might have scored higher just days earlier. The rut was on in Missouri, and the monster whitetail had several points recently broken from fighting.

Ross Potter and his buck were among

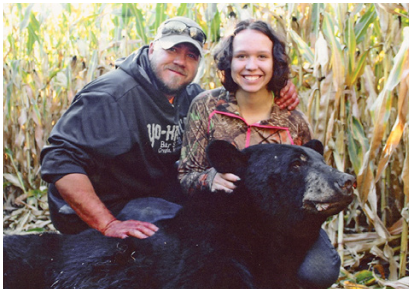
nearly 30 young hunters honored at the Jack Steele Parker Generation Next youth awards, a highlight of Boone and Crockett Club's 31st Big Game Awards, held in July '22 at the Wonders of Wildlife Museum in Springfield, Mo. B&C's 31st triennial awards honor great North American animals entered into B&C's records system between 2019 and 2021, with over 100 awesome animals on display at Wonders of Wildlife through the summer months.

Named in honor of Jack Steele Parker (1918-2013), stalwart member and past president of Boone and Crockett Club, the 31st Awards marked the fourth Generation Next youth awards. The rules are simple: In order to be entered into

Generation Next, the hunter must be 16 or under at the time the animal was taken, and it must be officially measured during the awards period.

At the close of the period, all animals officially entered are invited to be displayed, with the "best of the best" recognized at the Awards banquet or, for young hunters, at the Generation Next banquet.

At the 31st Awards, young hunters entered 132 great animals. For the display and awards presentation, five North American big-game species were represented: black bear, mule deer, pronghorn, Rocky Mountain goat and whitetail deer. Whitetails were by far the greatest number, which makes perfect sense: As our most populous and widespread animal, whitetails are the big game a



Among the nearly 30 young hunters honored were Landon Hayne and his 80 $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch pronghorn, left and above; Alexander Rowin and his 193 $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch mule deer, top; and Morgan Burns and her 20 $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch black bear.

majority of hunters of all ages pursue close to home, and most accessible for younger hunters.

Even so, I found it striking that, at this Generation Next awards, young hunters were recognized for eight typical and eight non-typical whitetails, taken in nine different states. There were multiple entries from three states, with Kansas and Kentucky claiming four each.

Every trophy has a story. In the brief stories related at the “Gen Next” banquet, as a Kansan I noted that multiples of the big Kansas bucks were taken during our state’s special September youth season.

Dominique Girard was hunting with her dad on the opening morning of this season, from a stand where their trail camera had revealed the presence of a huge buck. It was still early when they



saw a big rack protruding above standing milo. The buck wandered off into the woods and they could hear him rubbing. A big 160-class 10-pointer appeared. Naturally, Dominique wanted to shoot, but her dad urged her to hold off. Almost immediately, a clearly larger buck came out and Dominique took her shot with her .243. Her big non-typical entered B&C’s records at 212 $\frac{7}{8}$ points. The buck of a lifetime ... but how many of us would pass a 160 waiting for such a buck?

Although not the first time in the short history of the youth awards for a young hunter to have multiple great animals, Josey Norris was recognized twice, for big typical whitetails taken in back-to-back Kansas youth seasons in 2019 and 2020. The lone Iowa entry in this Generation Next awards was also taken during a youth season. Alex Engelken had targeted a big non-typical they called Crater. On the last day of the season, just at sunset, Crater stepped into a clover patch and fell to Alex’s 350 Legend. The buck scored 195 $\frac{5}{8}$.

The young hunters’ success with big whitetails wasn’t all about special or rifle seasons. Joshua Swartzentruber used his Mission Craze bow to take the lone Indiana buck, a giant 201 $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch non-typical, taken in an early bow season. Ryleigh Campbell used a crossbow for a big Kentucky typical. Noah Detloff, Samuel Gronewold and Joseph Joiner used shotguns with slugs, taking their big whitetails in Minnesota, Illinois and Kentucky.

Folks, I’ve hunted whitetails for 55 years. Most of these bucks, all free range and taken in fair chase, are bigger than any I’ve ever seen, let alone bagged. I hope nobody is feeling pangs of jealousy! Instead, let’s be happy with such success, and even

happier that our North American game populations are in such good shape as to produce exceptional animals.

We can, perhaps, have subconscious thoughts about hunters’ luck and beginners’ luck. For some of these young hunters, their award-winning entry was their very first big-game animal. The taking of a B&C-qualifying animal is so unusual that, realistically, for many of these youngsters this may remain their trophy of a lifetime.

For sure, there is always some luck involved when an exceptional animal appears and offers a shot. In some cases, specific bucks were known and targeted, others were unknown and random. Naturally, many of the young hunters were under careful supervision of a parent or mentor, others were hunting on their own. Doesn’t matter. Whether the actual size of antler, horn or, in the case of bears and cougars, body size is fully appreciated at the moment of the shot, consider this: Whether beginner or expert, regardless of age or sex, when the decision to shoot is taken, the hunter must do things right. The firearm or bow must be brought to bear without spooking the animal. The projectile must be placed correctly, and then the animal must be recovered. Morgan Burns, Nathan Kaiser, Logan Kobus and Hunter Milanowski all took massive black bears with skull measurements qualifying for B&C, hunting in Minnesota and Wisconsin (two bears from each state). Most reported scary follow-ups, with much help needed to recover the huge bruins. They were among 132 young hunters who did things exactly right when a rare opportunity was presented. B&C’s Generation Next gives us great hope for the next generation of American hunters. **ah**

Photos Courtesy Boone and Crockett Club

The Ultimate Guide To Picking a Snow Goose Guide

During the spring conservation order, you can hunt with outfitters from Arkansas to Saskatchewan. Here's how to avoid the poseurs and choose the right one.

By Joe Genzel

The spring snow goose migration is one of the most unique natural phenomena in North America. From January to early June, millions of white geese fly from their wintering grounds in the southern reaches of the U.S. to the coastal marshes and boreal forests of Canada. Along the way, there are tens of thousands of hunters with unplugged shotguns waiting, blasting electronic callers over massive decoy spreads as tornado machines spin flyers (kites in the shape of snow geese) below—it's a waterfowling circus.

Snows drop from the stratosphere in flocks by the hundreds, sometimes thousands. When they're in range, hunters unleash a firestorm of steel shot—you can easily burn through 10 rounds if an extension magazine is affixed to your 12-gauge. With enough shooters and the right guide calling the shot, dozens of birds die in a single volley. It's no wonder so many hunters get addicted to snows. But it takes a lot of time and

money that many of us don't have to get under these big spins of white geese. That's why plenty of hunters employ an outfitter during the spring.

But you have to be careful who you book with. Guided snow goose hunts lend to fly-by-night operations that are only out to take your money. To avoid getting ripped off, here's how to properly vet an outfitter before you go.

Spring Snow Goose Rules

The snow goose conservation order (it's not a season) applies to the Central, Mississippi and Atlantic flyways. There is no order in the Pacific flyway, though you can goose hunt in some Western states until mid-March. In the U.S., it's legal to affix an extension magazine to your shotgun and there are no daily limits. In Canada, hunters must keep plugs in and there are limits, so check the provincial regulations before you go.





You still must abide by all other migratory bird laws during the spring order. Laws like wanton waste (making an insufficient effort to retrieve birds from the field), party hunting and not tagging birds all apply. Ryan Warden is a former guide who plead guilty to improperly tagging migratory birds. As a result, he started Toe Tags LLC (toetagsllc.com) so waterfowl hunters can stay legal. He recommends snow goose hunters keep their birds with them at all times and be sure to claim birds after every volley—don't pile them up.

"It's hard to know who shot what snow goose when hunting with multiple shooters," Warden said. "But a legit guide knows the rules."

So, ask guides how they handle in-field possession and transportation of dead geese out of the field. Bring your own tags, and put them on your geese. And do not leave your birds until you get back to your primary means of transportation (likely your vehicle). If you leave birds in the field (tagged or not) and walk back to the truck or pile all the geese into the bed of an ATV and can't identify the birds you shot, that's a violation of migratory bird law.

Finding a Reputable Guide

Duck guides are a small community. Snow goose guides are even smaller. That tends to weed out poseurs quickly. But every season there are dishonest folks who only want your money and care little about putting you on birds. The easiest way to vet a snow goose guide is to ask them who they have guided with or who they buy decoys from, and then ask to talk to those references. If their response is that they have never guided with another outfit or never bought a decoy spread off another snow goose hunter, that's a sign to move on.

"Most of us know each other," said Ducks Unlimited TV producer John Gordon, a former Texas snow goose guide. "If you call me and I have never heard of the guy, and no one I know has heard of him, find someone else."

Also, never book with a guide that doesn't have a website. If they operate solely using social media, that's another red flag. It takes little effort to open an Instagram account or create a Facebook page. An outfitter with a website is at least taking the time to build a platform. It shows they are invested. Lastly, ask the outfit what their policy is if you have a slow hunt. Some

guides will let you come back for no cost or a reduced rate if there isn't much action.

Know When To Go

Snow geese are unpredictable. An experienced guide will be able to give you a time frame when they have historically done well, but your best bet for a good hunt is to be able to leave on short notice. Ask the guide when they think is the optimal time to come. That will give you a better chance to hit the migration right, but if you can swing it, ask the guide to call you when there is a massive influx of birds.

Adult snows move north first, and are the hardest to kill, so be leery of a guide that books you for opening day. You want to hunt the juveniles because they haven't made this migration before and are not as wary. It may be that the outfit always does well the first few days of the order. Just inquire why they want you there so early. For example, if a guide in South Dakota wants you to hunt Feb. 15 and there is a foot of snow on the ground, look elsewhere.

The Gear You Need

Different locations require different types of gear. You need a shotgun of course, and it's nice to have an extension magazine in the U.S., but not a requirement. For ammo, 3-inch No. 2's, 3's or 4's kill snow geese just fine. A case (10 boxes) of shells is usually enough for a three-day hunt, but keep a backup case in the truck. Pattern your shotgun on paper with the shells and choke you intend to use at 40 yards. A modified or improved modified choke is optimal because shots tend to be longer on snows, unless you're hunting a feed.

Ask the guide what they hunt from—pit, layouts, backboards, etc. If you're in a pit, the accommodations should be dry and comfortable. But layouts and backboards can be a mess, especially if the field is wet. If that's the case, wearing waders and a waterproof jacket or white Tyvek suit over your bibs is best. It keeps all the mud and water on the outside, and if you use a Tyvek suit, it can be thrown away after the hunt.

"I tell people to prepare for the day like you're going to be in the field from shooting time to sunset," said Sean Herrick, an Illinois snow goose guide. "That means dress accordingly, pack plenty of water and coffee, and bring enough deer salami to feed a pit full of hungry hunters." **ah**

Photos: Author



TURKEY SEASON PLAYBOOK FOR THE LONG GAME

By Mark Kayser, Field Editor

The length of turkey season varies from state to state. Fortunately, a vast array of states offer seasons a month or more long. Since turkey breeding correlates with spring hunting season, the ever-changing romantic makeup of the flock necessitates you change your strategy with the changing mood of the flock. Change your playbook for the long game of a long season.

Montana outfitters Rich Schneider and partner Rick Wilund, own J and J Guide Service (jjguide.com). They outfit turkey hunters in addition to big game with three outpost camps in Big Sky Country. With 40 years of hunting experience in his rearview mirror, including wily Easterns and mellow Merriam's, Schneider understands the importance of varying tactics as turkey vibes fluctuate throughout the spring season.

OPENING DAY PARTY

Winter flocks typically mix by opening day. Bachelor gobblers and hordes of hens mix together into sizable packs of poultry. Calling in a gobbler with five hens is one thing, but calling in a flock consisting of several gobblers and dozens of hens becomes a tactical nightmare. Schneider has experienced these turkey gangs in various state settings and has learned a few

important lessons while tackling the masses.

“Wait quietly and wait for them to hit the ground. You are going to want to call when you hear them gobble. It is hard to hold off, but wait. Turkeys hear extremely well and undoubtedly will hear your calls, but that gives those large flocks a higher chance of landing farther off and walking away at daybreak.”

Game Play: Make the birds hunt you.

While guiding clients, Schneider may hold off on calling (buglingbull.com) to roosted turkeys, but that changes when flocks hit the ground. If the flock decides not to engage Schneider immediately at shooting light, he works to get as close to the flock as possible with terrain or dense cover restricting turkey vision. A hunting app (huntstand.com) is invaluable to look ahead at a final setup destination.

“I don't mind them in large flocks, but that also equals lots of eyeballs and ears,” describes Schneider. “My tactic is to get as close as possible using thick pines, plum thickets or hills to hide behind. Make them come and look for you. The closer you get before hen calling the better. I usually do not use a decoy because I am forcing them to show themselves in the tight settings for a shot the first time I see them.”



SECOND QUARTER BREAKUP

As the days lengthen, hormones increase and signal the time for flocks to break up. Although the dispersion of turkeys into new areas along with more flocks means opportunities could abound, patriarch gobblers may not be as eager to chase down a hen when they just landed the big prize of a flock of their own.

Game Play: Beat the flock to their destination and call with persistence.

“The most important aspect is to figure out the general direction and destination of the flock, and get out far in front so they work toward you.”

Using audio clues and visual sightings, Schneider keeps adjusting his frontal position. Next, he waits until the flock is reasonably close before calling. At this point in the season, Schneider is impelled to utilize a strutting gobbler decoy and a hen in combination (montanadecoy.com). Nevertheless, his real tool is persistence with a hen call.

“Toms have the hens they need, but those hens may not be ready for breeding or just reserved in their calling. Using insistent—but not overbearing—calls, and sticking with it, can lure in a tom or a curious hen. That usually means the whole flock ends up in your lap. It can take an hour or more to call one away or have the whole flock arrive, but oftentimes they just can’t stand not investigating. And the good part is that if you muff that opportunity, you can move on to another flock.”

HALFTIME AND HALF OF THE FLOCK IS OUT

Halfway through the season also coincides with the halfway point for nesting activity. Hens begin spending more time at the nest as eggs accumulate. Competition for breeding peaks as fewer hens hang around a roost site creating more competition between toms. Schneider puts several of his earlier tactics together with assaults later in the day.

Game Play: Hunt later in the day and become the only game in town.

Desperate toms abandoned by hens equals great turkey calling as the day progresses. By midpoint of the turkey season Schneider has no problem hunting late morning, afternoons and even early evening.

“I have always liked the afternoons and even hunting into the early evening,” he stresses. “By midseason the hens begin to leave one by one for nest chores. Oftentimes, that leaves

toms with a handful of hens or none at all. Later in the day just means fewer hens around, and of course that means calling can be great as toms look for companionship. Lots of times the last hours of the day can really be hot. Toms are by themselves and they will stand in the open, and gobble trying to locate hens to roost with for the night.”

A few soft yelps and the sight of a decoy is all that may be needed to have a tom nearly run you over, but if the area has seen intense hunting pressure, wait patiently for a subdued, feathered suitor to arrive.

TWO-MINUTE WARNING ANXIETY

It’s breeding season, which means tom turkeys remain anxious throughout the spring as they seek out their next hookup. Although a hen has the ability to store sperm for one-stop breeding, most hens continue participating in the spring ritual before disbanding to become full-time mothers late in the season. Once the nest is overflowing with a dozen or more eggs, she abandons Club Roost for a one-month tour of nest duty. Most toms continue the search for species proliferation, but may show up in stealth mode or gobble without budging.

Game Play: Play the waiting game or opt for the stalk.

Schneider’s first advice late in the game is to locate their roost and absolutely hear them gobble from the tree. After that confirmation, hustle close without alerting the bird, set up and hen call softly.

“Call softly with hen sounds and, after you begin a setup, wait at minimum of 45 minutes to an hour. In that time period, call softly again maybe every 15 minutes,” says Schneider. “Be patient. Often these birds will not gobble back. They come in like a silent bull elk and suddenly appear right in front of you for an uh-oh moment. Be ready to shoot at first sight.”

Lastly, if he does get a bird to respond but it refuses to budge, Schneider has no apprehension about stalking a bird. He suggests you be safe and watchful for any other hunters, but if the birds will not cooperate, don’t hesitate to put a stalk into play.

“If the turkeys are not cooperating you can either go home or try a stalk. It could be your only option, and you’d be surprised how close you can get in cover moving stealthily and using a quality binocular.”

Turkey season can last for weeks, and during its course turkey moods change. Change up your tactics to match the changing tone of turkey life in the spring. **ah**



Build A Better Arrow

Like bullets, not all arrows are created equal, and the better your arrow build, the more accurate you'll be in the field next fall.

By Jace Bauserman

The best rifle hunters I know are all ballistic gurus. Good is never good enough for these guys. These shooters scrutinize every round they build, and they create loads formulated for the specific animal they're pursuing. It's impressive.

Bowhunters need to take a lesson from these magicians. I did years ago, and it's made a tremendous difference in my stick-and-string success.

Like ammo, not all arrows are created equal. Don't get me wrong, though. If you're a Midwest or Eastern whitetail hunter and limit your shots to 40 yards, there's nothing wrong with fletched, budget-style carbon arrows from the factory. However, if you call the West home or travel there to match wits with pronghorn, elk, mule deer and open-country whitetail, you'll need to focus heavily on your arrow choice and how that arrow is built. Here's what you need to do to create the ultimate carbon projectile, and why you need to do it.

Wind & Range

When hunting the West, in general, you can count on wind and longer shots.

That's why I've switched to shooting a micro-diameter shaft, exclusively. Most arrow manufacturers worth their salt (Easton, Gold Tip, Carbon Express) craft micro-diameter shafts. The best I've found is Easton's 4MM Axis Long Range.

With less surface area to press against, micro-diameter arrows cut through the Western wind like butter. Because these shafts are created with ultra-tight tolerances, the accuracy they provide is second to none. If you're hoping to be the most accurate archer you can be, and want to experiment with double-distance practice, a technique I believe every archer should use (see "Know-How" July '22), you'll want the best carbon shafts money can buy.

Double distance practice is simply practicing at distances twice as far as your max effective range. My max range on the field is 70 yards, and I practice regularly at 140 yards.

Penetration

When an arrow impacts an animal, the internal hemorrhaging created by the broadhead causes the animal to expire.

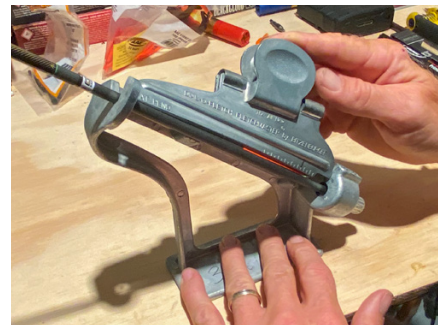
The deeper that broadhead can penetrate, the more internal goodies it will carve up. Micro-diameter shafts boost penetration, especially downrange because their small outside diameter tracks seamlessly behind the broadhead and doesn't create unnecessary friction.

The Build

Of course, choosing the right carbon shaft is only half the battle. The next thing you need to consider is your insert choice. Top-end arrows offer multiple insert options including aluminum, titanium and steel. If you're looking to boost the amount of weight in the front half of your arrow and increase penetration a tad, titanium and steel are great choices. As for me, I go the aluminum route. This is because Easton's 50-grain Half-Out aluminum inserts (eastonarchery.com) provide me a just-right FOC (front of center) balance, I don't lose much speed, and I've blown through bull elk at 60 yards using them.

After deciding on your insert, it's time to think about what vanes, what vane count and what vane orientation you want on your arrows. Take a deep breath and relax; we'll keep it straightforward.

Photos: Author



Suppose you're shooting a mechanical broadhead, which I recommend for all big-game species due to their low-profile aerodynamic nature and ability to create massive blood loss. With mechanical broadheads, I prefer a low-profile vane between 2.2 and 3 inches. I want the vane to be rugged but not too rigid and stiff—rigid, tall and stiff equates to a noisy arrow in flight. If you're not shooting a fixed blade, you don't need a long, tall, ultra-rigid vane. Low-profile vanes like AAE's Hybrid 23 vanes steer my mechanical-tipped shafts with remarkable accuracy.

When it comes to a three- or four-fletch arrow, the choice is up to you, but if you want superior downrange accuracy, I suggest you go with a four-fletch. Why?

The four-fletch option creates more spin and boosts stabilization, and the low-profile nature of the vane doesn't rob you of speed and helps the arrow fly quietly. Get yourself a Bitzenburger fletching jig (bitzenburger.com), and you can easily create three- or four-fletch arrows.

Fletch orientation is the final piece of the puzzle, and there are three options to choose from. The first is a "straight fletch," where the vanes run straight down the shaft. This design creates the least amount of spin and arrow stabilization, but it will boost velocity. The second option is to use an "offset fletch," where the vanes are placed straight on the shaft, with a slight offset from the front to the back of the fletching. An

offset fletch orientation stabilizes arrows well, even with a fixed-blade broadhead, and especially at close distances. The final fletching option, and my go-to style, is the "helical fletch," where the vane almost spirals around the shaft. While there are varying degrees of helical, I like a two-degree right helical, which creates great arrow spin and leads to excellent stabilization downrange.

I hope you are beginning to understand that not all arrows are created equal. Do some research, talk to the pros at your bow shop, spend some money to test and tinker, and you can create the ultimate arrow for your vertical bow. You'll be amazed at how much difference a better arrow can make. **ah**

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Turkey Hunting in

Early French-Canadian trappers called Minnesota The Star of the North. Today, American turkey hunters are lured here in search of adventure.

By Bryce M. Towsley, Field Editor

The worst part about turkey hunting is the early mornings, but compared to farmers we are slackers. By the time we pulled up to the house the farmer had his chores done and was finishing breakfast. He met us on his porch with a cup of coffee and a smile. One of the natives who spoke the tongue talked with him and we got permission to go after the turkeys we were trying to ambush.

'L'Etoile du Nord'



Photos: Jake Dahlke



But, it was too late. The flock was already in his pasture. We did get a heck of a show as a young bull became enraged at the interlopers and ran back and forth with intentions like ours: to kill a turkey. His results were about like ours as well: He ended up out of breath and frustrated, mixed with a little rage.

We had set up on the turkeys that morning, but after a show they elected to head over the ridge to the farmer's field

rather than to where we were. I know it's odd that they could resist our sultry calls, but it was late season and other than an occasional courtesy gobble they ignored us. That late in the year their libidos had about run flat and other than a bit of strutting and posturing they were more interested in eating bugs than loving the hens.

This was a double whammy in terms of turkey hunting. First, it was late May and, as I said, the concept of calling in

gobblers was about over for the year. The other problem was our location. We were in Minnesota, not far outside the Minneapolis city limits. This country turns rural pretty quickly and most of the land is in smaller blocks, a few hundred acres at best, usually much less. It's the edge of the prairie and much of the land is open, with tree lines acting as wind breaks and boundary markers.

One great aspect was that my son, Nathan, lives near St. Cloud, an hour or so away. He had filled his turkey tag the week before, but drove over to join our hunt. It was the first time we had hunted together in several years. Also hunting was Remington ammo's director of product management Nick Sachse, a hard-core hunter who uses the products he designs. Jake Dahlke works for Murray Road, the PR agency for Remington ammo. He also lives in Minnesota, not far away, and he served as local guide, interpreter, cameraman and social liaison.

The strategy was to find a flock by long-distance scouting using binoculars and the road system. If we could gain permission we would be there at daylight, decoys out and waiting. It should have

Run-and-gun toms in farm country is satisfaction enough. Tagging a tom with your son, with whom you have not hunted in years? That's a bonus.

worked, but two days of trying, morning and afternoon, had not produced a single turkey in shotgun range for either of our two groups.

Typically, I am not a passive turkey hunter. I hate sitting for any length of time. My idea is that if the birds are not coming to us, then we go to them. I like to run and gun, to be active, be aggressive and to cover ground. If the bird won't come to me, I'll get ahead of him and set up where he is going. That couldn't happen here. It's too open to move around much and usually when we tried to circle or flank them on these small parcels of land we ran out of ground we had permission to hunt.

I learned a long time ago that the best tool in any turkey hunter's arsenal is persistence. You have to stay out there day after day and keep trying. Sure, you need to be smart enough to change it up when it's not working, but you do need to keep trying something.

That attitude finally paid off. We watched a flock from daylight until mid-morning, on land we could not hunt. We sat at the fence and called, and received nothing but disdain in return.

Then, finally, a bunch of hens slipped under the fence and worked past us. One was so close I thought I could see the mites on its feathers. I figured the other hens and gobblers would follow, so we sat still. Then a coyote showed up in their field and, rather than run, one of the hens charged at it screaming whatever a turkey Karen yells when it's mad at an uninvited guest. I don't think I have ever seen a more puzzled looking coyote. He finally left and went looking, I suppose, for a hen that wasn't bat-guano crazy.

The turkeys resumed marching back and forth, just out of legal reach. My bum was numb, my legs asleep and my aging back hurt, but we sat still as the gobbler continued to prance around the field in front of us. Then, finally, when I thought perhaps it was possible to die from not moving, they went the exact opposite direction of the hens and left the field. If they had even noticed the coyote that had been 20 yards from them



at one point, they didn't show it. They must grow brave turkeys in Minnesota.

Just adjusting my legs gave me new life and we waited, probably longer than we should have, before we called it and headed to the truck. We took the truck to high ground (which ain't really all that high in Minnesota) to glass. We found the group of gobblers soon enough in a field of high grass, eating bugs and living the turkey life.

I got out of the truck at the bottom of what passed for a hill. I sneaked through the field, using the terrain and the grass to cover my approach, until I ran out of cover. When I poked my head up I could see two gobblers at the tree line, out about 75 yards. They were fixed and focused and staring right into my soul. My heart sank as I could see this hunt was over. Then up raised a head on a long neck, looking like a snake poking out of the grass. It was still too far, but then two more birds did the same, gobblers all. The last one was a long shot, but doable, particularly with the fancy, high-tech turkey ammo we were trying out. I centered the red dot on his neck, just below the head, and pulled the trigger. That action checked off a new state



on my bucket list of successful turkey hunting locations.

I love nothing better than to call in a big gobbler, watch him strut and then shoot him before he ever knows his true love is a liar. It is the epitome of turkey hunting, but I learned a long time ago that you take your successes where you find them. I find no shame in sneaking up on a gobbler and ambushing him. That takes skill too. **ah**



THE TRUTH ABOUT TUNGSTEN SUPER SHOT

In Minnesota we shot Remington's new entry into the world of TSS turkey ammo. In spite of the stiff price tag TSS (Tungsten Super Shot) has taken the turkey-hunting world by storm, and it's the current pinnacle of turkey hunting ammo technology.

This time it is different than some of the past advancements in turkey hunting shotshell ammo as we now have social media. I have seen some outrageous claims about the effectiveness of TSS shot on the "interweb." So, let's take a technical look at it and maybe correct some of the disinformation out there (most likely from the Russians).

I can remember a brief fad years ago when one ammomaker was pushing No. 7½ lead pellets due to the high pellet count. It produced some impressive patterns and a lot of writers jumped on the bandwagon, claiming to be fans without ever shooting a turkey with the stuff. I waited until I had a chance to use it before expressing an opinion. I am glad I did, as the results were a disaster. Turns out that it's not just how many pellets

By **Bryce M. Towsley**, Field Editor

hit the target but what each pellet can do after contact. Those little pellets had trouble killing turkeys. These tiny pellets used in TSS ammo were making me flash back, and the skeptic in me rose to the forefront.

Through extensive scientific testing, it was discovered some years back that for a lead pellet to penetrate a turkey's skull and break the neck bones reliably required 2.5 ft.-lbs. of energy per pellet, at the target. This is still a pretty good baseline.

Tungsten pellets are denser, or heavier per given pellet size, than lead. Pellet deformation has long been the main problem with keeping patterns tight. Tungsten does not deform inside the gun, and because the current TSS turkey loads use smaller pellets they pack better through a choke than bigger pellets. If choked properly TSS can deliver very dense patterns. Jonathan Langenfeld is the director of R&D for Remington and he tells me that their baseline requirement is that TSS must put 50 percent of

its shot in a 10-inch circle at 40 yards.

TSS penetrates better than lead because the pellets are smaller in diameter for a similar weight, and it doesn't deform on impact like lead. The pellets also have a better individual ballistic coefficient than lead pellets, so they retain more velocity and energy down-range. So, when launched at the same muzzle velocity, the tiny No. 9 TSS pellet will penetrate as deep in ballistic gelatin at 40 yards as a No. 5 lead pellet.

I have heard some outrageous claims about TSS ammo in recent years. Most of it is based on the incredible patterns it can produce. Because of those dense patterns some hunters think this ammo is the key to ultra-long-range turkey shooting. But, we must remember just hitting the target is not the only important thing. The pellet must also have enough energy to penetrate, break bones and punch through important stuff.

Shot charges are classified by weight, so even though the No. 9 is sized like the lead No. 9, there are not as many pellets in the TSS shot charge as there are

with lead. A 1¼-ounce load of No. 9 TSS has about 603 pellets. The same charge weight of lead No. 9 would have more than 1,000 pellets. A 1¼-ounce charge of No. 6 lead has 348 pellets, so the No. 9 TSS has 255 more pellets in the same weight charge as the No. 6 lead, which is about the smallest lead pellet that savvy turkey hunters will choose.

High pellet counts improve patterns and, with the very dense patterns produced with TSS and a proper choke, the result is that there are a lot of pellets on the target. The No. 9 TSS pellet size is the most popular in turkey hunting, presumably because it puts more pellets on target and the patterns are the easiest aspect for most hunters to test and understand. Each pellet weighs 1.27 grains. By comparison, in lead No. 6 is 2.2 grains; No. 5 is 2.68 grains and a No. 4 is 3.34 grains.

The No. 7 TSS weighs 2.43 grains per pellet, which puts it close to the No. 5 lead. There are 315 No. 7 pellets in a 1¼-ounce Remington turkey load.

The Remington 1¼-ounce ammo starts out at 1200 fps at the muzzle. The TSS No. 9 drops below 2.5 ft.-lbs. pretty quick, under 20 yards. But, does that threshold apply with TSS pellets? I don't know. Nobody has done the same scientific study with TSS. I would hope they do, as that study resulted in some significant advances in lead turkey loads.

If we look at the numbers, the No. 9 is probably best at less than 40 yards. That's the real maximum range on which it should ethically be used on turkeys, which is still pretty impressive. At that distance Remington's load is carrying 1.5 ft.-lbs. of energy per pellet. Given a little leeway for the smaller, harder pellet and that it penetrates ballistic gelatin about the same depth as No. 5 lead does at 40 yards, that may be fine. Certainly there is a lot of anecdotal evidence involving dead turkeys to support that theory.

Even with lead, 40 yards has always been the max distance for most ethical turkey hunters. My limited experience supports this with the TSS as turkeys shot at distances past 40 yards with No. 9 TSS were not a 100 percent kill rate and had to be dispatched.

The "other" TSS, the No. 7 pellet, holds its energy out to a longer distance. At 40 yards the Remington No. 7 TSS



A look at the numbers suggests Remington No. 9 TSS is best at less than 40 yards and No. 7 TSS is a 50-yard load. To learn more about it visit remington.com.

retains 3.4 ft.-lbs. of energy and does not cross below the 2.5 ft.-lb. line until nearly 60 yards. Most impressive.

So is this a 60-yard turkey load? No. I think 50 yards is a reasonable limit. However, it all depends on the patterns. I am unable to find any reasonable consensus on the minimum number of pellets that should be in a turkey's head to be 100 percent sure of a kill. Remember, only those that hit the brain or spine count, and they are a rather small portion of the head and neck. With shotguns it's always a gamble because patterns are like snowflakes: no two are exactly alike. So playing the odds, how many pellets need to hit the head of a turkey to be 100 percent sure of success? Six, eight, a dozen? I don't know, but more is always better.

Remington's Nick Sachse said, "You will run out of pattern before you run out of energy with this TSS ammo."

I think that's likely true with No. 7 pellets. It depends on your shotgun and choke. But odds are you will run out of pattern density before you run

out of pellet energy. You need both to kill turkeys.

Even though it seems like it has become a contest, at least on social media, this is not a contest to see how far you can shoot and kill turkeys. TSS is simply the next step in turkey ammo evolution. We still need to hone our hunting skills and get the birds close. But with this new ammo each shot is a bit deadlier than with ammo from years past.

I have been hunting turkeys for a long time and I have tried just about everything with which to legally shoot them. I have been a firm advocate of No. 4 shot for decades. Number 6 is more popular, due to that pattern thing again, but in my (at the risk of bragging) extensive experience, No. 4 works better. In that light, while the No. 9 TSS is the ammo of choice for the masses, I rather prefer the harder punch of the No. 7 pellets. I know I risk being canceled for such a statement, but so be it.

No matter which size you choose, you still must get as close as you can. Hitting a gobbler with TSS shot is just paying the insurance. remington.com **ah**

PHEASANTS WHERE THE

In Kansas amid cackling roosters and heart-racing flushes, the author embraces the fervor of pheasant hunting.

Pheasants were inconsistent. Some ran serpentine routes of evacuation. Some flushed distant, no pellet pattern capable of intimidation. Some huddled into monastic strongholds that held hope of avoidance, the world outside passing them by unnoticed. Some—the bold—flushed off hunters' shoelaces and cackled in contempt. But then, that is what pheasants do, their inconsistency birthed in some tempestuous form of consistency.

What was consistent and begged no argument otherwise were those maddening winds. Steady at 20, sprinting to 35. Boisterous and chilling and annoying, screaming angrily from the north beneath scowling skies and cowering sunshine. Such was the greeting on that first day. Kansas, it was. Dorothy

By Tony Kinton

and Toto, were they present, could likely relate. The Wizard proved fictional; the cold was a foreboding reality.

Perhaps it was just me. I am Deep Southern. Venues such as the ones in Kansas, while not totally exempt in Mississippi, are uncommon. There is what we here call the Delta, a flat-land expanse of rich soil and farming and scatterings of trees along the state's west, this border formed by that mystical river. There is also an anomaly of sorts with a brief circuitous route on the eastern side, this known as the Black Belt. These are exposed grounds not unlike the Kansas prairie, and the winds here can be disagreeable. Cold, too. Yet to me, this property of the Sunflower State was simply more unpleasant. So I

guess it was just me after all.

Then again, maybe there was some other element mixed into the equation. Fred was along; he, too, is Deep Southern. A few years short of my age. And he was cold. Yet, he was moving along just fine. So were the other two in my age bracket, Tom and Dale. The remaining trio—young medical professionals from Illinois—was exceptional. Laughing; navigating CRP fields with the agility of one executing the feature role in a Tchaikovsky ballet. The lads were doing well. And then a valid point surfaced from my frozen core. It was not geography that plagued. It was not specifically the inordinate cold of a November morn. It was age and primarily my overall conditioning. I was, in the age and conditioning category, a conquered king among the entourage.



COLD WINDS BLOW



Photo: Tim Christite



And then it happened. Isaac—proper protocol would suggest Dr. Mittendorf, but we were immersed in the congeniality of a hunting field—had his Llewellyn, a 2½-year-old setter bubbling with excitement and energy and at this moment a heavy dose of olfactory enchantment, this scent riding that north wind and blasting Pip head on. Pip became birdy.

Pheasant hunters know this situation well. The hoped-for promise of a viable shot. The discouragement of runners. The discomfiture of faraway flushes. There are and were few givens. The line flowed beautifully toward Pip's ecstasy, guns safe but at ready. Some small talk of instruction and positioning—each shooter wishing others well, each shooter quietly begging the bird fly in that shooter's 10-to-2 cone. A grand rooster erupted—from those shoelaces earlier mentioned. Isaac's shoelaces. A svelte 28-gauge cracked. Pip delivered to his owner.

Isaac had pointed out earlier something I had not noticed. He and I were shooting the same shotguns. Beretta Silver Pigeon in 28, his a more decorative and

less-scarred unit than mine, but both otherwise identical. He had used his a great deal while pheasant hunting, and if this demonstration just witnessed were a test, the 28 certainly passed. I had taken a few preserve pheasants with mine, but no settings like this. It had, however, seen an untold number of released quail tumble. And a host of briar patches and the occasional barbed wire, thus the scars that Isaac's lacked. Additionally, I had equipped Carlson's choke tubes in mine for this hunt. Extended rigs. Full and modified. The pattern board was pleasantly peppered.

My love affair with the 28 had begun decades prior to this little gauge's most recent celebrity. Touted by some to be miraculous, by others to be useless, the 28 is neither. It is simply a 28, a solid performer when its handler is competent, but not a mythic being with unexplained powers. Useless? Hardly. Perhaps not the best choice for some chores, but wildly capable for other chores. Center the pattern on target and things are pleasing. If, on the other hand, the only contact made with target is the pattern fringe, its

Pheasants are truly striking birds. The brilliance of a rooster's plumage makes it particularly handsome. Pip the Llewellyn setter certainly was proud of himself as he posed with a limit of them.

efficacy is similar to most other shotguns.

I have used the 28 for doves, ducks, quail, chukar, pheasants and the occasional rabbit or squirrel. Modern nontoxic loads, though steel is somewhat lacking, make it a grand choice for teal and woodies, even bigger ducks in the decoys. The 28 is a delight to handle, carry and shoot, and it performs called-upon tasks with little fuss. So yes, I am in love. But the same can be said for the 20; I love that one as well. For my work, I need nothing bigger or smaller than these two: the 20 and 28.

There was quite the collection of shotguns among our group of seven. Over/unders; autoloaders; 12s for the most part. Then Tom uncased an aging but superb Belgian-built Browning A-5. Sweet 16, naturally. I admired it. Locked quietly in my safe is an identical rig save



the chambering. Mine is 20. And like Tom's, there is no rib. I unleash it annually for a rabbit or quail hunt and allow it to make more memories.

Somewhere along the way I was in the right place. I don't recall where or when this occurred, for my quadriceps ached and my piriformis burned as fire. That latter was unlike my fingers; they were brittle with cold. Eyes blurred as well. Still, I was in the right place. A rooster burst with gusto. Right to left, inconvenient for me the lefty. The 28 was up and shouldered. It popped. This pop was to no avail, but the second was more productive. I stood silently in the CRP and nursed my ailments, while simultaneously celebrating the bird and the dog and the shotgun and the camaraderie. I recalled briefly what all these sentiments were like in my youthful past and prayed for more to come even though facing sluggish execution of the assignment and staring down a maniacal calendar that possessed no remorse for escaping months and years.

And the CRP I have mentioned? It can be boon and bust. The boon is that it is perfect and preferred habitat for pheasants. The bust, at least potentially, is that it can be rough walking. I have already alluded to the element of age and conditioning, so there is little need for a great deal more expanded explanation. Simply, age alone is not the entire issue. Physical conditioning, as it plays a primary, is essential. Those miniature hummocks of grass roots from plants such as big bluestem, little blue stem and switchgrass—grasses that provide shelter for pheasants, grasses that are common to the CRP fields we hunted—are at times difficult to traverse. High stepping is the norm. And for many of us, high stepping is not a daily maneuver. Best prepare prior to the trip.

The CRP where this hunt took place is set up in individual fields. These are often adjacent to active farm fields, and farm roads generally run the borders of each. A hunting group that tramps all portions of a given field may, in so doing, easily log more steps than initially imagined. That can be tiring, particularly in grass-strewn terrain chosen by the birds. However, the rewards are worth the effort.

That second day held more promise than the first. Predictions suggested a low of 19 degrees, the wind a touch more



GEAR FOR KANSAS PHEASANTS

I used the Beretta Silver Pigeon 1 in 28-gauge the first morning. In it I used Federal Premium Upland shells, 2¾-inch chambering, ¾-ounce copper-plated No. 6's. Each barrel held a Carlson's Chokes extended tube, modified in the bottom, full in the top. Patterns on my board at home before the hunt revealed this combination a wise choice. Field use proved the same. beretta.com; federalpremium.com; choketube.com

My other gun was a Browning Citori 725 in 20-gauge. The shells I put in this were Hevi-Shot 3-inch No. 6's, ⅞-ounce payload. I used the improved cylinder and modified Invector DS tubes that came with the shotgun. This, as did the 28, worked well. browning.com; hevishot.com

My boots—and you will need sturdy boots—were well-used Irish Setter “Hunt” 6-inchers, insulated and waterproof. These have made three trips to Africa and a bear hunt to Vermont. Woodcock and quail hunts as well. They have never failed and are still going strong. irishsetterboots.com

sedate. Steady at 12, gusts seldom. There was also hope that the sun might come out of hiding. These held firm at the beginning but went sour as the day aged. Temperature did rise a speck as might be expected, but the wind kicked up with midmorning and the skies turned gray. The hunting, however, was spectacular.

We went to a new field, this one more undulating than some. And there were scattered about odd clusters of cover here and there across the landscape—some the size of a pickup, others the size of a house. Growing and glowing out of the thick and thigh-high grasses of CRP. Turns out they were wild plums. Each looked inviting. I assembled my 20-gauge Citori, not because I needed a heavier payload than the 28 provided but because it is my other love, holding a place in my heart matching that spot held by the Beretta. I like this shotgun; it apparently likes me. Partly recovered from the previous day of unruly winds and cold, I was eager to go. I put on mittens and filled each with hand warmers.

Action was near immediate in this field du jour. Pip and a comrade scurried

and scented and eventually fell into that cautious resolve of a sneak. Creeping up on something, it appeared. And they were creeping; stopping hesitantly in rigid pose at times; creeping again. A strip of milo lay ahead. And then a rush. Whether this rush was instigated by the pheasants or the dogs is not certain, but when those cackles and that blurred but iridescent brilliance of roosters enhanced a glum firmament as with Christmas-tree ornaments, all eyes turned upward. Shotguns responded.

Two birds, left-to-right, on that end. Two right-to-left on the other. One straightaway here and there. Fred dealt with a high climber, one seeming to elect the opposite direction from his consorts. “Hen,” was shouted now and again. Surprisingly, my arthritic fingers adequately manipulated the Citori. Feathers scudded on that north wind. Even the most competent ones in that discipline of shotgunning arts would have proffered smiles and nods of commendation should those competent ones

continued on p. 71 »



Why Black Bears Get Under My Skin

In spring or fall, in the mountains or in the conifer forests, it's easy to understand why hunters become excited at the prospect of a bear sighting.

By Phil Massaro, Field Editor

When I grew up in Upstate New York, our big game species were limited to whitetail deer and black bear—and they still are. Back then while deer were plentiful, our bear populations were essentially relegated to the Catskill and Adirondack mountains, at least in the eastern part of the state where I hunted. A bear sighting, to a 16-year-old kid who was soaking up the hunting lifestyle like a sponge, was nothing shy of amazing. My limited expendable capital set aside for hunting was often burned up heading to those mountains in hopes of just such an encounter.

Honestly, I've been around many more bears than I've shot. New York has no spring season, and we are not allowed to bait for black bears, so a chance encounter is about the extent of things. As a land surveyor, I spend quite a bit of time in the wilds of Upstate New York, and I can say today's bear population is much greater than it was 35 years ago. Back then I'd have come unglued to have a clean shot at a bear.

The black bear is a popular game animal, ranging from coast to coast along the northern United States and southern Canada. I find it is exciting to both watch and hunt. I've had the chance to hunt the black bear on the East Coast and the West Coast, in a number of different scenarios, and all were really exciting hunts. I've also used a bunch of different rifles, cartridges and bullets to hunt black bears.



Most of the time, hunting a bear revolves around playing to its stomach. In spring, a bear coming out of hibernation is ravenous, and will do everything it can to replace the weight it lost during the winter. Baiting a bear in the spring is a



great method to not only see bears but to judge them as well. A bear meandering through the woods at 50 yards might not be the easiest to judge, especially when the foliage is thick, but if you can get that bear to come into a bait barrel—usually filled with rotting meat or some sort of sweets—you can definitely determine sow vs. boar, as well as the overall size.

The Canadian province of Quebec lies just north of New York, and I've done a few hunts there. In the spring, the bear hunting can be great, but the black flies can be terrible. Depending on the weather (May and June can be fickle) the bear activity can be red hot or shut off like a switch. One year, we had snow on the first day in camp, and none of the baits were hit for three days. Once the temperatures rose into the low 70s, we had baits hit all over, and that afternoon I took a good boar just after 4 p.m.

For this hunt, I had my well-worn Ruger 77 MKII in .308 Win., hand-loaded with 180-grain Swift Scirocco IIS. Although I knew the shots wouldn't be

far—I think 100 yards was the greatest distance from blind to bait—I like the bonded-core bullet for its deep penetration, and it handled the quartering-away shot on that boar just fine. That was also the first time I heard a bear's death bellow: that long, mournful wail they emit as they expire. I like Quebec in the springtime, as you can spend your mornings checking baits right after breakfast then fish the innumerable lakes until early afternoon, when you head to your blind or stand to hunt until dark. You'll want a good headnet for the swarms of black flies, but I have a special place in my heart for those spring bear hunts in Quebec.

Across the continent, Alaska in springtime is also synonymous with bear season. In the spring of 2018, I found myself in the Land of the Midnight Sun, in Tyonek on the north shore of Cook Inlet, with tags for both black and brown bear in pocket. Because those huge coastal brown bears were on the menu, I was carrying a Bansner & Co. custom bolt rifle, based on the M704 action, chambered for the classic .404 Jeffery. The rifle loved the 450-grain Woodleigh Weldcore load in Norma's African PH line, and I felt (and still feel) this load would handle any brown bear, let alone even the largest of black bears.

My guides Bob Jewett and Pat Donelson had a bunch of bait sites set up, and it was our hope that we'd be able to punch the tag for both species. On the evening of the second night, we had a nice, mature boar black bear come into the bait and decided he was worth taking. The Bansner .404 did its job neatly, and that bear ended up squaring 6 feet. Though the brown bear eluded us for the remainder of the hunt (several appeared on camera but none before our eyes) I did learn an awful lot about the way a big bear will

Photo: Author

Photo: Victor Schendel



Massaro, left, and Leupold's Shawn Skipper, right, took black bears last fall with Hornady's 7mm PRC. Both shot a Savage Impulse Mountain Hunter.

Local sources of food, whether crop fields, orchards, mast crops or salmon-rich streams, can be targeted as the bears will take full advantage of any opportunity they can.

I was recently on a hunt in northern British Columbia with AlphaDog Outfitters, with tags for elk, moose and black bear, and I carried the new Savage Impulse Mountain Hunter in the equally new 7mm PRC. In spite of it being the third week of September, the temperatures raged into the high 70s, essentially shutting down the moose and elk activity. Yet the bears were seen in the early morning making their way back from the farm fields to the thick bush, as they'd been feeding all night. Leupold's Shawn Skipper and I were partnered up on this hunt, and as our guide nearly hit a big boar that was highly motivated to cross the road, we felt we had a good shot at taking bears. Driving between moose calling positions among the myriad slashes and clear-cuts that pock the crown lands in that part of the world, we spotted a boar in a patch of young growth, and decided not to kick sand in the face of good fortune. After a brief stalk, the Savage came quickly to shoulder, and at 75 yards a 175-grain Hornady ELD-X was responsible for the first black bear taken with the 7mm PRC.

An almost identical scenario played out the following day, but this time it was Skipper behind the trigger of the Savage straight-pull rifle. Skip had spotted the bear from the logging road, but we both lost sight of it as it slipped into the waist-high young evergreens. We gambled on where we thought the bear was heading and sneaked down the logging road, and came out on top. I caught a glimpse of black hide through the young brush, and the Leupold Santiam binocular showed the outline of the boar. Skipper threaded the needle with that 7mm PRC, and shortly thereafter stood over a fine fall bear.

Back in my native New York, the fall ritual is certainly centered on the pursuit of whitetail deer, but the bear hunting equally appeals to me. Though we do not have a spring season (sadly), there



approach a bait during those long sits that June. After Bob prepared his special cocktail of strawberry Jello mix, sugar and some other unmentionable additives that sits over Sterno until it makes a thick white smoke, we'd watch as a boar similar to the one I'd shot circle the bait very cautiously, and wait in the shadows of the thicker brush patches staring at that bait. The guys told me that this is characteristic of a wise, educated bear. Maybe that brown bear was closer than I ever knew, though I never got to see him.

While checking baits in the midst of the devil's club and spruce thickets, where visibility is sometimes less than 10 yards, that big .404 Jeffery felt rather small in my hands.

We had rolled into a bait site late one morning to check out things when we saw a pair of small cubs playing at the bait barrel. I knew mama wouldn't be far away. I stopped in my tracks when I heard the "woof." That sow moved like lightning, swatting at her cubs until they scampered up a tree, and she followed. Drooling and snapping her jaws, that bear was not happy with our presence at all. Be cautious while checking your baits, as bears can move very quickly when they want to, and become very possessive over their offspring.



In autumn, the bears are heavier and are usually consuming as much food as possible to prepare for their hibernation.



are early seasons for bear in both the Adirondack and Catskill state park areas, and years ago I hung up my archery tackle in favor of taking out a rifle for the early bear season. It was first offered in the Adirondacks, and I'd make the two-hour drive at least a couple of times each September. But between the warm temperatures and thick foliage that's a tough hunt, especially on those vast tracts of public land. There is now a two-week early bear season in the Catskills, though the same circumstances apply—warm weather and thick vegetation aren't optimal conditions, but we are in the woods hunting, and that's a good thing. If only we could bait those bears ...

Once our October/November rifle season opens—either the third week of October or third week of November, depending on the zone—much of the foliage has dropped and the bears are filling their bellies.

I enjoy the areas where the chances for bear and deer are nearly equal, as the chance of seeing a bear during a deer hunt adds a bit of excitement to the foray. I have a favorite haunt in the town of Hunter, in the northern Catskills, which has a good population for both bear and deer, and is covered in a mix of old growth forest, and patches that have been logged and grown up in young beeches and other brushy vegetation. One memory that sticks in my mind was a frosty morning that had seen about an inch of snow the night before. Hiking up one of my favorite logging roads to get to a small clearing—which not only gave me a bit of shooting room but also held a few beech trees producing nuts that year—I noticed the tracks of a small flock of turkeys on the road. Using the soft snow to mask the sound of my footsteps, I crept along until I heard the



CARTRIDGES AND LOADS FOR BLACK BEAR

There are many suitable rifle/cartridge/bullet combinations to cleanly take a black bear. I like to choose a cartridge with enough velocity and bullet weight to punch through a shoulder and still reach the vital organs. When the shots are closer, cartridges like the 7mm-08 Remington, .308 Winchester and .30-06 Springfield are perfect choices. If the possibility of longer shots exist, I like faster cartridges like the .300 Winchester Magnum, that 7mm PRC I used in British Columbia or the 6.8 Western.

For the faster cartridges, I like a premium bullet or heavy-for-caliber bullet to avoid the possibility of premature breakup. For years I used a 220-grain Hornady InterLock round-nose bullet in my .300 Winchester Magnum, slowed down to 2450 fps or so, and that worked just fine for bears here in New York.

If you asked me to pick just one bullet as the perfect choice for black bears, I'd recommend the good old Nosler Partition. It is soft enough up front to give good expansion for the most tissue damage, yet the rear core will help retain enough weight for deep penetration. All that thick hair and fat can plug up an entrance wound, making tracking a wounded bear a difficult prospect—so with a bear I find two holes are better than one. Most importantly, put that first shot where it belongs, and you should have your bear.



sound of the turkeys feeding voraciously, though I heard none of the clucks, putts or purrs that turkeys usually make. Using my binocular to see what was going on, I spotted a little black fuzzball rolling around on the ground soon joined by another, and then a third. As I'm sure you've guessed, they were bear cubs, and not turkeys at all. Mother was lying on her belly, using her paws and forearms to scoop beechnuts and other vegetation into her mouth. This was something I've never seen before or since. I watched the quartet feed for about 15 minutes before they exhausted the supply of food.



As I write these words, I'm fresh from another bear encounter. On the opening

day of our 2022 New York rifle season (just this morning) I had a huge sow and her two cubs inside 30 yards.

I saw the mother first. Based on the sheer size of her, I had brought my 6.8 to shoulder but saw her cub behind her. In New York, it is illegal to shoot a bear from a group of bears, the presumption being that it would be a mother with cubs. So the presence of the second bear prevented any shot opportunity. However, the angled morning sun on their coats, the bright white patch on her chest ... watching the way a mother interacts with her cubs—it is all part of another great bear hunting memory, even though there wasn't a shot fired. Sometimes encounters like this can be as exciting as taking a bear. **ah**

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Ibexin' Against the Clock

An ibex hunt in Turkey shows how blessed American hunters are to have the NRA.

By Karen Mehall Phillips, Communications Director, NRA HLF



I'll never forget my first evening in Turkish hunting camp. Exhausted but exhilarated, my husband, Phil, and I scaled serious mountains, and viewed untouched beauty as far as the eye could see. We got our first glimpses of ibex in the wild and glassed a giant billy at sunset with no time to close the gap. Climbing down was worse than climbing up, descending in darkness, yearning for nothing but a seat in the truck we'd left at the base of the mountain hours and miles earlier. We reached camp for an amazing meal of fresh, local dishes and Turkish tea. A soothing fire crackled in the fireplace as we traded stories with guide Ethem, the only other English speaker, who translated for head guide Ali and the kitchen

staff, who were drawn to our laughter. Everything was exciting in this new and different place as attention shifted to the Muslim call to public prayer coming from the mosque. We'd lived a week of adventure in just one day. Good thing, because then the outfitter called: "The anti-hunters just won their court battle. Turkey's hunting season is closing."



Beauty is in the eye of the beholder when it comes to those extra special game species that make our adrenaline rush at first glance. For years, that animal for me was the bezoar ibex after a life-sized taxidermy display caught my eye at a Safari Club International (SCI) show. While I'm always planning my next deer or elk



hunt, I dreamt of climbing mountains in pursuit of this stocky, bearded feral goat with the backward-curving ridged horns—the ibex species that also has the largest horns for its body weight. "Goin' ibexin,'" as I called it, would require a trip to Asia, specifically to Turkey where this ibex species ruled.

Having friends in high places—literally, as in the Turkish mountains—was a leg up. The next several years of hunting shows involved visits with NRA Hunters' Leadership Forum (HLF) member and outfitter Kaan Karakaya at his Shikar



Safaris booth, adorned with fascinating images of hunters and the game they'd taken with him across Asia and Europe. NRA HLF member and Distinguished Hunters Leadership Award winner Don Trump Jr. is in a few of those photos and always says Kaan is the best, so we took that as a fine endorsement. Cost, quantity of ibex in his areas and booking logistics were just a few of my questions. Phil and I were set to go in March 2020, then COVID hit. We regrouped during the annual hunting show season in January 2022 and reset dates for the end of March.

The fact that Phil's passport expired on March 31, and no U.S. Passport Office appointments were available until the morning of our departure added a level of unnecessary stress, and admittedly I considered having to leave him behind. But we never imagined the real stress that awaited us in Turkey, as global animal rights extremists, backed by some of the same suspects we fight here in the United States, waged a war against Kaan and the other outfitters to push the government to close the season early.

Unlike in the United States, hunters

elsewhere have no NRA to fight for them, and rely on outfitters to protect hunting's future. We knew Kaan had been helping to fight two court cases against animal rights extremists for months, but they were making headway as we flew to Istanbul last spring.

While Kaan monitored court proceedings, guides Ali and Ethem met us at the airport. Ethem spoke English and handed us his phone so Kaan could advise that several of his hunting areas had now closed, including the prime snow-packed archery area Phil was to

Photos: Author



hunt. Fortunately, Kaan has other incredible hunting areas throughout Turkey, so we headed to the Mugla province close to the Aegean Sea—not exactly where I’d imagined hunting a bezoar ibex. We peeled off our hunting coats and piled into Ali’s truck, traveling roads lined with bee boxes in the region Ethem said was Turkey’s main source of pine honey. Camp was a bed-and-breakfast-style hotel along the water where we picked oranges right off the tree. But this country’s biggest allure for me was its unique geographic position. Situated in both Asia and Europe, it has served throughout time as both a bridge and a barrier between the two continents.

I fired a few sighting shots from my .28 Nosler, ideally dubbed the Model 48 Mountain Carbon Rifle, which Nosler specifically created for just such a trip, and went out with Phil and our guides the next morning. Phil’s hunting permit was delayed due to getting his passport at the last minute, so I was up first. I was thankful I’d recently spent time at friend and DSC Board member Tim Fallon’s FTW Ranch for his nationally known SAAM Training (Sportsman’s All-Weather All-Terrain Marksmanship).

The hunting area had no roads beyond the valley floor. We parked the truck at sea level near a lake at the bottom of a mountain lined with bee boxes. We looked at that first mountain and started a steady

climb. Every time we hit what seemed to be the peak, we were faced with another rise. We’d glass the open hillsides just long enough to catch our breath and start climbing again. The terrain was not only steep but full of boulder fields. We climbed over and around boulders bigger than cars. We finally arrived at a spot late morning where we looked back and saw the lake, a breathtaking realization of just how high we’d climbed.

Knowing few words in English but always smiling, Ali gestured toward me, insisting on adding my jacket and extra ammo to his already-hefty pack filled with our food and water, his extra clothing, first-aid supplies, a rifle rest and I’m not sure what else. He never needed to catch his breath, but he’d stop to light a cigarette once in a while so we could catch ours. Ibex live in typical goat country—steep and rocky. The secret to wrapping your head around the climb was feeling good about making headway but ignoring how far you still had to go.

In between climbing and glassing, Ethem explained how difficult and expensive it is for Turkish citizens to hunt—even professional guides—yet they could take us hunting. Hunters pay \$1,100 for a five-year hunting permit for each rifle they own. This is in addition to needing clearance from medical specialists just to own a hunting rifle—including a visit to a psychiatrist who

will ask: “Why do you want to kill animals?” With no NRA in Turkey, Kaan has his hands full.

You knew when the guides were getting serious about glassing because Ali would drop his pack and lean over it like Santa Claus to hand out treats. Out came dates, hazelnuts and a natural fruit-based candy called lokum, which had the consistency of gumdrops, or Turkish Delight. We watched a few female ibex and a young male in a basin below us, but nothing that got the guides’ interest. It was finally time for lunch.

While Ali pulled out fresh bread, meats, a jar of olives, tomatoes and more treats from his pack, Ethem wondered aloud why we hadn’t been curious about the difficult climb. “Because we’re trying to find a mature ibex?” I surmised. No, said Ali, explaining there are many nice ibex in the area that could be spotted without this much effort. “But the largest one this year lives on this mountain in Kaan’s toughest hunting area,” he said. A shepherd shared with Kaan that he’d spotted an outstanding ibex in the area so Ali, who might actually be part goat, made the climb to confirm it. As proof, Ethem showed us a slightly blurry cell-phone photo of the billy. “If you’d shown us that at the bottom of the mountain, it would have made the climb easier,” Phil said.

We spent the rest of the day glassing every nook and cranny of the mountain,



The hunting couple made time during their *shikar* to tour Turkish sights including Kaunos and the Dalko caviar facility.

to no success. When the wind picked up at sunset, we started picking our way back down the mountain.

But then Ali looked back up the canyon and saw him through his spotting scope, feeding near the cliff ledge, a magnificent sight even at 800 yards. We probably had 30 minutes of light left. The ibex was just too far, and it was too late. Not for Ali.

Ali motioned for us to follow him. Hearts pumping, we went back up through a boulder field as fast as we could. We relocated the billy, but by the time we got to an opening to see across the canyon, we'd only gained 200 yards and only had 10 minutes of shooting light left. Ali adjusted the rifle atop his pack and I laid prone at 600 yards, admiring it through my Zeiss Conquest v6 scope, estimating a 25-30 mph crosswind. Though I could hit a gong at 700 yards, I couldn't be sure what the wind would do to the bullet at that distance. I wouldn't take a chance on this incredible animal. I offered to sleep on the mountain, but was overruled. With the last bit of light, we gathered our gear and descended. Would I ever set eyes on that ibex again?

It was dark when we started the road trip back to camp, guzzling water and eating bananas. Ethem broke the silence by giving hope of finding the billy at the same spot come morning, as ibex tend not to travel much at night.

Over dinner, I reflected on that beautiful ibex and how much I hoped to get one. Ethem assured me there were many other quality ibex to be had. "Don't worry ... we won't have to do that climb again."

"Oh, no," I said. "There is no way we're not going after *that* one. Maybe we



GEAR FOR THE GOAT

My .28 Nosler M48 Mountain Carbon rifle powered by Nosler's 175-grain AccuBond Long Range ammunition was ideal for this Turkish mountain hunt. At 6 pounds, the glass and aluminum pillar-bedded custom-action M48 is lightweight, accurate, balanced and withstands a beating, thanks to a carbon-fiber ultra-light stock and fore-end and carbon-wrapped, match-grade barrel. My rifle of choice on several elk hunts, it also proved its worth at a Sportsman's All-Weather All-Terrain Marksmanship course at the FTW Ranch in Barksdale, Texas, where its guaranteed sub-MOA accuracy when using Nosler ammo had me consistently hitting gongs at 700 yards. nosler.com

I topped it with the versatile Zeiss Conquest v6 3-18x50, which Zeiss labels "the epitome of a hunting rifle scope" for its image precision and reliability. The second-focal-plane illuminated MOA-based reticle's higher-power levels aid mid- and long-range pursuits in all lighting conditions. Having more than 100 minutes of elevation adjustment means accuracy at longer distances and, thanks to Zeiss' solid Ballistic Stop, you know you are zeroed every time. You can choose from two second focal plane MOA-based smart reticles: ZBR-2 and ZMOA-2, both of which will help you make out every detail on an ibex. zeiss.com

For more on that SAAM course, confidence under pressure requires training in all conditions. We hunters invest time and money in our adventures and have so much riding on that one shot. Knowing a shot opportunity could come at a greater distance than when going with a "2 inches high at 100 yards" sight-in process for an East Coast whitetail hunt, SAAM course instructors, who all have Special Ops training, had me working those windage and elevation turrets nonstop. ftwsaam.com

should leave earlier tomorrow." Ethem translated this for Ali, who grinned at me, happy to have a client who was willing to hunt so hard for a worthy animal. Then Kaan called. He said his office had Phil's permit, but he'd just lost his other court case. Turkey's hunting season was closing in two days.

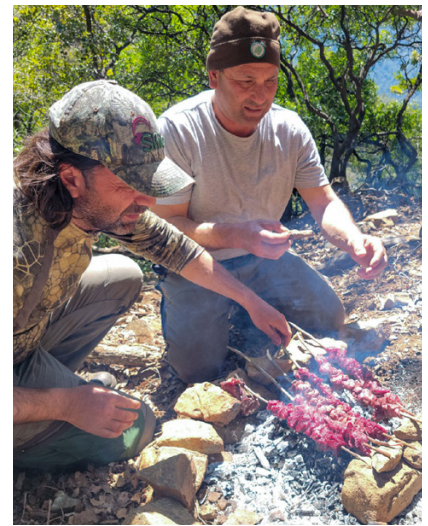
It's hard to fathom that animal rights extremists had just shut down your hunt—*during* your hunt, 6,500 miles from home—derailing a trip that was years in the making. Fortunately, Kaan delivered the bad news without demotivating the hunt party, still confident we'd both get an ibex. He called in more guides to help scout, and suggested we split up to maximize our odds. Phil was off the hook for repeating that climb, though it was bittersweet since sharing

in each other's experience is part of what made the trip so special. Phil agreed to swap his bow for a rifle, as Kaan's prime archery areas were already closed. A two-day hunt was better than no hunt.



At 4:30 a.m., Phil headed out with Ethem and two new guides. I jumped in a truck with Ali and new friends Musa and Erol, none of whom spoke English, and headed for my mountain. I started climbing, employing the "mind-over-matter" trick in order to focus on getting past the next boulder. Maybe my ibex was bedded where we'd left him. No such luck. The morning light revealed mountains rising abruptly in all directions. The billy had plenty of options.

We moved toward the next mountain. I sucked in a couple deep breaths



Phil Phillips' ibex was only a year younger than the author's but its body was 30 percent smaller, as coastal members of the species are typically smaller.

realizing again that not all mountains are created equal. The guides, especially Ali, moved like goats themselves and seemed to quicken their pace. *How does Ali carry that pack?* I wondered. I tried to keep up, wondering what they were saying. Every so often they'd take a break, probably more for my benefit, to smoke a cigarette as I wondered how they moved so effortlessly, while sweat ran down my back.

Suddenly Ali was excited. I called his name, pointed to him, then to my eyes and then made a curved-horn motion over my head, trying to ask if he saw the billy. "Yes." That word was an energy jolt. As we maneuvered around the mountain and over to the next one, Ali was trying to tell me the billy was near the creek at the bottom of the next mountain. Many minutes later, we were clunking along that creek, which was dry in parts, making for a noisy trek. The sound of running water in the distance helped to mask our approach. The creek bottom was thick with brush, but the guides still picked out the goat on the next mountain. At least I thought that was what was happening. I still hadn't seen it.

Ali stopped abruptly. He turned to me and made a horn-shaped gesture above his head. He could see the ibex. He whispered, "300," which I hoped meant yards. He dropped his backpack and positioned it atop a couple big rocks for what I guessed was to be my rifle rest. I still didn't see the ibex, but setting up was a good sign. I raised my Leica rangefinder

binocular and found the billy near a ledge, struck by his curving horns and dangling beard as he munched foliage in the sunlight. He was just over 300 yards. I'd been given a gift. I settled the crosshairs on him and fired. Then he vanished.

I rose my head off the Nosler to look at Ali, who motioned for me to lay still. The guides stared through their binoculars, crouched around me. I picked up mine, trying to find the goat that should have been on the ground. No one said a word. Ali was so serious that I almost doubted my shot. After what seemed like a whole minute, he turned to me and, in his best English, said, "Ibex is kaput."

It's a humbling and spiritual moment when you approach a once vibrant animal that stirred your soul. I touched its coat and horns and beheld its natural beauty with Ali, who said, "Eleven years old." While Turkey has a variety of big-game species, this one had to be its most prized. We took photos and then Ali and Musa skinned and quartered it, then Erol cooked the backstrap on tree-branch skewers over an open fire. With no one to talk to, I silently hoped Phil was having luck, too.

I've heard many hunters say, "If I can just get this one animal, I never need to hunt again." That's exactly how I felt as I relived every second of the morning. While such sentiment may fade by the next hunting trip, if I'd used up all my hunting luck on this ibex hunt, I was OK with that. How could I deserve anything beyond this moment?



Back in camp for dinner, I was excited to show Phil my billy, and he was more excited for me than he would have been for himself, knowing I'd dreamed of taking this animal for years. Though he'd seen a couple nice billys amid the cliffs near the sea, none were quite mature enough, and he was down to the last day.

My hunting party joined Phil's the next morning to help scout. The clock was ticking, but no one mentioned it. Kaan was too far away to reach us, but he'd given us good reinforcements. There was no guarantee Phil would see the right ibex, but we'd leave this place knowing Kaan had given it his all as he helped us face circumstances that were no fault of his own. Uncertainty and change are inescapable parts of hunting, but losing a week of hunting on the trip of a lifetime stung even more.

Phil toted my .28 Nosler for luck as we headed out with Ali, Ethem and company, who spotted three good billys midmorning in the area Phil hunted the previous day. They all looked good at 350 yards, maybe 200 yards below us. But as the guides chatted in Turkish, it appeared there was something special about the one that offered no view to the vitals. The goats bedded and we got comfortable. Phil anchored the rifle on a boulder and waited. Two hours later, they rose. Phil nestled the Nosler and waited for the perfect shot. The side view of a majestic bezoar ibex never gets old. Phil fired.

Descending 200 yards almost straight down in spots then trekking 350 yards packed with boulders to reach the billy



SHIKAR SAFARIS: TURKEY AND BEYOND

was tougher than it looked and took longer than imagined. Why did I always have to relearn that?

As we admired Phil's ibex, Ethem identified it as 10 years old. While it was only a year younger than mine and its horns were only a few inches shorter, its body was 30 percent smaller. We took photos and the crew skinned and quartered it and carved out the backstrap and Phil enjoyed the same dining experience I had, eating backstrap chunks off skewers. A meal could not be more healthy, fresh or rewarding. And when you are physically spent and famished and living in the moment, you are certain it is the best thing you have ever eaten.

Coastal ibex like Phil's, Kaan explained, are typically smaller. The area Phil hunted was where game managers trapped ibex that were taken to nearby Greek Islands hundreds of years ago to establish what is now called the "kri-kri" ibex.

"Phil, you know I've always wanted to go to the Greek Islands," I said, pondering ibexin' with a bow. Phil said, "I think I know where we're hunting ibex next."

Two months later at the NRA Annual Meetings in Houston, Kaan joined us at the NRA HLF dinner. He was hopeful about Turkey, saying hog hunting had reopened. But as of this writing in January, he said ibex hunting remains closed in our hunt area and others. "The people who are trying to stop hunting don't understand how hunting works," he said. So, we wait. Turkey's government is pro-hunting, we know. So we hope its wildlife department changes some regulations so the antis don't win the game.

Epilogue

This article is dedicated to dear friend, World War II veteran and noted big-game hunter Chris Klineberger (1927-2020), who inspired me to use hunting to travel the world. The author of two books, *Gamemasters of the World* and

Conservation or Preservation, he also is known for his epic 1960s hunting film, "The Great Shikar," chronicling the expedition he and brother Bert made in the footsteps of adventurer Marco Polo as they searched for the fabled Marco Polo sheep in Afghanistan. A founding member of SCI, Chris helped to open Africa to international hunting in what is now Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Botswana, and he worked political connections in Asia, opening hunting in Iran, Mongolia, Nepal, the Soviet Union and in most countries ending in "stan." Thank you, Chris, for working for us all to establish hunting and conservation programs that today sustain wild game worldwide. **ah**

The word "shikar" is the Asian equivalent of "safari." Shikar Safaris is based in Turkey and has been organizing hunts in Asia and Europe for more than 25 years. Outfitter Kaan Karakaya and his staff know their destinations well and have built teams of professionals who assist you from the time you arrive throughout your stay. Kaan has organized more than 3,500 successful hunts accounting for numerous world record game animals taken for those interested in hunting for the biggest of the big. If you're shopping for your own ibex hunt or any other species available in Kaan's part of the world, he has the hunt for you. Email Kaan at kaan@kaan-karakaya.com. **shikarsafaris.com**



EXPLORE TURKEY

If one good thing came out of having our hunt cut short, it was having more time to tour this unforgettable place bridging the continents of Europe and Asia. Turkey's diverse traditions, religions, histories, landscapes and cuisine reflect the many different groups that conquered it over thousands of years, from the Hittites to the Romans and Ottomans. Outfitter Kaan Karakaya set us up on sightseeing and museum tours in his hometown of Antalya in southwest Turkey on the Mediterranean Sea, where we saw what remained of an ancient wall along the water where Marc Antony once fired arrows at invading ships. We visited the ancient city Lycia along the "Turquoise Coast" and went to Myra to visit Santa Claus—as in the real Saint Nicholas—and the Church of St. Nicholas built in 520 AD on the foundations of where he once served as bishop. We visited Kaunos, famous for its 3,000-year-old stone graves built into the mountainside. We went fishing, admired waterfalls, toured the Dalko caviar facility and soaked our muscles in an ancient Turkish mud bath. The highlight of every morning was breakfast in the hotel dining room. It rivaled any buffet in the world—and the local honey was amazing.



CVA Cascade XT

By Mark Kayser, Field Editor

CVA keeps making customers happy. With their leap forward in the precision Paramount series of muzzleloaders to their slide into the Cascade centerfire market, not to mention a plethora of muzzleloaders to fit any hunting scenario or budget, they keep delivering.

The Cascade rifle series includes the matte blue version, a Cerakote model and, released in 2021, the Cascade SB or short barrel. Make room. The engineers at CVA are adding another version to the Cascade lineup, the XT. What sets the XT apart? The CVA Cascade team added a heavier, fluted barrel for increased accuracy in a hunting rifle. Out of the box, the 6.5 Creedmoor shipped to me looked the part of a dependable hunting partner. The attributes were readily visible.

As a team member in Bergara, CVA has access to Bergara's famed barrels, and the XT uses a fluted, No. 5 taper carbon-steel barrel as the launching pad. A Cerakote graphite black finish protects the barrel. It is the heaviest barrel in the Cascade series. Nevertheless, CVA understands that you do not want to carry a boat anchor, so fluting equals weight savings while increasing precision capabilities. Rate of twist varies with the corresponding caliber. The 6.5

Creedmoor test rifle I shot. It falls just outside the mountain rifle category for weight, but barely. After adding the SIERRA6 riflescope, my XT still weighed less than 8.5 pounds. That is a number I am comfortable with toting up any mountain. And to ensure you have the force behind you for your quarry, CVA offers the Cascade XT in eight calibers ranging from the versatile varmint caliber of .223 Remington to the pile driving .450 Bushmaster. In between you will find a selection of calibers to tackle everything from pronghorn to moose. Additional calibers include the 6.5 Creedmoor, 6.5 PRC, 7mm Remington Magnum, .308 Winchester, .300 Winchester Magnum and 350 Legend.

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The barrel length on the 6.5 Creedmoor is a comfortably spry 22 inches long making it compact enough to weave in and out of brush-country situations. Of course, it does not have quite the maneuverability of the Cascade Short Barrel, but it does not mimic the flailing of a long-barreled goose shotgun.

CVA understands the market demands ease in riflescope mounting and the Cascade XT delivers. It arrives with two Picatinny bases already installed. Choose your favorite rings and a scope for quick setup. I leveled and mounted a SIERRA-6BDX 3-18x44mm riflescope in a matter of minutes with the factory installed bases. CVA also offers one-piece bases from their online accessory store.

One aspect that the CVA Cascade delivers on, XT version aside, is weight savings. The XT continues that trend weighing in at 7.25 pounds for the 6.5

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The free-floated stock is durable, like a coated truck bed. Constructed of synthetic and reinforced with fiberglass, the stock has the makings to withstand any bashing in the natural or truck cab environment you can give it. To guarantee a solid grip, CVA enhances the stock with what they call a Soft Touch finish. Checking in the forearm and pistol grip enhances handling further. Those characters, combined with the lightweight character, make throwing the rifle to your cheek an easy and natural action.

An admirable trait of CVA's Cascade series is the ability to adjust the stock to fit varying length-of-pull shooters.



Regardless if you purchase the rifle for yourself, a youth or a female hunter, the buttstock of the XT has a built-in spacer to add or remove for LOP adjustability from 13 to 14 inches. The Crushzone recoil pad flexes just enough to absorb return energy from the shot of the 6.5 Creedmoor and although I did not test a larger caliber, it, combined with the muzzle brake, should team well to tame the beast. The recoil pad swaps easily while changing LOP.

A subtle, but pleasing feature is the addition of dual front swivel studs in the forearm. As a fan of the bipod, this allows you to attach a bipod separately from the sling, keeping the two separate for quick detachment or other tweaking as needed.

The XT's one-piece action operates smoothly and I was impressed with the effortless 70-degree action throw. A short throw provides more scope leeway and faster cycling of another cartridge. A three-lug bolt combined with a sliding plate extractor perform the chores of cartridge insertion with purpose. A handy button at the rear of the action allows for easy removal of the bolt. The entire receiver is formed from 4140 carbon steel giving the working portion of the rifle a sturdy platform. The two-position



safety is conveniently located forward of the pistol grip and affirms on and off with a reassuring click for operation. The single-stage trigger arrives from the factory set at 3 pounds with adjustability from 2 to 4 pounds.

For weight and presumably cost savings, the trigger guard, floorplate and magazine are a plastic composite. The removable four-cartridge magazine fits flush to the bottom of the stock and springs out surprisingly well with the simple press of a latch button. You can purchase a spare from CVA. Instead of adding a buttstock cartridge holder to a rifle, I prefer another loaded magazine ready to insert when extra cartridges are required quickly.

One of the most innovative elements

of the XT is that CVA allows you to purchase the rifle and test it for 14 days to ensure the CVA guaranteed MOA is acceptable. Seems sensible to me. *ah*

CVA CASCADE XT

cva.com

- **Type:** bolt-action centerfire rifle
- **Caliber:** .223 Rem., 6.5 Creedmoor (tested), 6.5 PRC, 7mm Rem. Mag., .308 Win., .300 Win. Mag., 350 Legend, .450 Bushmaster
- **Magazine:** removable box; 4-rnd. capacity
- **Barrel:** 22" (tested)–24"; No. 5 taper; fluted; button rifled; 1:8" RH twist; threaded 5/8x24 w/radial muzzle brake
- **Trigger:** single stage; pull weight adjustable 2–4 lbs.
- **Sights:** none; two-piece Picatinny bases included
- **Safety:** two-position toggle
- **Stock:** straight comb; synthetic w/fiber-glass reinforcement; SoftTouch finish, Realtree Wav3X camo; LOP adjustable 13"–14"; dual front swivel studs
- **Metal Finish:** Cerakote graphite black
- **Overall Length:** 44"
- **Weight:** 7.25 lbs.
- **Accessories:** none
- **MSRP:** \$799



Accuracy Results* CVA Cascade XT 6.5 Creedmoor

Load	Weight (grs.)	Velocity (fps)	Group Size (inches)		
			Smallest	Average	Largest
Hornady Precision Hunter	143	2700	0.78	0.94	1.10
Hornady Match	140	2710	0.70	0.83	0.95
ArmScorUSA ELD-Match	140	2750	0.73	0.83	0.92

* Outdoors | Sandbags | 100 Yards | 3-Shot Group

A detailed photograph of a CZ 600 Trail rifle, shown in a three-quarter view from the left. The rifle is black with a textured grip and a long, adjustable stock. The receiver is visible, showing the CZ logo and the number '6071118'. The barrel is long and has a Picatinny rail. The background is dark, making the rifle stand out.

hw
RIFLE

CZ 600 Trail

By Frank Melloni

Sometimes the best places for success are also the most inaccessible, and you'd have to be a fool to believe that is by accident. As hunting pressure increases, wildlife will literally head for the hills, leaving you with a laborious pursuit. A favorite spot in the Catskill mountains comes to mind as I type this. While a fit hunter can still score a win in this locale, it will require both lightweight and compact gear to make the journey. Over the years, I perfected my kit, stripping down to the bare essentials and finding clothing that was warm enough for the sit, yet breathable enough for the hike. Coupled with a lightweight climber and a tiny daypack, I had most of my gear worked out, except for the firearm. A rifle was required for the hunt, as 200-plus-yard shots were on the table, but one strapped to my back always found a way of clanking against the metal frame of my treestand, essentially turning the two into a warning bell. What I needed was a compact rifle that could be packed inside my bag, which in turn would also make it effortless to hoist into my stand. That solution finally came in the CZ 600 Trail.

The Trail is part of CZ's new 600 series of bolt-action rifles. Originally

intended as a switch-barrel platform, CZ decided against it shortly after the first of the 600 series rifles left the loading dock. Instead, the company settled on two chamberings for the 600 Trail: .223 Rem. (tested) and 7.62x39mm. The two choices make excellent hunting cartridges and cover game that ranges from fox to whitetail deer. While both versions have their intricacies, the most defining feature of this model is its four-position collapsible stock. When retracted, the CZ 600 Trail presents a footprint that is scant longer than 27 inches, allowing it to be packed away into even a modest backpack. The secondary feature responsible for its compact nature is its 16.2-inch barrel. Sparing no expense, CZ crafts these with cold hammer-forged rifling at a rate of 1:7-inch (for .223 Rem.), which is ideal for even the heaviest bullets in this caliber. It is finished with a 1/2x28 thread pitch for the easy addition of a flash or sound suppressor or even a muzzle brake if noise isn't a concern. At its core is a weight-saving aluminum receiver that is home to a three-lug controlled-feed bolt that requires just 60 degrees of lift to cycle. This abbreviated stroke will hasten follow-up shots and help to keep your body movement down as you chamber that first round.

The furniture on the 600 Trail is built explicitly for an endurance hunt or one in the tight confines of a crowded blind; you take your pick. Extending it requires nothing more than the depression of the tang-mounted release button, and the user can stop it at two spots along the way or rip it all the way out to its fully extended position. If you've done that math right, you've already realized that this design allows the 600 Trail to fire with the stock completely closed. This is a handy feature when on the fly or if you need to stay as tight as possible to eliminate detection. The Trail is built with an AR-style pistol grip that nearly everybody is going to find cozy, particularly since the backstraps can be changed to accommodate various hand sizes. Lastly, a 10-inch aluminum free-float fore-end sleeves the barrel and is cut with 270 degrees of M-LOK slotting for the addition of game lights, bipods or sling hardware. At the 12 o'clock position sits a full-length Picatinny rail that is perfect for forward-mounted IR or thermal imaging devices. When used in conjunction with the receiver portion of the rail, it also makes for an adequate means of mounting iron sights. Of course, most folks are going to use said rail to clamp on an optic, and I can't say that there are any wrong choices. Red dots are a good pick because of their unlimited eye relief. This allows for a usable sight picture when shooting with the stock pushed in, as well as when it is fully outstretched. Low-power variable optics also have



a bunch of utility because their typical magnification ranges complement cartridges like the .223 and 7.62x39mm. For my testing, I slapped on a Riton 3-15x Primal because I was more concerned with a repeatable sight picture than anything else.

I selected a realistic array of loads for my evaluation, keeping solely to hunting-grade fodder. At the end of it all, I'm only interested in what a gun will do with ammunition for its intended purpose. I kicked things off by setting up a solid benchrest position and dialing in an initial zero. My .223 test sample fed from conventional AR-15 magazines, which allows for easy solutions if either state or wild-life management regulations cap your capacity. Also familiar was the AR-style safety selector, which is built for bilateral operation. Additionally, so is the ambidextrous magazine catch, which doubles your options for loading and unloading in a pinch. After touching off my first round, I deemed the stock system to provide adequate comfort, which is always a

concern for minimalist designs like this one. I will note that the cheek pad is only designed for right-handed use, but firing off the left shoulder without injury isn't an issue. That's important because whatever shoulder you plan on shooting from, the deer will almost always come out on the other side.

Overall accuracy was excellent, well within minute of fox or coyote. Throughout the course, we printed several sub-MOA groups with the gun simply loving the inexpensive Federal Power-Shok ammunition. After cleaning up the zero, I took to some common field positions to exploit the lightweight nature of the Trail. Without question, it was a dream to shoot. Offhand shots were effortless as there wasn't much mass to balance, and dropping to the kneeling and prone positions allowed for clean impacts on our 100-yard test target. All the while, we experienced flawless feeding and cycling as well as authoritative ejections that kept the action clear no matter how gingerly the bolt was thrown.



The CZ 600 Trail proved to be a handy little rifle that can down game in hard-to-find places, all without alerting everything with fur that you have moved into the woods. Its lighter chamberings make it easy for recoil-shy shooters to field and makes it ideal for target work too. At the end of the day, this is an excellent gun for any hunter to own and will see plenty of range use in between seasons. If nothing else, it's easy to stow away, leaving room in the safe for that ever-growing collection. **dh**

CZ 600 TRAIL

cz-usa.com

- **Type:** bolt-action centerfire rifle
- **Caliber:** .223 Rem. (tested), 7.62x39mm
- **Magazine:** detachable AR-style, 10-rnd. capacity
- **Barrel:** 16.2"; carbon steel; semi-heavy contour; cold hammer-forged; 1:7" RH twist, 6 grooves; threaded 1/2"x28 w/cap
- **Trigger:** two-stage; adjustable pull weight 2 lbs., 1 oz., -3 lbs., 9 ozs.
- **Sights:** none; Picatinny rail for optics
- **Safety:** two-position, AR-style
- **Stock:** PDW-style; collapsible; 5.75"-13.75" LOP; free-floating, 10" aluminum fore-end w/M-LOK slots
- **Metal Finish:** blued
- **Overall Length:** 27.2"-35"
- **Weight:** 6.01 lbs.
- **Accessories:** none
- **MSRP:** \$1,155



Accuracy Results* CZ 600 Trail .223 Rem.

Load	Weight (grs.)	Velocity (fps)	Group Size (inches)		
			Smallest	Average	Largest
Federal Fusion Soft Point	62	2736	1.07	1.46	1.98
Federal Power-Shok	64	2827	0.88	1.10	1.30
Nosler Ballistic Tip	55	2754	0.94	1.36	2.01

* Outdoors | Caldwell Rock Rest + Rear Bag | 100 Yards | 3-Shot Group



Hornady 7mm PRC

By Philip Massaro, Field Editor

The September weather in British Columbia had turned warm, too warm, which did not bode well for our group of hunters. We held tags for moose, elk and black bears, and we were on a mission to test the new Savage Impulse Mountain Hunter rifle chambered in the equally new Hornady 7mm PRC cartridge; though the weather was not going to cooperate. All the range time had shown that this new cartridge was plenty accurate, and a 7mm magnum cartridge certainly makes for a sound all-around choice for North America. So with a flat-shooting new cartridge in a slick straight-pull rifle with a carbon-fiber barrel, we headed afield to put the combo to work. Paired with Leupold's Shawn Skipper, I had an opportunity on day one, when a black bear stood still for just a bit too long; and the first bear taken with the 7mm PRC was in the books.

The 7mm PRC is the third in Hornady's

line of Precision Rifle Cartridges, coming after the 6.5 PRC and .300 PRC. Where the 6.5 PRC is designed to fit in a short-action receiver, and the .300 PRC needs a magnum-length receiver, the 7mm PRC uses a standard long-receiver. Like its two older siblings, this is a rimless cartridge without a belt, using the 30-degree shoulder for headspacing. The case has a rim diameter of .532 inch—the same as the Holland & Holland family of belted magnums—and minimal body taper, to give plenty of case capacity. However, keeping in the theme of the other PRC cartridges and many newer case designs, the case length measures just 2.280 inches, in order to leave plenty of room outside the case for a long, sleek bullet of high ballistic coefficient (BC) to give the best long-range performance. The cartridge overall length for the 7mm PRC is 3.340 inches (comparable to the .30-06 Springfield or .300 Winchester Magnum), with a neck length of 0.287 inches, or just over one caliber, which offers proper neck tension.

One of the unique features of the 7mm PRC is that even the longest projectiles won't extend downward into the case and compromise the powder capacity; in fact the vast majority of projectiles will have the shank/boattail junction aligned with the base of the case neck. Nothing is more frustrating than trying to take full advantage of the case capacity of a large cartridge by mating it with a high BC bullet, only to find the ogive is so long that the cartridge ends up so long it will not fit in the magazine, or that the bullet had run into the lands of the rifling. Reducing the case length—as is the case with the 6.5 Creedmoor, 6.8 Western and the PRC line—allows the use of the longer, sleeker bullets; the BC of a bullet can have more influence on downrange performance than will 100 fps of velocity. This is just one reason that these modern designs are changing the game.

Armed with a barrel using a 1:8-inch twist, the 7mm PRC has three factory loads as of this writing: a 160-grain CX



bullet at 3000 fps in the Outfitter ammo line, a 175-grain ELD-X at 3000 fps in the Precision Hunter line and a 180-grain ELD Match bullet at 2975 fps in the Match ammo line. I had the opportunity to use the latter at the SAAM Shooting course at the FTW Ranch in Barksdale, Texas, where we took the 7mm PRC out to 1,400 yards on steel targets. I took the aforementioned black bear in British Columbia, as well as a pronghorn antelope at the Lander One Shot Antelope Hunt in Wyoming the week before, with the 175-grain ELD-X load. The bear was taken at about 75 yards, and the antelope at 330 yards. Another hunter used the 160-grain CX bullet to cleanly take a bull moose on that British Columbia hunt, giving a quick, humane kill. Hornady's Precision Hunter and Match ammunition is loaded in brass cases, while the Outfitter series sees the copper-alloy monometal CX bullet loaded in nickel-plated cases, to best resist corrosion.

The 7mm PRC compares favorably with the other 7mm magnums, as it will offer roughly the same velocity range as the highly popular 7mm Remington Magnum, yet will not exhibit the case stretching issues associated with the belted cartridges, and the 7mm PRC

can offer better chamber concentricity because it headspaces off the shoulder. I feel the 7mm PRC handles the heavy-for-caliber bullets in the 7mm bore diameter better than the vast majority of other cartridges, especially when using bullets designed for long-range shooting.

Having spent time with the 7mm PRC in a Remington Model 700 at the FTW Ranch, and in the Savage Impulse Mountain Hunter in Wyoming, British Columbia and here at my range in New York, I had no issues with feeding or extraction whatsoever. I found the 7mm PRC to have less recoil than most of the 7mm Remington Magnums I've shot, and certainly less than that of the 7mm Weatherby Magnum or 7mm STW. While certainly not as easy on the shoulder as a 7mm-08 Remington or 7x57 Mauser, I had no problem with the recoil of the 7mm PRC at the bench, from a prone position or in the hunting fields.

Taking the Savage rifle to the range to test all three loads, I found that all printed sub-MOA groups, with the 175-grain ELD-X load giving the tightest groups. Velocities were close to the advertised values, with the worst extreme velocity spread being 51 fps in the 160-grain CX load. The carbon fiber barrel of the Savage Impulse Mountain Hunter handled the heat very well, and were I going to build a 7mm PRC rifle for competitive shooting, I would probably lean in that direction for a barrel choice.

Looking at the downrange hunting performance of the 7mm PRC, you will see that when using a 200-yard zero, the 175-grain ELD-X load will drop just 34.2 inches at 500 yards, still retaining over 2,100 ft.-lbs. of energy. My test rifle was topped with a Leupold VX-5HD 3-15x44mm scope—which I consider to be a fantastic choice in magnification range, elevation adjustment, length and weight—which had an elevation turret specially compensated for the trajectory of the 175-grain ELD-X load. Marked in yardage, all one has to do is range the target, dial that distance on the turret and hold directly on the target for elevation. Combine a hard-hitting cartridge, an accurate rifle and a compensated scope with excellent glass, and you've got a rig capable of handling all sorts of hunting scenarios. From deer and black bear in the woods of the northeast, to the pronghorns on the Great Plains and sheep in the mountains, from the diminutive Coues deer across the desert flats to a regal bull elk on the other side of the canyon, and from an aoudad ram on the distant rimrock to a bull moose in the alders, the 7mm PRC will handle it all, and I wouldn't hesitate to take it to Africa for any and all plains game species.

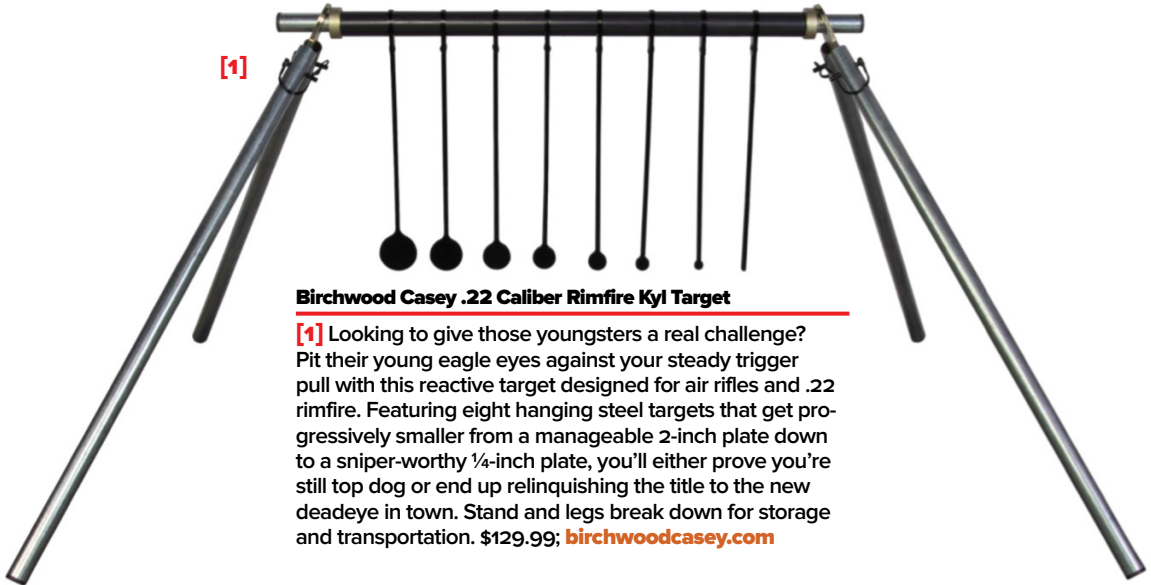
I personally feel the 7mm PRC is the best of the family, as it offers the familiar performance of the great 7mm bullets, in a package best suited for the longer shots. Well done, Hornady; I think you've got a winner here. **ah**

Accuracy Results* **Hornady** 7mm PRC

Load	Weight (grs.)	Velocity (fps)	Group Size (inches)		
			Smallest	Average	Largest
Hornady Outfitter	160	3000	0.85	0.92	0.98
Hornady Precision Hunter	175	3000	0.63	0.72	0.90
Hornady Match	180	2975	0.83	0.89	0.95

* Outdoors | Sandbags | 100 Yards | 3-Shot Group

Make Spring Training a Blast



Birchwood Casey .22 Caliber Rimfire Kyl Target

[1] Looking to give those youngsters a real challenge? Pit their young eagle eyes against your steady trigger pull with this reactive target designed for air rifles and .22 rimfire. Featuring eight hanging steel targets that get progressively smaller from a manageable 2-inch plate down to a sniper-worthy ¼-inch plate, you'll either prove you're still top dog or end up relinquishing the title to the new deadeye in town. Stand and legs break down for storage and transportation. \$129.99; birchwoodcasey.com



Gamo Swarm Fusion 10X GEN3I Air Rifle

[2] In .177 caliber at 1650 fps or in .22 caliber capable of 1300 fps, this is the most advanced break barrel air rifle we've ever seen. Rapid-Reload Technology utilizes a 10-round, inertia-fed magazine that indexes with the recoil of the rifle; all you need to do is break the barrel to cock and you're ready to fire. Features a sound moderator to keep things quiet, an adjustable two-stage CAT trigger and the RRR recoil-reducing optics rail that reduces scope-busting recoil stresses by nearly 100 percent. \$293.90; gamousa.com

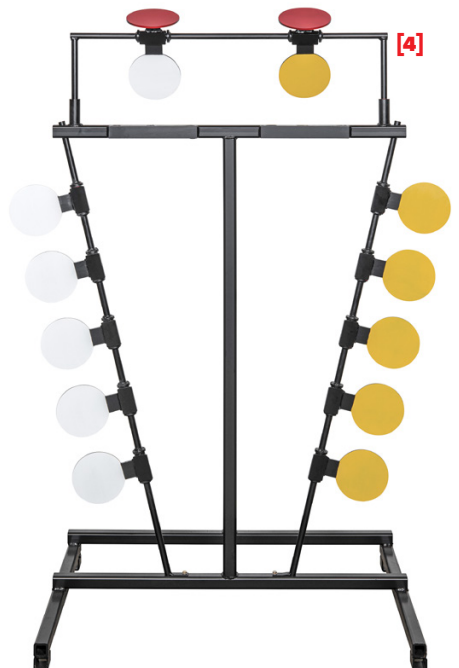
Walker's Disruptor Earbuds

[3] These wireless rechargeable earbuds are a complete sound management system packed with advanced audio tech. Protect your ears from harmful noises like gunshots, while four microphones provide 360 degrees of sound enhancement. Controlled on your smartphone or device via Bluetooth with the Walker's Link 2.0 app, users can change settings, adjust volume and even listen to music and movies. \$279.99; walkersgameear.com



Revolution Targets Portable Dueling Tree

[4] Made for handgun and rimfire calibers, this target is designed for two shooters to go head-to-head where speed is the name of the game. The made-in-America dueling tree features five, 6-inch rotating ¼-inch-thick AR500-steel plates on each side and two weighted stop plates on top, for a total of 12 reactive shootable targets. Target stands about 6 feet tall and features greaseable pivot points for extended life. \$1,825; revolutiontargets.com



[5]



Caldwell AR500 33% Pepper Popper Auto Reset Target

[5] Turn your backyard range into a reactive shooting gallery. Constructed using AR500 rifle-rated target-steel, this highly visible, 14-inch-tall pepper popper target is capable of withstanding impact velocities up to 3000 fps and energy up to 3,500 ft.-lbs. A 7-inch-tall frame keeps it out of the weeds, and the integrated spring automatically resets the steel plate after each hit. Includes ground stakes. \$99.99; caldwellshooting.com

[6]



Champion Freedombird Electronic Auto Feed Trap

[6] Take your wingshooting game to the next level, or just seriously increase your fun quota on the backyard range. This thrower features a flurry-fast cycle time of less than one second, is adjustable for angle and range out to 90 yards, and sports the ability to throw standard or mini clays with a 50-clay hopper. Built on a wheeled cart and comes with a corded foot pedal and wireless remote. \$629.99; championtarget.com

[7]



Delta McKenzie Big 8 XL Archery Target

[7] Designed with eight sides to give you the maximum shooting area, this 20-inch target sports a variety of white and green aiming points. Made of a durable poured foam that is touted to last 8X longer than traditional layered targets, the Big 8 can stop arrows from both vertical bows and crossbows, with field points or broadheads. Arrows pull easily. Features a replaceable core and molded-in handles. \$245.99; dmtargets.com

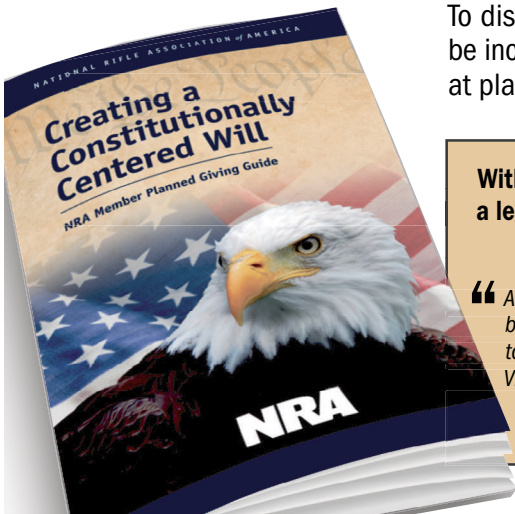


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**Consult with an attorney in your state of residence to finalize your gift language.*



GUN SALES REMAIN STRONG

Photo by NRA

LATEST LEGISLATIVE NEWS FROM INSIDE THE NRA INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Recent Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) statistics on the “top ten highest days” for National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) firearm background checks reveal that seven of these “top ten” dates occurred after Joe Biden was sworn in as president on Jan. 20, 2021. While NICS numbers are lower overall for 2022 than 2021, last year’s “Black Friday” (Nov. 25) still clocked in as the latest of the “top ten” days.

Background-check numbers don’t represent firearm sales exclusively or correlate exactly to the number of firearms sold, but they are broadly indicative of sales trends and, by

implication, the growth of the gun-owning community. Adjusted NICS data from the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), which subtracts transactions coded for carry-permit checks and re-checks from the overall NICS figures, confirm that gun sales remain consistently strong despite record-breaking inflation. December was the 40th consecutive month in which the number of likely sales-related NICS verifications exceeded one million. As we went to press for this issue, total sales-related checks for 2022 were estimated to be nearing 16 million, representing the “third-strongest year-to-date on record for sales, running just behind 2020 and 2021.”

More And More Americans Carry Firearms For Personal Protection

Another valuable indicator of how Americans really feel about their Second Amendment rights is the number of concealed-carry permits. In November, Dr. John Lott’s Crime Prevention Research Center (CPRC) published its latest annual report, *Concealed Carry Permit Holders Across the United States: 2022*.

According to the report, there are now at least 22.1 million concealed-carry permittees in the United States, compared to 2.7 million in 1999. The number continues to grow even as more and more states embrace constitutional (permitless) carry. Overall, 8.5% of American adults have concealed-carry permits; in 17 states, more than 10% of adults have permits, and in some places the percentage is much higher. “In 2018, there is at least one county in

Alabama where almost two-thirds of the adults have a concealed handgun permit (Cleburne with 64.6%). In 2017, there were five counties in Pennsylvania that had between 30% and 50% of their adult populations with concealed handgun permits” On the flip side, in California, Hawaii, Maryland, New Jersey and Rhode Island—states where the government imposes draconian restrictions on lawfully carrying a firearm—fewer than 1% of adults have permits.

The concealed-carry community continues to grow increasingly diverse. Information from the 15 states that track permittees by sex indicates that women made for 29.2% of permit holders, up from 28.3% last year. Looking at the seven states where such data is available for 2012 and 2021-2022, “the number of permits increased

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by 278% for women and by 129% for men—a 115.4% faster rate among women.” Although few states release data on the race of permit holders, the available information likewise suggests that permit issuance for minorities is increasing exponentially and, in some cases, outpaces the rate for white permittees. “When permit data is broken down by [both] race and gender, we find that black females have had the fastest growth, especially during the pandemic. The rates of permit holding among American Indian, Asian, Black, and White females all grew much faster than the rates for males in those racial groups.”

On the relationship between crime rates and concealed-carry permitting, the report notes that, generally, permit holders tend to be exceptionally law-abiding and, as “permit holders commit virtually no crimes, right-to-carry laws can’t increase violent crime rates.” According to the CPRC, the 25 states with the highest concealed-carry rates, compared to the rest of the country, “experienced markedly lower rates of murder and violent crime ... we find that states with the sharpest increases in permits had the largest percentage drops in murder rates. A 10% increase in the share of the adult population with permits reduces the murder rate by 1.4%.”

South Carolina Constitutional Carry Legislation

South Carolina’s H 3594 is a bill that recognizes the constitutional right of law-abiding citizens to carry a firearm for self-defense without first obtaining government permission. This bill is part of a public-safety package and also increases penalties for criminals who cannot possess a firearm.

This important legislation, introduced by State Representative Bobby Cox (R-21), ensures that citizens can exercise their right to self-defense without government red tape or delays, but does not affect previously issued carry permits, thus allowing citizens who still wish to obtain a permit to carry in other states recognizing South Carolina permits to do so. We will, of course, keep members apprised of how this legislation progresses. **ah**

IN MEMORY NRA-ILA CONTRIBUTIONS

December 1 - 31, 2022

Xander L. Cannon, Hood River, OR (from: Dorothy L. Cannon);

James Overby, Summerville, SC (from: Palmetto Gun Club);

Andrew Earl Crosby, Charleston, SC (from: Palmetto Gun Club);

Paul Laren (from: Elkhorn Valley Rifle Club); **Joel Kortons** (from: Elkhorn Valley Rifle Club);

Virginia J. “Ginnie” Baker, Thomasville, GA (from: John Workman);

Perry Eugene Ingram, (from: Wesley & Donna Ingram and the Ingram family);

Carey Cunningham, Abilene, KS (from: Brenda L. Presley).



Aaron Lewis began carving out a solo career in country music about 13 years ago. Aaron, who was best known as the lead vocalist, rhythm guitarist and founding member of the nu-metal band Staind, has now paved a unique road into country music that has garnered lots of attention. His passionate songs are about patriotism and current events in this country (such as “Am I The Only One”), the music industry itself (such as “That Ain’t Country”) and just everyday life that we all can relate to whether we are white collar, blue collar or no collar. Aaron’s no-holds-barred attitude encourages listeners to stand up for what they believe in, just like he does in every song, interview or performance. Aaron’s love of hunting, fishing and the outdoors is a family tradition that he continues with his wife and daughters. A true supporter of the Second Amendment and the Constitution, Aaron Lewis has been and always will be NRA Country! NRA Country’s Lisa Supernaugh got to grab a quick moment with Aaron to ask him a few questions. Be sure to follow Aaron on all social media and check out his latest music, tour schedule and merchandise at aaronlewismusic.com.

LS: You were touring a lot in 2022 and have a packed schedule for 2023. How do you make time to hunt and fish?

AL: I make it a priority. I strategically put hunting and fishing everywhere that I can in between shows. If it means my bus driver and I peel off and go to a spot, then we do. I have to be crafty with my schedule, but the payoff is worth it.

LS: We’ve heard whitetails are your favorite to hunt.

AL: Well, I’ve been blessed to harvest many whitetails over the years, and some sizable ones at that, but I’ve moved my focus to coyotes. Coyotes I can hunt anywhere without a bag limit or seasonal restrictions.

LS: Your song “Granddaddy’s Gun” shows your love of tradition. How do you continue the outdoor traditions you love with your family?

AL: We certainly have in the past, but we haven’t had much time here lately. I look forward to all of us having more time to enjoy the outdoors together again.

LS: What inspired your Billboard No. 1 hit “Am I the Only One?”

AL: The events of 2020, in every sense, inspired what became “Am I The Only One.” And what has occurred since then is a glaring example of what freedom isn’t—and how fragile it is.

LS: Your songs speak to the heart of America, helping people to find their freedom and their voice. What does freedom mean to you?

AL: We once thought our constitutionally protected freedom was impenetrable to the evil forces that seek to destroy what our founding fathers had the wisdom and fortitude to create: to stand up against all odds for what was right and just for all ... a freedom for all, regardless of our individual differences—regardless of race, religion, sexuality or gender. A freedom for Americans, by Americans, against the all-too-familiar feeling of tyranny.

LS: You have had an amazing career in nu metal and country. What can we expect in 2023 from this unapologetic patriot?

AL: Another year full of shows, and I’m trying to get both a new Staind record and a new acoustic record out!

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gunshows.nra.org

Dates and locations of gun shows are subject to change. Please contact the show before traveling. Discounted NRA memberships are sold through NRA recruiters. Some shows may offer free admission to people who sign up for new memberships or renewals.

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Questions? Email to refuse@nrahq.org or by calling (800) 861-1166.



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INDY23 NRA
ANNUAL MEETINGS AND EXHIBITS

APRIL 14-16, 2023

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NRA: America's TRUE Gun-Safety Org



By Joseph P. DeBergalis, Jr.
Executive Director,
General Operations

Your National Rifle Association is the true gun safety advocate in the United States, and has been for more than a century. While anti-gun groups can attempt to claim that distinction, it is simply not the case. The NRA is recognized worldwide as the gold standard for safe firearm training, with our programs having developed many millions of safe shooters. Whatever your age or level of expertise, whatever type of firearm you're interested in, NRA has something for you.

For example, more than 100,000 NRA-certified instructors teach the safe and responsible use of firearms nationwide. The NRA Training Department has programs for range safety officers; shooting coaches, who help develop shooting athletes at the club, high school, collegiate and national levels; and training counselors, who recruit and train instructors to teach NRA's basic firearm courses. Go to firearmtraining.nra.org to find out more about NRA Training programs.

The award-winning NRA Hunter Education program teaches hunters to be safe while out in the field. The first NRA Hunter Education program was established in New York in 1949. Today, NRA Hunter Education courses are taught by state fish and game departments across the country, as well as in Canada. Additionally, 13 states allow hunters to take NRA's free Online Hunter Education instruction courses. Learn more at explore.nra.org/interests/hunting.

NRA Youth programs have been teaching young Americans how to safely handle firearms since 1903, when then-NRA Secretary Albert S. Jones urged the establishment of rifle clubs

at all major colleges, universities and military academies. Modern NRA Youth programs include competitions, awards and contests, training and safety courses, and scholarships. One of my favorites is the NRA Youth Hunter Education Challenge—a fun environment for kids to improve their hunting marksmanship and safety skills. Through simulated hunting situations, live-fire exercises and educational events, YHEC helps young folks build upon the skills they've learned in basic hunter-education courses and encourages safer, lifelong hunting habits. Visit yhec.nra.org to find out more.

One of NRA's biggest achievements is the Eddie Eagle program, which has reached 33 million children since its inception in 1988. The Eddie Eagle GunSafe program teaches children in pre-K through third grade four important steps to take if they find a gun. These steps are presented by the program's mascot, Eddie Eagle, in an easy-to-remember format with these simple rules: **STOP! Don't touch. Run Away. Tell a Grown-up.** At this kid-friendly website, children can watch the Eddie Eagle video, read through storybooks, join in sing-alongs, download coloring sheets and other fun activities that reinforce the gun-safety message. Learn more at eddieeagle.com.

All of these valuable, and potentially life-saving, programs are possible due to the support of you—the NRA members. Be proud of all we accomplish together, for there is no other organization in the world that provides the training, safety programs, and educational courses that we do. Thank you for being a part of our efforts to keep Americans safe and free.



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Photo by NRA

Camp Valor Outdoors is a nonprofit that helps wounded veterans find camaraderie through competitive shooting.



FREE NRA MEMBERSHIPS FOR ACTIVE DUTY MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES

The NRA proudly supports the brave men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who defend freedom both at home and abroad. As a small token of our appreciation of their sacrifice, NRA is now providing **free-of-charge NRA memberships to our nation's active-duty service personnel.** If you have a loved one or friend now serving on active duty who might like to receive a free membership, please invite them to visit our special website at [NRA.org/ActiveDuty](https://www.nra.org/ActiveDuty) and sign up today. These **free memberships** are available due to the generosity of patriotic members of the NRA family. Thank you for helping recognize and honor our nation's heroes.

NRA National Matches

On Saturday, July 8, the NRA's iconic National Matches will enter its third year at Camp Atterbury, a National Guard training facility located in Indiana about 37 miles south of Indianapolis. For more than 150 years, the National Rifle Association of America has advanced the state of marksmanship while serving as the country's foremost defender of the Second Amendment. The NRA National Matches at Camp Atterbury are where high-level competitive shooters from around the country can shoot shoulder-to-shoulder to determine the best of the best on the firing line.

If you haven't been to the NRA National Matches yet, put it on your bucket list—we believe you will enjoy your experience in the Hoosier State and will find the ranges at Camp Atterbury to your liking. To learn more and view this year's complete schedule of events, visit competitions.nra.org.

Also, be on the lookout for the upcoming 2022 NRA National Matches Recap, a commemorative digital magazine with complete coverage of last summer's competition at Camp Atterbury. Go to ssusa.org for more information on how to read it free later this year.

CAMP VALOR OUTDOORS

Camp Valor Outdoors is an exciting organization whose goal is simple: improving the lives of veterans and their families through different outdoor activities, including competitive shooting. A nonprofit, CVO was founded in 2013 by its executive director, Maj. John Schwent, a retired Marine who had a vision to reconnect wounded, disabled and ill veterans through a shared love of the outdoors. By 2015, the first CVO high

power rifle team was on the firing line competing at the National Matches.

In 2022 at Camp Atterbury, CVO once again fielded a team at the High Power Rifle National Championships, including a few veterans receiving their first NRA National Matches experience. The debut of e-targets last summer at Camp Atterbury certainly helped make the High Power Rifle Nationals more appealing, since it meant no pit duty for all shooters. "Electronic targets being used for the first time ever at the NRA National Matches was a big win for all competitors, but especially for veterans and older shooters. Many of our warriors have problems pulling targets up and down," Schwent said. "With e-targets, High Power shooters can stay in the game longer."

Last year at Camp Atterbury, CVO also had a team competing in the AR Tactical match, a new addition to the NRA High Power Rifle rulebook that allows shooting ARs with a bipod. "AR Tactical is more like military-style shooting, since it doesn't require jackets or other high-speed shooting gear," Schwent said. "Our team had a good time with it."

Through the awarding of grants, the NRA Foundation has assisted CVO with expenses for the competitive shooting team, such as entry fees, housing and travel costs. Chief operating officer of CVO, 29-year Army veteran Col. Denise Loring, said, "We wouldn't be able to do what we do without the support of the NRA."

Additionally, CVO conducts fundraisers to support the shooting team, which not only competes in high power rifle, but also action pistol. All funding goes towards supporting veteran events.

For more information about Camp Valor Outdoors, go to campvaloroutdoors.org. **ah**

Photo by John Parker

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been observing. The dogs completed their chores with haste, birds collected with great fanfare. We moved to another spot down field.

This spot was festooned with a plum thicket. Birds were there. Six took wing; three forfeited all altitude. Fred, Ryan and Tom were the practitioners who enjoyed success there if I recall. However, I was toying with my camera at the moment, and some details of the action perhaps escaped me. Another plum thicket was up the way about a quarter-mile. I trailed with my camera, hoping for that perfect photo that never came. But I saw pheasant hunting at its finest.

Three roosters charged from the far edge as six hunters got uncomfortably close. These birds cackled and climbed and shimmered in a hazy overhead. Five shots maybe. Regardless, those three tumbled. And then a fourth—from the end near Ryan or Nick. Not sure who, and that remains immaterial. This one also dropped.

And to that final plum clutter. As with the one preceding, I was playing cameraman. But the remaining six were highly proficient in their collecting of birds. Someone shouted, "Limit." The hunt ended.

Too much I fear throughout this writing I have complained about my age and specifically about my physical conditioning. If so, my apologies. But really, it has not been, in my way of thinking, complaining as much as it has been about a sobering reality. Age is a familiar acquaintance of mine. That cannot be avoided. What can be avoided, to lesser or greater degrees, is my conditioning. I can do better. And I will try. So the question arises: Will I hunt pheasants in the CRP ever again?

A short poem by Wendell Berry comes to mind when I contemplate such a question: "Now, surely, I am getting old, for my memory of myself as a young man seems now to be complete, as a story told. The young man leaps, and lands on an old man's legs." Me? I choose to continue leaping! *ah*

LODGING


The hunt outlined here took place at Upland Inn, Greensburg, Kan. It afforded thousands of acres of CRP, and pheasants were plentiful. uplandinnhunts.com



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Out of an African Blind

By Stacy McCloud, Greeley, Colo.

Africa always ends with a story: This one is mine. September 25, 2022, dropped at a blind with my tracker, Eric, we crawled into our 5-by-7 tomb swallowed by the earth. I sat looking out beyond the peephole of the sweltering hotbox. My last three Africa hunts, the blue wildebeest had eluded me. The welcomed African summer breeze whistled a leafy song through the trees. The melody cooled my sticky body. I imagined the feeling of the breeze whipping through my sweat-soaked hair, instantly drying it, ending the unrelenting stream of salty liquid trickling from the base of my scalp, down my shoulder blades and shamelessly parading between my cheeks. I wipe the sweat that has been building off my nose.

I love African blinds. The closest thing to a true-to-life “Jurassic Park” experience. Every noise and darting shadow could be a female pig overseeing offspring chasing each other through mud while scaring off the Triceratops peacefully enjoying a drink, or a venomous snake slithering through the slit of the blind window.

We got the call. The Cape buffalo we’d been searching for had been spotted. They’re coming to rescue us from our sun-baked oven. Yesterday I saw a picture of the old prince of the African plains who no longer runs with the herd; every day he lumbers is a gift and torture. His body and hide told stories of a lifetime of fierceness.

In an African blind, clothing is optional. I appreciate some clothing: a tank top, my light Sitka jacket, shorts, boots. In my bag is water, fruit, ChapStick, a flashlight, a book, sudoku, a notebook, a pen and my Maven rangefinder. By my side is my Mathews Triax bow, release and my Ted Nugent Zebra arrows—filled with sugar for extra punch in case of a buffalo.

My trusty Frye boots—broken in perfectly after two decades of living as full as this boot inhabitant could afford to dream—I’d forgotten in Colorado. I found myself hunting 2 miles up a mountain wearing Old Gringo dancing boots with absolutely no trek, built for the slide of the dance floor. Straight from Billy Bob’s in Fort Worth to Pongola, South Africa. Ridiculous.

My first walk and stalk, my dance with this old bull, and Cap’n Jack Sparrow would’ve stumbled more gracefully. With each step I took, I did the “electric slide” half a step backward. My stomach was flipping, my heart racing.

Early summer, late morning, dancing boots. The smell of defeat was leaking from my pores, and I had no water to wash away the impure thoughts of quitting. I was parched, my tongue glued to the roof of my mouth, I couldn’t form the words, “I quit.” My tongue had no freedom. My husband saw the defeat in my eyes. I wanted to cry, but my eyes refused to extinguish the pain of this hunt by relinquishing tears. I was an overused rag wrung of moisture, weave weakened, dry and tattered.

My PH Falahke’s arm shot up, signaling an immediate stop, sending me and my boots into another backward cha-cha. I reached out to grab a tree, stabbing myself with a thorn, but caught enough branches to prevent my descent down the mountainside



into the watery abyss. I pictured myself flailing yard sale-style down the mountain; legs, arms, hair, broken ego and Ray Bans landing in the awaiting crocodile-infested sarcophagus below.

Dazed and dehydrated, I held my ground and turned my attention to the great bull laying with another under the only shade capable of engulfing both bodies. Falahke spoke great English, and though my Zulu was limited to “I am Stacy,” rarely had we experienced a communication hiccup.

With lots of hand gesturing, faint whispering and defeatist grunting, we tried to find a kill shot. Like an elephant, I tiptoed around, looking for a clearing. I found my shot. It wasn’t perfect, but it was all I had—a perfect 40-yard backward shot I might as well have taken upside down in this overgrown vegetation. Praying my arrow would pierce his heart from above, I raised my bow to draw, and I couldn’t pull it back! My muscles were screaming, fighting each other. My second draw attempt worthier a comic applause. Is this a joke? Is this how it ends?

Bow drawn, arm relaxed, sight lined up. Breathe. Exhale. Don’t forget follow through. Release. The beast was hit! Stunned, the buffalo spun around to find the offender, and starting his death dance, he charged. Four shots fired, two from my husband’s Remington 700 .375 H&H, two from my PH’s rifle. The beast was down, one arrow buried in his lung along with four bullets. He lived a life worth living, a death worth writing about. *dh*



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