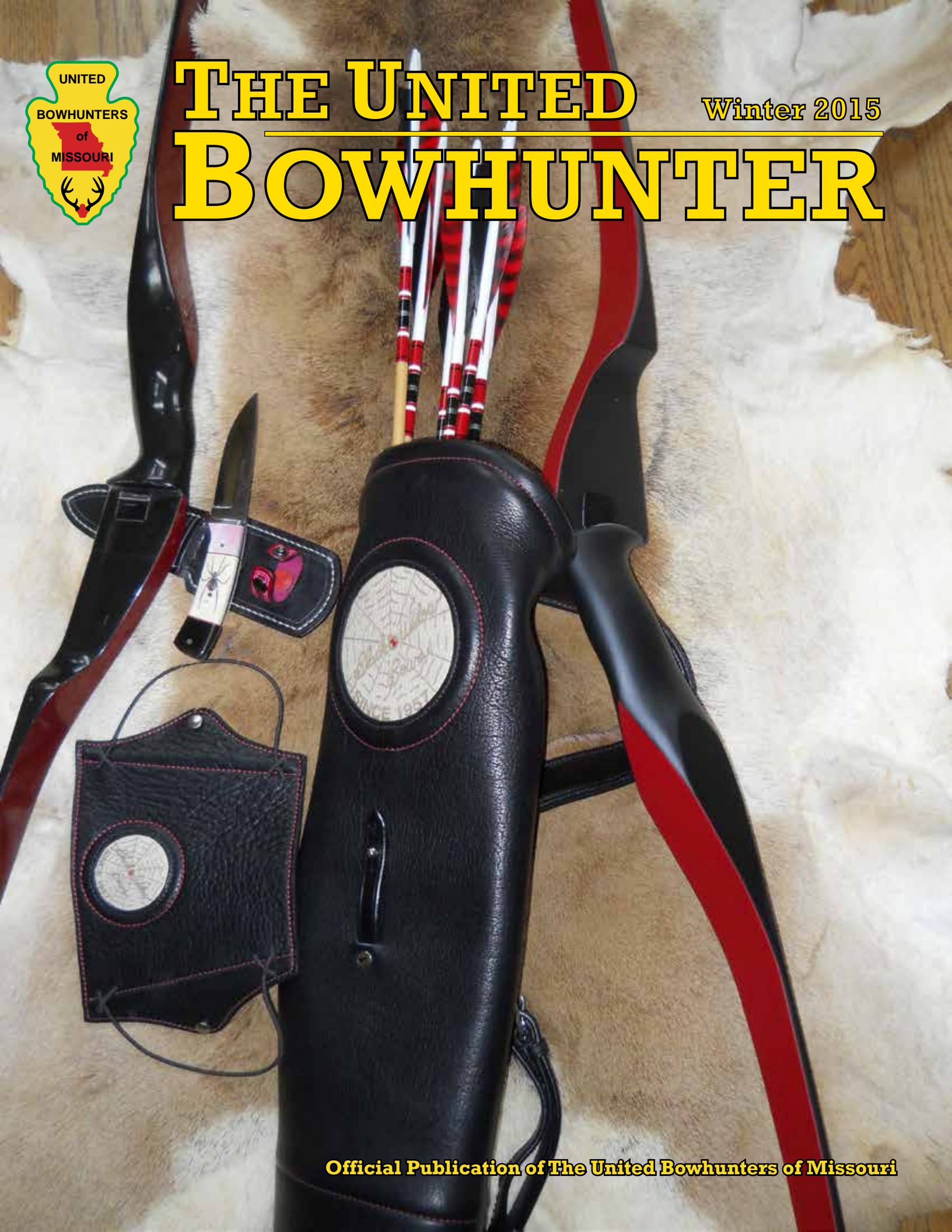




THE UNITED

BOWHUNTER

Winter 2015



Official Publication of The United Bowhunters of Missouri



Calendar of Events

January

15th – Missouri and Oklahoma archery season closes

February

6th-8th – UBM Festival at the Country Club Hotel and Spa, Lake Ozark, MO
 15th – Missouri rabbit and squirrel season closes

March

20th-22nd – Conservation Federation of Missouri Convention at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, MO

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Full page	\$130.00	⅓ page	\$70.00
⅔ page (back cover)	\$125.00	¼ page	\$50.00
⅓ page	\$110.00	Less than ¼ page	\$30.00

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It is the purpose of The United Bowhunters of Missouri to support and upgrade the sport of bowhunting and foster a spirit of sportsmanship.

The United Bowhunter is published quarterly by The United Bowhunters of Missouri for the membership. This publication is a public forum available to the members to voice their ideas, concerns and to share their experiences.

Written materials, photos and artwork for publication are welcome. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope with the materials you would like returned. The editors can assume no responsibility for any submitted materials.

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— On the Cover —

Black Widow bow
 with accesories

deadlines for submitting copy and pictures to The United Bowhunter
Feb. 15th, May 3rd, Sept. 15th, Dec. 10th



BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS, ANOTHER SEASON IS EITHER IN THE BOOKS OR PRETTY DANG CLOSE. I hope you all had one that was productive, enjoyable and safe. As of this minute, I have not put anything in the freezer with my stick and string. I have seen a lot of deer while hunting but have had only one opportunity to shoot something and that one didn't work out in my favor. Oh well, I did get some meat with a firearm and I have high hopes of adding to it with my flintlock during Alternative Methods season so I cannot complain. Besides, no matter what you kill them with, once a deer is on the ground it's just work after that. It sure makes you appreciate where your meat comes from, though!

By now, you all should have gotten your 2015 Festival registration packet. Please fill it out promptly and send it back in. If you did not receive one, you can either download it from our website at <http://www.unitedbowhunters.com/DOCS/2015FestivalRegistrationForm.pdf> or you can contact me and I will mail it to you. All plans are moving forward and I

believe we will have another great event. It will be held at the Country Club Hotel again this year and our banquet speaker will be none other than Dick Robertson of Robertson Stkybow. As an added bonus, his daughter, Yana, is also going to be a seminar speaker. Yana is the creative director for a company called onXMaps which provides detailed mapping data for use on PCs, GPS and mobile devices and she will be showing us how this technology can better help us plan our next hunt. To help make this Festival a success, please consider donating an item, or items, to the silent and live auctions. These auctions are the club's main source of revenue and that revenue is used to do things like print this newsletter. I know there are a lot of talented artisans in our ranks so whip up a bow, quilt or quiver and donate it now. We are also always in need of hunting and fishing trips so consider offering something like that as well.

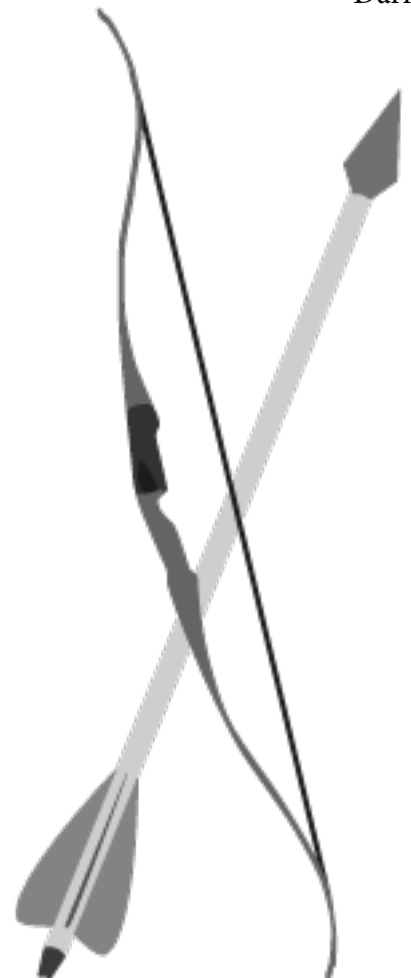
In case you missed the annual squirrel hunt, we had a fine old time. Of course, it was just Brian and me in attendance and we could have fun at a leprosy colony. The weather was ideal for hunting and there was plenty of excellent food and drink to go around. Brian's son's friend, Cole, even got a shot at a squirrel! The most memorable moment for me, though, was right after that shot was taken. We had to climb over a fence to get back to camp and I hopped up on the top strand of barbed wire, got my balance and then jumped over. As I was picking up my bow, Cole remarked, "You're pretty spry for an old man." I wasn't sure how to take that. On the one hand, it was nice for someone to notice my catlike

grace and agility. But on the other, I could have done without that "old man" bit. I told Cole my reflexes were the result of all the Pilates classes I take. What I should have done is kicked him in the shin and told him to respect his elders.

Well, fellow member, I don't have anything else for you at this time. Turkey season and javelina hunting is just around the corner so keep those back muscles warmed up and broadheads sharp. I look forward to visiting with you at the Festival or you can just show up at my house for a hot cup of coffee.

Pick a spot!

Darren





IT'S A QUIET, RAINY FRIDAY EVENING, and by all accounts I should be standing around the campfire with a lot of fellow squirrel hunters. Instead, it's another late night in the shop and the season finale of Z Nation. Guess we're not as hardy as we used to be! Well, maybe someone will come

play tomorrow. If not, I'll eating leftover venison for a week! I hope you all have at least had some quality field time and perhaps some success this fall? Deer season has had mixed results this year around our neck of the woods with several poaching incidents, but I was still able to tag a sweet little button with the bow and a dandy 8-pointer with the UBM muzzleloader during the first 10 minutes of firearms season. Darren and I (mostly Darren) have been hard at work getting the Festival details in order. I hope you all will make an effort to attend. I promise you it will be a memorable one if for no other reason than seeing your "once a year" hunting buddies, swapping stories, learning something new at the seminars,

picking up some sweet items at the auctions, eating some tasty food, and maybe even taking home the coveted Black Widow raffle bow. Sounds like a blast, doesn't it? It is—see you there!!!

Keep 'em sharp!



SEASON 'S GREETINGS EVERYONE! I hope that everyone is having a good winter and enjoying the various hunting

seasons. I am now enjoying the fact that I don't have to go to class or take a final for a solid month! I still have to go to work for the rest of this week but as of Friday, I'M FREE (until the first week of January that is)!!

You may be asking, "Elise, what are you going to do with all that free time"? Honestly I have no clue. Beyond working on this newsletter and doing some early job searching I plan to do absolutely nothing. I imagine I will be going up to St. Louis to see family but beyond

that I plan on sleeping in, being overly lazy, and enjoying my well deserved break. This semester I worked my butt off to get a myriad of time sensitive projects done for both school and work. It all payed off though! I managed to get a B+ in the terrifying image design class and I also got on the Dean's list for the second time ever!

Despite the end of the semester I can't rest too much. As previously stated I intend to do some job hunting over the break or at least get my portfolio and resume in order to start looking when semester hits. That being said, If you know of any graphic design jobs out there please don't hesitate to email me about them. I need all the help I can get.

In non school news, my apartment situation is still going

swimmingly. My roommate is over at my neighbor's apartment more often than I am, so much so that she's practically a live-in. When I'm not doing homework, I still spend a decent amount of time at their apartment watching movies, eating, or generally being social.

I would love to say that I have anything else to talk about, but my life is basically work, school, eat, sleep, and repeat. On the off chance I have spare time I still obsess over television shows, geek out over a cappella groups, and spend weekends at home with my parents, or as I call it practice for being jobless post graduation. That's all I got for y'all, so goodbye, happy hunting, and have a great holiday season!

Elise

➤➤➤ UBM Banquet Awards Criteria →

“WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO WIN AN AWARD AT THE UBM FESTIVAL”?

Have you ever wondered if you or your buddy may be deserving of one of the awards we present? Well we thought we should print some of the criteria for some of these awards so you can be gathering information or complete some of the things that help measure up for consideration.

Many times I have heard that the same people always win but I can assure you that all nominations are considered equally for each award. Sometimes we only have one or two nominated for a certain award, but you can help us out by making that nomination of a worthy member for these when we solicit for them. Here are a few guidelines for some of our awards, not the total criteria here but just a few things for consideration.

FALL OF FAME: This award does not have to be awarded annually. It is reserved for those who have displayed a long term dedication to UBM and bowhunting.

YOUTH BOWHUNTER: A bowhunter is considered a Youth if they are 15 years old or younger and have used the Bow and Arrow to pursue and possibly legally take some type of game. Taking of game is not a requirement but it does carry weight in the decision. It could be a rabbit, squirrel, fish, frog, deer, turkey, or ???

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR: A District Representative who is working to promote UBM and Bowhunting to others. You will probably see them helping at the Festival,

Rendezvous, or any other activity UBM members may be involved in to promote UBM. They should be working with their respective Area Representatives to help promote UBM.

FRED BEAR AWARD: This award is for an outstanding Animal which was taken during the year. Type of hunt and difficulty may have some weight but mostly it is the Animal that receives this award.

JERRY PIERCE AWARD: This award is presented to a supporter of UBM in honor of the late Jerry Pierce. The person may be a vendor or other who donates to UBM and helps with our fundraising efforts to continue our mission of promoting Bowhunting. Most have been there for several years faithfully donating to UBM.

AGENT OF THE YEAR: These nominations usually come from within the Department of Conservation but can come from any member who knows of an Agent who has worked to defend our Missouri Resources. Archery related cases do weigh in on this award but other cases are also considered. This past year we had some excellent nominations and a really competitive group to select the winner from.

Bowhunter of the Year: This award is voted on by the last three recipients of it. However, nominations can be made by any member. Below are the categories considered for this honor and the maximum amount of points awarded for each category.

Equipment Standards (10 points): Using hunting equipment that is consistent with the UBM standards.
Bowhunter Education (10 points): To receive these points, the nominee must have completed a certified bowhunter education course.
Bowhunting Instructor (10 points): Eligibility for this category requires that the nominee be a current bowhunter instructor.

Membership (10 points): The nominee must have endorsed two new members that meet UBM standards. This information is recorded on a person's application for UBM membership and kept by the membership committee.

Leadership (10 points): Nominees are judged on their volunteer work on UBM programs, committee service, etc.

In-State Large Game (10 points): Points are awarded for taking at least one large game animal in Missouri. Large game can be; deer, turkey, coyote, fox, or bobcat.

Out-Of-State Large Game (10 points): Points are awarded for taking at least one large game animal somewhere other than Missouri.

Bow Fishing (5 points): Awarding of these points is based on the fish taken and turned in by the person who nominated the nominee.

Small Game (5 points): Awarding these points is based on evidence presented by the person nominating the nominee.

Hunting Dedication (10 points): In this category, a narrative must accompany the nomination. This is

an open-ended category. Possible items in the narrative would be time spent hunting and scouting, habitat development, educating newcomers, and personalization of hunting gear.


Newsletter Participation (10 points): To be considered for these points, the nominee must have submitted a photo or story or both to the newsletter.

This information is just some guidelines and not all inclusive but just to give you some ideas as to who may be receiving or worthy of receiving one of these awards. Please help us recognize those who are working for UBM and Bowhunting by nominating them for an award for next year.

»» Gear Review—Deer Sleigh'R



I'VE HAD A CHANCE TO USE THE DEER SLEIGH'R A FEW TIMES, and it never ceases to amaze me how well it works. It is a little ungainly to carry around, so I generally leave it in the truck and will retrieve it during the recovery process on a deer, but once the deer is secured, the ABS sheet practically glides over the forest floor, blowdowns, and rocky hillsides. This is particularly valuable if you want to save the cape on your deer and your taxidermist will love you! One could argue that it is an almost disposable tool as they do show significant wear after a long drag out, but they are resilient and can be used over and over. If the \$20-\$40 price tag scares the frugal at heart, I have even made a smaller version for personal use from the little roll up plastic kid's snow sleds and a grommet kit. A little small perhaps for large deer, but perfect for elk quarters and the little deer we grow in SW Missouri.



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➤➤ My "Almost a Miracle" Buck Rev. Dr. Nicholas Gray

SPENDING A LOT OF TIME IN TREESTANDS has allowed me to pray a great deal and even compose some sermon material while waiting for a possible shot at a deer. I constantly thank the Lord for the opportunity to be out in the woods and ask that I be allowed to shoot well for a clean shot if the opportunity presents itself. Of course, not killing anything doesn't always mean an unsuccessful hunt. When I see fox, rabbits, various kinds of birds and other animals, how could seeing God's critters be non-successful? His creation is wonderful!

My wife, Cynthia, is allergic to beef and most pork partially processed. We think it must be the hormones or whatever chemicals they shoot them up with that make her sick. She can eat grass-fed-only beef or any wild game without a problem. She likes to tell people that I must hunt so she can have red meat to eat. What a gal!

Since moving back to Missouri in the year 2000, it didn't take long for me to discover that our small part of southwest Missouri had poor deer hunting. Several reasons have been suggested for this including: excessive private feeding of deer in backyards along Table Rock Lake, possible year-round poaching by people from both Missouri and Arkansas, lack of food crops, just not a large number of deer and lack of permission to hunt on most private land. Our state and national forests are all timber, which makes bowhunting quite difficult. Although, I have had about a 50% success rate by not being too choosy.

Last year, one of the members of our church gave me permission to hunt a tract of ten acres he owns. About half of it contains two large,



high, thick grass fields and almost all of the rest is cedar trees. This presented a problem for putting up treestands, especially when it is necessary to move around a few times to learn the correct deer routes to get a good shot. I opted to use a tripod, which I moved several times. I never did see a deer on that property last year.

This year, on the same property, I moved my tripod to an old mudhole which had been a mineral lick in the past. I even tied limbs around the edge of my stand to keep from being detected. I saw a few does the first day of the season (September 15th) without any shot opportunities. I continued to sit on that stand as much as possible in September and October without seeing any deer.

Here I am, sitting on my tripod on October 27th, watching the field and mudhole with the small birds and a squirrel in attendance. Wondering if I would ever see a deer on this property, I was at

least thankful that God gives me the ability to bowhunt at 72 years of age. I knew that deer don't live on this property. They just pass through back-and-forth between feeding and bedding areas. I just hoped that I would be presented a shot before the season closed! My own property is all trees and all the deer are "pass-throughs-only" also, resulting in only two deer taken on our property in fourteen years.

While I was enjoying God's great outdoors, the he was. A nice eight-point was standing broadside by the mudhole at about twelve yards. I was watching the entire area but never saw him come in. Without hesitation, I sent my Wensel Woodsman-tipped arrow on its way from my Black Widow recurve. This magnificent creation of God bolted quickly away with broadhead holes on each side of his rib cage. "Where did he come from?" I thought. After thanking the Lord and waiting awhile, I got

Miracle continued on page 8

down from my stand to look for blood. My arrow wasn't there and neither was any blood. My heart sunk. I thought that my arrow had been a pass-through, but where was it?

After waiting a while longer, I headed for the spot where I last saw the buck; still no blood. I decided to start looking again from where the deer was standing, taking a slightly different angle route. There was blood and my arrow a few yards from the stand. The arrow must've been hanging by the feathers and dropped out right away. I thanked the Lord again for the shot opportunity and asked Him to help me find the deer and to point me in the right direction. I went through some brush into a small open area about 70 yards from my stand; still no deer. I asked our Lord again for help. Starting again, I took just a few steps and looked to my right. There he was!

I immediately fell to my knees in prayer thanking God for the deer.

After field dressing the buck, I dragged him through the brush to the field so I could load him into my pickup.

I walked back the almost ¼ mile to my truck still thanking the Lord for the gift. I attempted to get the buck into my pickup for about 30 minutes even using ropes. "Hey, I could call on my cell phone for help," I thought. I got the landowner's wife, who said he was walking the dog. I just had headed for their house when he showed up on the road in his car. His wife had told him that I needed help.

We drove to the field to load the deer into my pickup. Using all our strength, and with several tries, we

were wearing out. Finally, we got the buck loaded! Here were two old guys with a combined age of 140 years showing their age. The Golden Years!

Well, I was on my way home to show Cynthia God's blessing of this nice buck. The only photos we could get shows blood in the truck bed. There was obviously no way to unload the deer, take pictures and then put it back in the truck. I should've washed the blood away but I didn't think of it at the time. I needed to get the deer to the locker so I suppose I was in a hurry. This is my best whitetail shot in Missouri. My best one came from Kansas.

After investigation, I found out that no one in the area remembers seeing this buck. I was watching intently for deer coming to me and the buck just appeared as if from nowhere. There was no good blood trail in the thick high grass initially yet the buck was laying five yards away from me, bled out, right after I asked the Lord to find the deer for me. God is good! Now this doesn't meet the requirements for an actual miracle, but the Lord works in mysterious ways. I thank God for my "almost a miracle" deer.

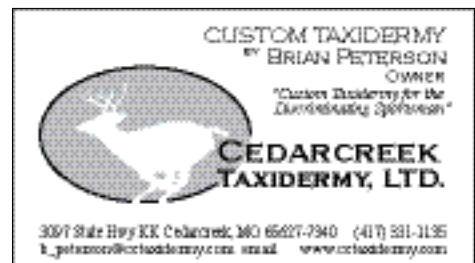
The rest of the story is that I was hunting in the morning and planning to leave home in the afternoon to attend the Missouri Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. I was able to shoot the deer, get it loaded, photograph it, take it to the processor, clean myself up, travel three hours to Lake of the Ozarks and arrive with an hour to spare before the first meeting!

Cynthia and I continue in the ministry by counseling and helping counselors with continuing education. As a "retired" pastor, I still do some guest preaching. We are both district chaplains in the American Legion and auxiliary.

These activities don't allow me to hunt every day. I'm also thankful for my many years as a member of the CBA board of directors and am especially blessed to have Dr. Lowell Thill and Rev. David Roose as friends.

I have more deer tags to fill so off to the woods I go.

God bless!





As the animal made his way I took notice of a good looking rack. There was hardly any width between his two sides but pretty good mass and height made up for the lack of spread. As the buck drew nearer to the top of the ridge I was hunting he reared up on hind legs, and was checking some elevated limbs. Pretty awesome sight to see this fairly mature animal (I estimated at 3 1/2) standing upright scent checking lofty limbs. The buck dropped back to all fours and proceeded to come down the trail I was overlooking. His hot breath was steaming out of his nostrils, as was mine.

I was hoping he couldn't hear my heart thudding against my chest,

ALTHOUGH I WAS SKEPTICAL FOR A GOOD WHILE, the introduction of trail cameras has added some pretty awesome benefits to the realm of hunting. I still favor observed field hours in person, but have to admit it is pretty neat to be able to keep an eye on the property at the times life has me occupied in other areas. My father and I both were hesitant to utilize trail cameras due to our traditional hearts and our shared love for a good challenge, but once we did decide to "modernize" it definitely showed us more than our own eyes could reveal.

It is a pretty amazing thing to be able to monitor particular bucks that cruise our neighborhood from year to year. One buck in particular I had a run in with back in 2010. The first time I saw this animal was with my own two eyes, and it was the week before rifle season while I had bow in hand. It was a clear, calm, and brisk morning.

Everything was still, and ground had a nice glaze of frost covering it. It was one of those mornings where I was timid to move because everything was so still, but my eyes were peeled. Fairly early on I caught movement coming up the ridge, and quickly identified it as a whitetail.

but as he approached I readied myself for the shot opportunity.

Hindsight is always twenty-twenty, and I wish I would have let him walk just a little further past me before I decided to draw my bow, but hastiness got the better of me this time. I attempted to draw my bow as he was five yards away

Local continued on page 10





directly in front of my stand. Being as still as it was the buck caught movement as I attempted to draw back, and he did a perfect ten yard sideways lunge right into the brush. With his head high, he scanned the situation for a minute before he decided to turn around and head back out the way he came in. I can't say that disappointment set in because it was such an awesome



close encounter and anytime I see a quality animal it is success in my mind. Regardless, I was not filling a tag that day and wondered would I ever see this animal again.

The answer is yes. Trail cameras made it possible for me to keep up with this buck throughout the next few seasons. It would appear this buck became primarily nocturnal after our encounter. I hunted for this buck pretty hard, but never got the opportunity to see him with my eyes again. I hunted this area religiously, but it was not meant to be.

The following season, which was 2011, he popped up on a trail camera I had on the same trail where our rendezvous took place. The camera caught him on more than a few occasions but all were during the late hours of the night. The deer was a brute during this season. He had an elongated body, burly, good mass, and a tall rack with a couple dagger G2's. He was magnificent and I really wanted another chance at this guy.

During the 2012 season, we did not capture any images of the

buck and thought that maybe he met his fate or moved off to a new neighborhood. The 2013 season rolls around and a surprise guest decides to show his face again. He actually looked like he was on the down slope during that year. He still was a great looking buck but he didn't look quite as dominant as he did during 2011. Again, every photo that was captured was only during the hours of the night. No sign of the old boy this season. I would guess him to be around 7 ½ years old if he is still kicking around. Though I likely will never lay eyes on him again, the trail cameras enabled me to keep up with the guy after our initial encounter years ago and this buck will always have a permanent slide show in the still frames of my mind.



Kasey's first tracking job

THERE ARE VERY FEW NEGATIVES ABOUT OUR WONDERFUL SPORT OF BOWHUNTING but one, however, does stand out and that being wounded and lost game. Wounding and losing a game animal, with the thought of the animal going off and crawling in a hole to die an unspeakably miserable death, haunts us all and has been the undoing of many aspiring bowhunters. Believe me, I have had my fair share of such events and trying to deal with this over the years has, to say the least, caused some sleepless nights. I won't say here that I have found the answer but I sure do feel a whole bunch better about every blood trail I have been on, win or lose, since the arrival of Kasey.

Several years ago, at the annual Compton Rendezvous, Ryan Rothhaar gave a seminar on tracking dogs where he and his dog, Oskar, put on quite a show. Ryan talked a lot about how to train your dog, the ease of training and the fun a guy can have watching his new friend become an invaluable part of our sport. One of the first things Ryan talked about was the multitude of breeds to choose from with the goal being to find

an animal to fit your needs. This means not only choosing a dog with the ability to track but also to fit into your family. After all, hunting season is only a part of the year. A major prerequisite for whatever breed you choose is the dog needs to have some brains. This is usually a very hard trait to determine when looking at a bunch of puppies running around in a pen. One way to help ensure this part is by going to a reputable breeder with a long line of successful dogs. You will have to pay for this but it probably is the very best way to go. Being cheap at heart, that is not what I elected to do, but the outcome could not have been better.

Kasey helped me find this nice buck



Kasey continued on page 12

We had just lost Sandy, due to age, one of the best dogs a guy could ask for. Sandy had been a member of the family for over 14 years. She watched over the barnyard and it took a bit to convince her that chickens, eggs and even small pigs were not her personal meals. But all in all, I would consider her a good, smart dog. It was with great apprehension, then, that I started looking for another dog to replace Sandy. What if the one we chose was dumber than dirt? Once they are in the family there is no turning back. You're stuck with what you get and there's no real way to know until they have been around for a while. By then, though, it is too late. Dogs have a way of winning the hearts of at least one member of the family.

In early 2010 I saw an ad in a local paper for some $\frac{3}{4}$ Australian Shepherds, $\frac{1}{4}$ Border Collie pups. I remembered a dog from my youth that was one of my best friends of that mix so we decided to go just look at them. Arriving at the south-central Iowa farm we were greeted by—yes, a bunch of puppies running around in a pen. But as we walked up to the fence the only black & white pup of the bunch came over to visit us while

the rest covered around the dog house. Brenda looked at me and nodded and I thought, yes, that's the one! We named her on the way home when we passed a Casey's general store, but the name had to begin with a "K". After all, our other children were "Kevin" & "Karla" so how else could it be?

I am not sure whether I trained Kasey or she trained me, probably a bit of both, but we both worked pretty hard at it. I had acquired some beef blood at our local butcher shop as Ryan had suggested and, starting out at 9 weeks, I laid very short easy trails in the yard but always with some fresh raw meat at the end. Gradually I worked up to more elaborate trails leaving several yards between ever decreasing amounts of blood. I think the key was the reward at the

end. It was not necessarily the meat but when Kasey realized she had done something I wanted she liked the attention / loving I gave her as much or more than the fresh meat. Each training session started with me putting a "halter" on her with a leash attached. I would carry her to the first blood, sit her down and tell her to "find the deer". The "halter" seems to be very important. The only time it is put on the dog is during training exercises and, of course, the real deal. After just a few sessions, Kasey knew exactly what was up and got extremely excited when I just showed her the halter. Some type of leash is required by Missouri law, with a maximum length of 30 feet. I had a local harness shop build us one. It looks and feels like leather but is some type of man-made material

much cheaper than leather. A rope just does not work. I tried that but it was forever getting tangled in the brush and interrupts the dog too much. Kasey would get very confused when I had to stop her to untangle the dang thing. The "leather" leash works great; it sort of slithers through the brush. There are also other restrictions on the books regarding the use of tracking dogs in Missouri: 1) The hunter has exhausted other reasonable means of finding the animal, (2) has contacted an MDC agent and (3) does not possess a firearm or bow during dog tracking activities. I do not like the "exhaust other means" part because the best thing for the dog is to have a clean trail—just the wounded animal—not a half dozen guys spitting tobacco and relieving themselves on every other bush! Some states do not allow the use of dogs for trailing, leashed or not. There is an organization, United Bloodtrackers, (unitedbloodtrackers.org) and one of their many activities is working with state and federal game officials to try and rectify this problem. Give their website a look-see. A ton of good info is available there.

Kasey's first bona fide tracking job came in early October of 2010. Brenda got a good arrow in a young doe, watched it fall but left the scene undisturbed. When I put the tracking halter on Kasey in the dark, even at 8 months of age, she seemed to know this was something different. The trail was easy but perfect for her first recovered deer. It was the first deer she got to see up close and enjoy real fresh meat afterword!

Another track that stands out is, once again, Brenda shot a doe, cannot find any blood but can see the leaves turned up where the deer made its exit. I wanted to put Kasey

Helping out the neighbors. This deer would have never been found had it not been for our wonder dog!



Kasey continued on page 13



Ryan Rothhaar's dog, Oscar.

on the trail right away but Brenda was afraid she would mess up what little visible sign was there so Kasey and I were sent home. An hour or so later I get a call from Brenda saying that the trail was lost but the deer was now leaving some blood so could I maybe bring my dog and re-join in the search? I won't get into the husband/wife conversation here but suffice it to say Brenda was dually impressed a short while later when Kasey found her deer!

Probably the hardest part of letting a dog do the tracking is trusting them; especially when there is no visible blood. I still sometimes have a big problem with that. I mean, after all, we humans are much smarter than any dog. We know where a wounded deer is supposed to run and there has to be visible blood on a blood trail right? Not really true; a dog's olfactory senses are so acute that microscopic bits of blood, or just the animal's scent, are enough for them to follow the trail. The dog does not necessarily need to be walking on the blood trail as us humans would. Sometimes being downwind of the trail is better for the dog. Kasey has learned to "cheat" by casting around to pick up the scent of the carcass. Just a couple weeks ago, a neighbor shot a good buck. He knew his shot was a bit low so he

waited four hours before starting to track. Fortunately, he marked the trail as he went because he jumped the deer in the dark and wisely pulled off it for the night. The next morning he got back on the trail but quickly lost blood. I had told him about Kasey so he called up for assistance. We started downwind and probably 100 yards short of the last known blood. Kasey started out right on the blood trail but pretty quickly started dropping down the ridge off the marked path. I have learned to let her do her thing and in less than ten minutes she was standing over the buck. My neighbor is a good hunter and had spent several hours searching. There is no way that deer would have been recovered without the dog. We backtracked the 75 yards

Kasey bails out Brenda once again!



from the carcass to the last known blood and did not find a drop. This spring, I shot a Tom turkey with my bow. The hit looked okay but I watched the bird hobble off down the ridge accompanied by another Tom. I waited a couple of hours before bringing in Kasey. There was good blood on the arrow, and more for the first 50 yards or so, but after that it was not visible to me. During the tracking job we ran into other turkeys and the other Tom. Kasey sat down and watched that bird run over the hill! It took her a while to convince me where my Tom had expired but 100 yards from the last visible blood, and a long ways from where I knew the turkey had to be, she once again bailed me out.

Since that first find four years ago, we have had many like experiences and some that did not turn out with a dead animal at the proverbial end of the road. But each one has taught me more (as I said, not sure if I trained the dog or she trained me) about the benefit a good dog can add to our sport. Oft times, at the end of the day, the haunting question/concern is, "Did I kill the critter or not?" I feel much better these days that, if Kasey can't find it, it didn't die.

PLANNING FOR THE “2014 PRIME TIME WEEK” STARTED DURING THE WARM MONTHS before bow season started. My friend Shane from Hannibal, MO and friends from North Carolina usually join me for a few days at my parent’s farm in Illinois each year. This year, conflicts kept two of the three NC guys from coming, but Mark made plans to arrive Thursday Nov. 13 and leave Tuesday Nov. 18. Shane was able to take days off from work Thursday and Friday and I took off Thursday through Tuesday. The best rut activity seemed to be falling in this timeframe the past couple of years and our farm seems to come alive with mature deer during the peak. Otherwise, it is loaded with young does, fawns and young bucks chasing everything they see including their own shadow.

As the days drew closer, Mark secured flights to arrive Wednesday night and leave Monday afternoon. The weather was nice and cool each day and we spent as much time in the woods as we could and saw lots of activity; just not much mature deer movement. We apparently missed the prime rut activity by about a week. We did manage to catch a glimpse of a good buck crossing the pasture along the pond near the house on two separate occasions. The narrow strips of weeds and young trees that mark the water ways that feed the five acre pond make nice hiding places for mature deer but appeared to be difficult to hunt.

This year I had placed a stand along a fence row at the top of one of these draws. However, after hunting it I noticed that most of the traffic into the draw was 20 yards



south of the stand. I found some potential spots to move the stand to, but we were winding down on our days to hunt and I focused my daytime hours in the woods and not on moving the stand. Shane finished up his hunt with us on Sunday morning which left Mark and I with Monday morning as our last morning together. Mark decided to take a stool and find a spot to hide in the skinny draw along the pasture in hopes of seeing the buck we had nicknamed Brownie.

The approach to this area required a long hike down the gravel road, up a farm-use lane and into the corner of the pasture to keep from being totally exposed to the pasture and the other narrow strips of trees. This trek put him at his approach to the draw a little later than planned and he was spotted by a group of does. After waiting them out, he finally got to a hiding place and was positioning his stool when a nice 10-pointer walked up on him and then trotted away. After a short time, a second 10-pointer arrived and met up with some does and they all managed to keep

themselves out of bow range. Soon it was time for Mark to pack up and head to the airport.

With Mark on his way and another day left to hunt, I decided to move the stand like I should have done a couple days before. The temperature high topped out at only 12-15 degrees that day but by the time I finished hanging the stand I had sweated through all of my clothes. The wind was picking up so I elected to retreat to a blind in the woods where I could stay a little warmer. I would hunt in the new stand location the next morning... Tuesday morning arrived and I was now the lone hunter in camp.

I talked my Dad into getting up early and driving me close to the stand location and dumping me out. I wanted to keep from spooking any deer that might be hiding in the narrow strips and avoid the problems that Mark experienced the previous morning. It was just about getting light with a brisk wind and 8 degrees on the thermometer. Within minutes

Lonely continued on page 15



of getting settled into the new stand location, a group of does approached the draw and milled around in one of the small secluded pastures. Then a small buck that we had seen plenty of during the weekend chased a young doe into the draw and made two circles around my stand.

On the third trip by me, a big bodied buck busted into the draw, grunting all the way toward the young buck. One glance proved that this was a mature buck and I saw a heavy set of antlers. Anticipating one of the two 10-pointers that had been seen the day before, my immediate thought was that this could be one of them. I turned my attention away from his head and anticipated a shot opportunity. Within seconds, he was approaching my tree and stopped at about 5-10 steps. This was the chance that I had hoped for! I seized the opportunity and placed my Zwickey Eskimo 2-blade just behind the right leg a couple

inches left of the spine on a steep down angle. The buck blasted past my tree into the pasture and angled back toward the fence row full of tangled Osage Orange. I heard him crash into the fence row but could not see if he exited.

**What a thrill, 15
minutes into the 6th day
of hunting and I had a
bloody arrow!**

It took a while for all the does that had gathered to finally make their way out of sight and I began the search. The arrow had stayed in him as he disappeared into the hedge row so I didn't really expect to see any blood in the 30-40 yards of pasture between my tree and the point where I last saw him. I approached the spot that I thought he entered the thicket and heard some movement. There he was to my right taking a last breath nestled

up under some hedge branches that came to the ground.

My arrow lay in front of me where he entered the brush. I think we have identified another favorite hunting spot! We have considered hunting these little draws for many years, but always get sucked back into the woods and along the corn and bean fields. This year the experiment worked. My only regret is not figuring it out sooner to give Mark or Shane a better opportunity with an established stand or blind site.

If Mark had a pre-established site and hadn't wandered in blindly, I think he would have had a solid opportunity at one of the two 10-pointers the day before. As it turns out, the buck I was able to shoot was not one of them and, in fact, had three broken points and a goofy shaped right side. He was definitely an older mature buck, though. None of us had seen this deer before and definitely would have remembered his unique rack. Upon post-mortem exploration, there was only a palm sized piece of recognizable right lung and a one inch slice along the bottom half of the heart. That Zwickey did its job as it moved with each step the buck took on his 40 yard death run. I also identified a small hole in the skull near the base of the left pedestal. There was a quarter sized area of active infection under the skin leaving little question how he broke off most of his points! All this work and excitement kept me plenty warm on a lonely cold morning!

The Renaissance Company-

Missouri's Own Black Widow Custom Bows

Marv Cochran

THE RENAISSANCE OF TRADITIONAL ARCHERY HAS BEEN AN EXCITING TIME.

If you've seriously shot traditional archery for any length of time you are aware that traditional equipment came very close to disappearing along with the birch bark canoe and carbide lamp. Many people believed that bowhunting had disappeared with the invention of gun powder but thanks to a chain reaction started by the book, "The Witchery of Archery", (written by Civil War veterans, Will and Maurice Thomson) the seeds were planted. Ishi, Art Young, Saxton Pope and William Compton laid the groundwork for Fred Bear and it was he who sold America on bowhunting. Hence, Bear Archery became the "Legacy Company". Fred Bear is the guy whose media connections and accomplishments set the stage for bowhunting to become a wildly popular method of hunting.

It wasn't long, however, before invention once again spelled doom for the traditional bow and arrow whose arc was a direct result of the

muscle power of the archer. The compound bow appeared to have done to old fashioned bows what gun powder had done before. If Bear Archery was responsible for a fresh legacy then, indeed, Missouri's own Black Widow Bow Company deserves the title of "Renaissance Company". The sheer truth of the matter is that Black Widow was a major player in the rebirth of traditional archery.

I spend a lot of time in communication with bowhunters from all over and while Missouri is my home I tend to view the attractions in the "Show Me State" as lacking the glitter of the oceans or Mt. McKinley. I guess it is our nature to take for granted those special things nearby. Further, I feel even greater surprise when a bowhunter from Germany laments how lucky I am to live in the state Black Widow calls home. Indeed, when one stops to think about it we are pretty lucky to have Black Widow right here on our doorstep.

In the heyday of target archery, the name Wilson was long associated with success. Beginning



Silver anniversary Black Widow

in the 1930's, the Wilsons, of rural Springfield, Missouri, repeatedly demonstrated skills, not only as archers but also innovators of archery equipment design. Originally there were five Wilsons whose reputations as archers had become the talk of organized archery. Three were brothers; Bob, Norman and Jack. Bob's wife, Christine, and a nephew, Howard Wilson, were all frequent visitors to the winner's circle. Their first bows were Osage longbows carefully crafted (many from fence posts) using a draw knife in the ways of the old master bowyers. It was generally recognized that Bob Wilson's creations were highly desirable prizes because of both their performance and durability. In 1946, Wilson Brothers Manufacturing came in to existence.

The year 1957 marked the beginning of it all with the birth of the Wilson brothers' Black Widow Archery Company. It was rumored that the name, "Black



Renaissance continued on page 17



Two more bows from the early days. The top bow is one of the few brown glass TF models from the beginning of Black Widow.

Widow”, was selected after a nest of the poisonous spiders sharing that moniker was discovered in the corner of the shop. In those early years, Black Widow was known for their Model TF, glass-backed target and hunting bows. The TF Hunter had red glass and the model TF Target featured white glass. I always considered myself fortunate because, as a freshman at what is now Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri, I actually visited the nearby Black Widow Bow Company. The bows were beautiful but, unfortunately, out of my price range. I could only look and admire. In those days you could buy Black Widow bows in pro-shops, a practice long since discontinued.

With the compound bow looming on the horizon, the Wilson Brothers sold the company to an employee in the 1970s. Production continued but sales were mostly being made outside of the United States. With things not going well for traditional archery in general and Black Widow in particular, a gentleman named Ken Beck purchased the

company and returned it to a prominent position. The previous owner had been producing metal handled bows. Ken preferred the warmth and beauty of wood so with the introduction of the Silver Anniversary Black Widow, the bow not only became instantly popular but also catapulted Ken’s newly acquired company into the role of a major player in the renaissance of traditional archery.

As Black Widow continued to evolve as a leading innovator in traditional equipment design and production, another chapter of the Black Widow saga was being written. A defined leadership team had emerged whose individual names had thus become synonymous with the quality and honesty to which Black Widow’s customers had become accustomed. It only made sense that, when it was time, Ken would turn the reins of leadership over to those proven team members who had already demonstrated their ability and commitment to maintain the Black Widow name as a standard of excellence.

Interestingly enough, the current owners were originally connected not by blood but rather a love for rodeo.

It seems only fitting that a company started by three men dedicated to excellence be, once again, lead by three men with the same commitment. The Wilson trio was originally brought together by the fact that they were family. Each owner, in his own right, is an accomplished and authentic rider and western hero with a love for adventure. This was the perfect match for a company whose reputation was for selling adventure. Those years under the ownership of Ken Beck were filled with innovation and hard work. Although the Wilson brothers’ design was never discarded, Ken was able to put his own signature on this renaissance company by accurately recording exact tolerances so equipment prone to producing success could continue to do so. Ken’s commitment to quality and excellence made Black Widow the industry leader in the production of durable, attractive equipment setting the bar for others to do their best to emulate.

The new owners, Roger Fulton, Toby Essick and John Clayman each play a specific roll to maintain Black Widow quality. Roger Fulton, a lifelong resident of southwest Missouri, is the partner who speaks with the public. If

Renaissance continued on page 18

The current owners: Toby Essick, John Clayman and Roger Fulton





you call Black Widow to discuss a bow model, it is quite likely that your call will be directed to Roger as it is his job to track orders, answer questions and write on bows. Roger jokes that his biggest challenge is to keep Toby and John from killing each other.

Toby Essick, like Roger, is also a lifelong resident of southwest Missouri. Coincidentally, Toby was attending elementary school when Ken purchased Black Widow back in 1982. As a matter of fact, elementary school for Toby was in Highlandville where Black Widow bows were being made. Toby grew up on a farm and remains passionate about farming. Toby has the job of overseeing production and quality control.

John Clayman is the third partner. John, like Toby, attended elementary school in Highlandville. The difference is that John actually started working for Ken Beck while in the 7th grade. At the ripe old age of 12, John did odds and ends for Ken ranging from painting the flagpole to assembling Black Widow quivers at the factory. Thus, one can easily say that as



far as Black Widow is concerned, he has been there and done that. Today John's duties include shipping and receiving as well as accounting responsibilities. All things considered, Black Widow's management is a team with 85 collective years of experience in making some of the finest traditional bowhunting equipment ever produced.

From bottom to top -
HF 500 1972, Crown Jewell 1987, PGA 207 (50th Anniversary), PSA Graybark, PLX TD Longbow



Without a doubt, under the leadership of Roger, Toby and John, Black Widow continues to build on an already flawless reputation. The new Black Widow bows are more beautiful than ever, sporting a whole new line of exotic woods. Today's Black Widow is not only beautiful but one of the toughest hunting bows you could ever hope to possess.

Having worked to promote traditional archery over the years, I can assure you that the United Bowhunters Missouri is indeed blessed to have had such stellar support from such a special company. In the early days of the UBM, Black Widow was a huge factor in our organization's successful start. When we held our first event at Dave Alkire's farm near Adrian, Missouri, Black Widow was there. Not as a company planning to benefit from the efforts of dedicated bowhunters but as a company dedicated to bowhunting.

The Unexpected Loss of Man's Best Friend

Brandon Butler →

Editor's note: The following article was sent to me for possible use in our newsletter by Conservation Federation of Missouri executive director, Brandon Butler. It was originally published in the September 2014 edition of Brandon's online magazine, "Driftwood Outdoors". While it has absolutely nothing to do with archery, it does have to do with hunting and the strong bond between Man and his better canine half. If you are a dog person, you will see why I chose to use it. If you are not a dog person then all I can say is that we are praying for you.



We made the most of our only hunt

JUNIOR WAS BORN THE SON OF BOCEPHUS.

He was destined for greatness. Having a renowned retriever for a father sets expectations high. Junior may have never won a world title, but he was a champion. The tears of two little girls prove it.

From the first time I read *Where the Red Fern Grows* over 20 years ago, I dreamt of owning a well-trained, highly-functional hunting dog. Time and attention kept that dream from becoming a reality for too long. Opportunity struck when I was presented the chance to buy Junior as a three-year-old field trial washout.

Finished retrievers aren't cheap. Paying \$3,000 for a dog wasn't a decision I took lightly. But the first time I walked up to Junior's kennel and saw him standing there smiling his big goofy smile, with eyes so full of life and muscles rippling under his shiny black coat, there was no doubt he was going to be mine.

My daughters had no idea I was bringing home a dog. When I asked them to come outside to meet someone, I'm sure they figured it

was just another fishing buddy. Instead, they saw Junior. They looked up at me for a telltale sign he was ours. My smile gave it away. Hugs, shrieks, giggles and face licks lasted a good half-hour, then I ran him through a series of retrieves to show his new family how special Junior truly was.

It took him awhile to figure out how to be a family dog.

Junior's life had been a series of trainers and kennels. He had lived like an Olympic athlete. Now, he could lie on a couch, have his belly rubbed, swim in our pool and every so often enjoy a piece of bacon. His new life must have felt surreal.

Junior and I worked on his retrieves in the fields surrounding my house. At first, he had to put up with my novice handling abilities, but it didn't take long for us to click.

Watching him zigzag through a field searching for scent from a dummy I'd hid was amazing. I'd blow my whistle and he'd stop and sit facing me. With hand signals, I'd show which direction he needed to go. He'd respond and always found the dummy.

We only had one duck hunt together, but it was a hunt for the ages. A friend drew the first pill at Grand Pass during the peak migration. Three of us killed our limits of mallards and rounded out the morning with other bird limits of teal. Junior retrieved every bird we dropped. He was a machine. I was so proud, and so full of excitement for the future. I had a mallard from that hunt mounted. It hangs in my office. I'm so thankful I made that decision.

When Junior was a puppy he had Leptospirosis. The disease degraded his kidney function. It caused him to drink and urinate more often than most dogs, but he otherwise seemed perfectly healthy. Still,

Unexpected continued on page 20

he somehow caught an infection. When we took him to the vet, he had water in his lungs and around his heart. The vet tested his vitals and discovered his kidneys were only functioning at an estimated 25 percent. She suggested putting him out of his pain. A second vet I enlisted concurred. I couldn't do it.

The vet said she could perform an expensive surgery to drain the fluid and remove bacteria from Junior's lungs, but with his severely damaged kidneys, he would likely only live 4-10 more months. I didn't believe it, or at least I wouldn't accept it. He'd had bad kidneys for a long time. I thought maybe he had learned to live with them that way. I told her to perform the surgery. I wholeheartedly believed Junior would come out of surgery and live at least a few more years. We'd kill a bunch of ducks and I breed him with a strong female, so my future dogs would carry on his bloodline.

Junior died September 18. We had him for one year and one day. His kidneys just couldn't handle the surgery and he never recovered. I'm still at a loss. My wife and I sat with our young daughters and we all cried as we recalled the best dog we've ever known.

In the end, I believe Junior and I gave each other incredible gifts. He taught me what it means to truly love a dog. For me, he solidified the meaning of "Man's Best Friend." It is so hard to look at the empty space on the couch in my office where he'd lie all day while I worked. What I gave him was the best year of his life. I gave him the love of little girls, the comfort of couch cushions, the taste of bacon and the admiration of a man whose dream came true.

See you down the trail, Jun-Bug...
Editor's postscript: *I cried like a*

baby the first time I read this online and immediately contacted Brandon to offer my condolences. He reply was, "Thanks, Darren. I appreciate the words. Willie has been sleeping in Junior's place for about two months now. I got him started at eight months old. He'll turn 11 months on Friday. We had a big day last Friday, when Willie retrieved his first four ducks down at Reelfoot Lake. I attached a couple pics for you." You gotta like a happy ending!



Top:
Brandon and his new best friend, Willie.

Bottom:
Willie in action



What if We Threw a Party and Nobody Came... Again!



SO, THE 8TH ANNUAL SHEEP EATER'S GREATER OZARK MOUNTAIN SQUIRREL HUNT is in the books... with only one other UBM attendee! Last year's party was cancelled at the last minute due to a major snow event. This year's followed a bit of rain during the week but the actual hunt date was perfect. I'm just sorry you all missed it. Needless to say, we all feasted on roast venison, venison parmesan, moose chili, Dutch oven Russets, bobcat ham, and sweet potato cake and drank brew around the fire. And while I don't mind setting up the grounds and eating leftovers for a couple of weeks, it would sure be nice to share some campfire time with my UBM buddies again. I hope the SEGOMSH hasn't run its course—maybe set the first week of December 2016 aside on your calendar in advance and we'll give it one more try?

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