



# THE UNITED

Winter 2016

# BOWHUNTER

**Official Publication of The United Bowhunters of Missouri**



# Calendar of Events

## January

15<sup>th</sup> – Missouri archery season closes  
 29<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> – Kalamazoo Traditional Bowhunters Expo, Kalamazoo, MI

## February

5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> – UBM Festival, Ramada Oasis Convention Center, Springfield, MO  
 15<sup>th</sup> – Missouri squirrel and rabbit season closes  
 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> – Compton Big Game Classic, Lone Tree, CO

## March

18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> – Conservation Federation of Missouri annual convention, Capitol Plaza Hotel, Jefferson City, MO

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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.

The editors reserve the right to edit or reject any material and the right to crop any submitted photographs.

Send articles and photos for submissions consideration, question and comments to:

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— On the Cover —

Sunrise in Northern Alberta

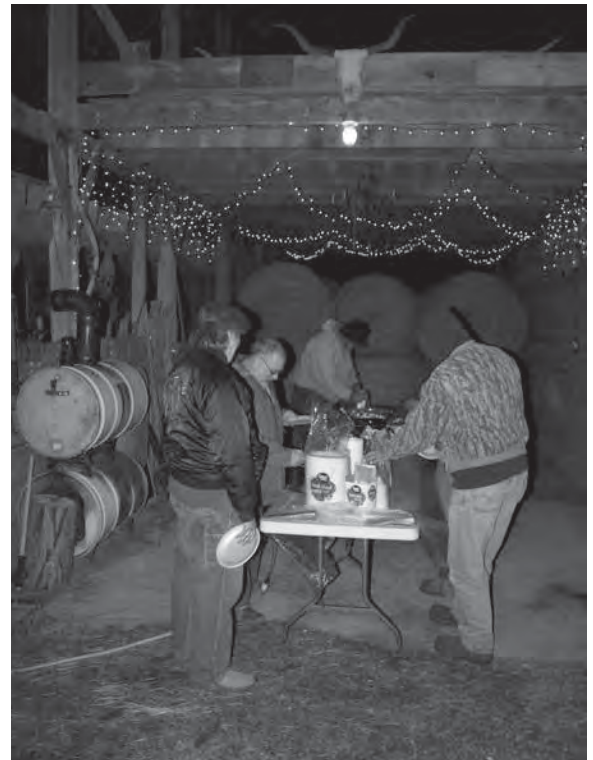
deadlines for submitting copy and pictures to *The United Bowhunter*  
**Feb. 15th, May 3rd, Sept. 15th, Dec. 10th**



**I** HOPE EVERYONE IS HAVING an exciting and productive season so far. I've heard a few member stories and seen some pictures and it looks like the UBM is doing its best to keep the animal population in check. I have been fortunate enough to fill my freezer with a moose and a couple deer so, for once; you won't have to read about me complaining on the trials and tribulations I normally suffer through.

The annual UBM squirrel hunt was held this past weekend and we had a great turnout. As we were sitting around the campfire lying

to one another, a person commented that you could always tell the squirrel hunt newbies because they were the ones who were actually out hunting. As usual, no squirrels were killed but we ate well and it was great to visit with everyone in attendance. So now it's time to focus on the upcoming Festival. There are several little things that need to be nailed down but I think all of the big stuff has been taken care of. There should be an ad in here somewhere that hits the highlights and you will be receiving a registration packet sometime soon. As always, we need some quality items donated for the live and silent auctions so if you're making a bow or some arrows for no one in particular, think of donating them to the UBM. These auctions are where the club makes its operating capital for the next year so give till it hurts. The last thing I want to mention is the passing of one of our lifetime



members, Larry Wall. Larry battled cancer for over five years but finally succumbed in September. He was a lifelong bowhunter, an ardent supporter of the UBM and a good friend of mine. I will miss his old jokes and long-winded stories. Till we meet again, my friend...

Darren

Pictures from the squirrel hunt (courtesy of Mike McDonald); Members doing what they do best, telling stories and feeding their faces!



## Mike Mitten, Guest Speaker for the 2016 UBM Festival

**M**IKE MITTEN LIVES in Beach Park, Illinois. Woodsmanship was learned early on during camping and fishing trips with his father, and through Boy Scouting where he earned the highest rank of Eagle. Mike received his bachelors' degree in biology in 1983 from Northern Illinois University, and has made a thirty year career in the pharmaceutical industry. He is currently employed as a dedicated member of a research team that discovers new treatments for cancer. Mike has hunted with the bow and arrow for over 45 years, cutting his bowhunting teeth on the family's vacation property and surrounding Chequamegon National Forest in north central Wisconsin. His passion for bowhunting whitetail deer is offset each year by annual solo bowhunting adventures to distant western states, Canada, or Alaska. Over the years, Mike has frequently shared his stories and experience by authoring articles published in hunting magazines such as North American Whitetail, Bowhunter, Traditional Bowhunter Magazine, Trad Archers World,



Professional Bowhunter Society Magazine, and Bow and Arrow Hunting. He also encourages membership in local and state hunting organizations along with national organizations such as Professional Bowhunter Society, Comptons, and Pope and Young Club. Mike attributes his life's passion for the outdoors and bowhunting success to an understanding family. Following a long journey building self-reliance and redefining the definition of failure, Mike has found

reward in every hunting trip. He is now able to teach his own children and help them accept the stewardship and responsibility each generation has for conservation of our natural resources. Mike's experiences as a solo hunter with a video camera in one hand and a bow in the other have enabled him to contribute as a co-producers of the award winning films Primal Dreams and Essential Encounters ([www.brothersofthebow.com](http://www.brothersofthebow.com)). He has published his first book, One with the Wilderness (Passions of a Solo Bowhunter). Mike wrote multiple chapters for a book compiled by Don Higgins called, Real World Whitetail Icons (...in Their Own Words). Mike is a member of Sitka Gear's Athlete staff where his field tests, advice and suggestions help with improving the functionality of hunting gear and apparel. He is a member of Wensel/Mitten Productions, whose videos and books go a long way to help non-hunters understand our passions for the chase and the true spirit of the hunt. Mike is also on the Professional Bowhunter Society's speaker's bureau.



LARRY AND I HAVE DEVELOPED an infatuation for an island in Alaska called Prince of Whales. We seem to be drawn there because of the friendship we have developed with a couple that we have a lot in common with. We met Bob on a Newfoundland moose hunt and were invited to their cabin on POW so his wife Lisa and I could hunt together. His wife was just getting into hunting and he wanted her to meet another woman who also had a passion for the sport and hence opened a door for us that we can't seem to ever close. Lisa and Bob are a terrific couple and have a great cabin in a very remote part of the island. There are no other hunters that we ever see and the solitude we crave when hunting is in abundance. The ferry over from Ketchikan drops you off on one end of POW and we drive a couple hours to the other end passing maybe five cars on the way and that is during the hunting season which is gun or bow. There



are no towns along the way and it is very peaceful and beautiful terrain. It's fawning season for the black-tail deer and because of the denseness of the forest they bring their fawns out to the road for safety. The fawns are smaller than the whitetail with shorter legs. It is an experience I will always look forward to. I have walked right up to them and taken pictures up close and personal while they lay and hide in the grass. Unfortunately, being around the roads makes them easy prey for the bears; a delicacy they don't pass up. That brings me to my new passion of the last few years, bear hunting. I always thought I would be too afraid to go into the dense woods to bear hunt and, of course, I was the first few times out. My first time in was, to say the least, frightening.



A friend walked me into the hunting spot along the quarter mile hike as the laws on POW state (you must be quarter mile from any house or any road - no problem). A GPS is a must and once you map out your site you can start baiting the same day the season opens. We use a barrel with a hole cut in the side about center and then hang it from a chain. The barrel is baited with sweetened-up dog food that we haul in from Ketchikan. Now back to that walk in... Did I forget to mention that you carry in a bucket full of dog food each time you walk through brush touching your elbows for a quarter mile? Yes, I thought so! Well, I dumped the dog food in the barrel, said adios



to my only life line and climbed up in my tree. The sit is fun due to lots of eagles in this particular area and animals called martins that resemble a weasel, I guess, but not really. They are very entertaining as they climb in the barrel for a snack of dog food doing their acrobats. We only hunt in the afternoon and I was getting pretty nervous towards dark so

I climbed down fifteen minutes early, picked up my empty bucket and pretty much do a sprint out. However, when I get to the end of path to wait on my ride I am now standing in the dark with sounds all around me, a nice smelly bucket in my hand; waiting. Well, that was four years ago and now I am a seasoned hunter that only shakes occasionally

in her boots when I wait for a ride. POW has now went to a draw for tags so if you're lucky you get drawn every other year, as was our case this year, so back we go. Bob and Lisa had another couple hunting in ahead of us so I was fortunate enough this hunt to already have a coordinate to hunt. All I had to do was put my hunting info on site for this bait to hunt it with permission from the previous hunter, which by the way was another woman. She took a very nice bear at this site and had told me about one she named "Hot Mess". Women do this you know; name critters. Men, well they just hunt. We put more personality with the animals we see. She had been seeing several bears on this site so I had her show me the way in before she left. Wow! I thought the last baits I hunted were remote - NOT! This was a long walk in through bogs and twisted roots that made running impossible. The



Alaska continued on page 7

path, which was very dim, twisted this way and that, crossed a creek and finally arrived at the site. Well this gal was petite and short and the ladder steps on her tree were six inches apart. I felt like I was climbing a tree gnomes' ladder! She also shot a compound so her shot was set at around 25 yards so I moved the barrel up to 10 yards. I like up close and personal. I climbed the tree and sat down. Three hours later, and getting pretty late, I heard sounds coming down the hillside and spotted a bear coming in looking for the barrel in its old spot. The bear was on pins and needles jumping at ever little sound the woods had to offer. It finally got brave enough to come to the barrel's new home and settled in for some dog food. I let it calm down and have its last meal before I sent the arrow home. The bear, of course, ran out right down my exit route and there was no death moan to assure me it was dead. I waited for another half hour before I climbed down then I followed the blood trail down my exit trail until it went off the path. I listened intently, heard nothing so I proceeded as fast as the path would let me travel in the dark, now trying to find the right direction. Finally, I found my way back to the truck. Afterwards the phrase, "A queersome turned around", came to me from the movie, "The Mountain Men". We never recover a bear at night due to the thickness of the brush so recovery was to be the next day. The bear hadn't gone too much further past where I had lost blood so we found it easily and packed it out. Oh, guess which bear...yep you got it "Hot Mess". The last time we were on POW it took me 9 days to kill my bear so I didn't have all this time on my hands. Now I had to figure out how to fill the days while Larry pursued his bear. Bob had some crab traps

and a boat so I learned how to bait and throw crab traps and ran them twice a day. Have you ever grabbed a crab? Well neither had I, their pinchers were everywhere. I would pull up a trap with thirteen crabs in it and they had to be sexed and thrown into another tub for the trip back to the cleaning dock. Well I never thought I would learn to sex a crab; it's not that hard after all. The markings on the bottom of the shell indicate the same shape we all know and that is all I am going to say about that. Now back to picking up those crazy things while they are doing their best to get a hold of you and never let go. I would grab one, throw him up on the cleaning table on his back, place a machete on his chest and give it a whack with a hammer to split him in half. I would then grab a half by the legs and shake the center I had just cut towards the water to sling out the guts, rinse and throw it into a bucket; piece of cake! This procedure had its rewards come dinner time. Man, were they delicious and I would have never thought I would get tired of eating crabs; however, it did take a week to get there. Larry had his adventures going on in the mornings fishing for halibut out in the bay with some friends that showed up the last week we were there. I went on one trip with them but nothing was caught. They did catch a really nice halibut from a small aluminum boat on a spinning reel. The fish was caught by another lady on the trip. Her name was Denise and she loved fishing. She landed that fish after an hour fight. What a woman! The fish weighed in at 125 pounds and a lot of freezer bags later they had it all put up. They fished that bay several mornings and Larry caught a few nice eating size halibuts also. I had the opportunity to go out on the open ocean to fish so I was all

in. We made it a girl's trip consisting of Lisa and her sister, two daughters and myself. Our boat was full but Denise was not to be left out so she went on another boat with her finance and away we all went. Oh I bet you are wondering what Larry was doing. Well, he still had a bear to kill. It was a fabulous trip and we caught a boatload of fish with heavy duty rods. My arms were jelly by the time the day came to an end. Larry finally bagged his bear and a really nice one at that. It was definitely worth the wait for him and will make a fine rug. Well, that is the end of this adventure but in another two years it will hopefully start all over again.



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## »» Festival Auction Reminder

**T**HE 2016 UBM FESTIVAL is just around the corner. My lovely wife has agreed to help me once again with the silent and live auctions. We need your help to make these auctions a success. Donations from our members are what fuel the auction. All sorts of items are needed. Items that do well are, of course, bowhunting gear, but also books, groups of old outdoor magazines, Homemade wood working items,

Man or Woman Cave decorations, etc., etc. So get those gears a turning and see what you can come up with!

Let's not forget the goodies auction either. I was amazed at some of the bidding wars that went on at that table. Thankfully no one was hurt in that action. All kinds of food items are needed from pies and cakes to cookies and brownies. One thing I noticed was that multiple small containers seemed to

do better than one large container. I would like to ask everyone that donates an item to take a couple of minutes and fill out a donation form for each item donated. This helps out greatly after the festival is over. Thank you in advance for everyone's help.

**Todd and Glenda Goodman**

## »» Two Days, Two Deer, One Arrow

Darren Haverstick

**U**SUALLY, BY THIS TIME of the year, I am just about worn out from hunting so much. My wife and daughter think I'm a stranger and my own dogs try to bite the unfamiliar hand that's feeding them. But 2015 has been a different story. My father-in-law's health is not good and Leah has been spending as much time as she can with him and the rest of her family in Lake St. Louis. That means that I've been staying home to take care of the chores instead of running off to my farm to chase whitetails. It's the right thing to do so Leah can be with her folks and I don't mind it so much since my freezer is already full of fresh meat. I was fortunate enough to kill a moose at the end of September so my brood can go into winter with high expectations of making it through. I have hunted a little bit behind our house but that doesn't hold a candle to the target-rich environment at the Haverstick Game Preserve in northern Shannon County.

But the missus knows that when the middle of November rolls around I will be on that sacred ground for the opening of our firearms season come hell or high water. I usually sneak in a couple of days of bowhunting too,

right before, just for good measure. This year was no exception and I pulled up next to Dad's house three days before the opener with a truck full of deer-killing apparatus and a head full of high expectations. The weather for Thursday and Friday was supposed to be perfect and I could hardly wait to get in the woods with my bow and arrows.

For my first outing, I decided I would hunt on the ridge behind our

barn. It is densely covered with oak trees and is steep as a horse's face on either side. There is a logging skid trail that goes up the side closest to the house and it continues down the ridge's back to the north where it ends in a loading ground. Dad has a salt lick there and to the north of the loading ground is a huge oak flat that the deer and turkeys love to feed on. I have killed several deer up there and, with the rut kicking in, felt pret-

*A very relieved author with his downhill doe*





ty good about my chances of getting a shot. I put my climbing stand up in a big black oak tree at the north end of the loading ground, got settled in and waited for shooting light.

Well, I didn't have to wait more than fifteen minutes or so before I heard the telltale sound of deer hooves crunching the leaves. I was facing southwest across the ridge top and the noise was coming straight to me. Pretty soon the sound was matched with its maker and I see a young 9-point-er coming out of the holler looking for something. I was so intent on watching him that I didn't notice that the "something" he was looking for was a young doe standing about 20 yards from me to my right. But now it was too late. I knew that if I drew on her then the buck would see me and they both would

run off so I bided my time to see what would unfold. As you probably have guessed, what unfolded was the doe took off away from the buck and he went right after her. No shot opportunities were given but it was no big deal. The morning was young and I had nowhere else to be.

At around seven, I hear a noise to my left and I see a doe and her fawn come out into the loading ground. They meander around for a bit and slowly start feeding toward me. I am an equal opportunity

hunter at this point and will shoot whichever one provides me with the first shot. I tighten my shooting glove and check the nock of my lucky arrow. It was the one that I had killed my moose with and I thought it was lost at the site. Miraculously, my guide found it four

draw and release. Unfortunately, she turns just before my arrow gets there and I grow sick with the sight of it barely hanging out of her off side angled front-to-back instead of back-to-front. She runs down into Tater Cave Holler and I know that I have a gut-shot deer to contend



Happiness is a full meat pole!

with. In my mind I mark the spot where I last saw her as I strain my ears to hear any sound of her demise. The fawn starts down that way and I decide I will stay in the stand for 30 minutes before I get down to see what is what. It is a looong half hour with a glimmer of hope at the end. I catch a glimpse of the fawn standing around the spot where I last saw her mother. Could the deer actually be dead there? It is too much to hope for as I climb down the tree and gather up my things.

days later when he was hunting with UBM member, Dan Novotny, at the same spot. Believing the arrow was filled with good mojo, I am ready to send it through a deer this morning.

The fawn comes to me first and, just as she turns broadside, Momma decides to look up at me. I don't dare draw now and I patiently wait for the doe to stop staring. She finally turns her head and her demeanor also turns. Spooky now, the doe walks to my left but before she can make the decision to run for it, I

The doe has run down our fence line and my plan of action is this: I will follow the blood trail up to where she crossed the fence. If I haven't found her by then I will go back to the house, wait a few hours and come back to continue the search. My arrow is found right away. It is intact and has gut material all over it. That reinforces my dread as I inch my way down the steep hillside following the spoor. The landmark I picked out to mark her spot is a forked hickory tree and when I get to that tree

*Two Days continued of page 10*

I really start looking around. I am rewarded with the sight of a snow white belly about 20 more yards down the hill. The doe had expired right where I hoped she had and I am almost overcome with relief. I had hit a big artery going into her liver and she bled out quickly. I say a silent prayer of thanks to her spirit and then start worrying about how I'm going to get her out of this hole.

The old saying about having a strong back and a weak mind comes into play here as I strip off my winter clothes and prepare to drag the deer about 200 yards straight up. I tie a rope around her neck and tie the other end to the four-point safety harness I still have on. With a lot of sweat and a little cussing, we finally arrive at the loading ground where I put her in the back of my truck and we head down to the house. Soon the doe is hanging in the barn lot and my lucky arrow is cleaned, sharpened and put back into service. Tomorrow is another day and another hunt.

Friday started out as a morning that hunters pray for. The tempera-

ture was in the mid 20's and the wind was nonexistent. I stepped out on the porch and the air was so crisp I swear I could reach out and break a piece off. As I turned to go back inside, I heard a mouse fart on the neighbor's place about a mile away. I knew right then that there was going to be some prime hunting taking place today.

This morning's hunting spot will be the Deer Turnaround. The ridge that borders the west side of our lower field has a skid trail that goes up it about half way. At the end of the trail is a loading ground that is just big enough to turn a truck around in; hence the name. Dad has a salt lick and a food plot there too and it is one of my favorite places to hunt. It's a pretty good walk to get there and I arrive at my tree a little behind schedule. Even though it's not shooting light yet, the turkeys are already talking and a deer comes in before I'm even halfway up the tree. Finally, I get settled in and nock my lucky arrow. It sure would be cool to kill another critter with it!

Some young and tender meat for the freezer

With the sun just about to peek over the horizon, I can hear deer walking around above me up near our fence line. I also hear turkeys yelping and kee-keeing in every direction and I contemplate a rescue mission for Dad who is hunting on the field edge below me. It sounds like he's got at least a hundred head of the birds in his lap and I don't think he has enough arrows to keep them whipped off his scrawny body. "Fend for yourself, old man!" I decide. I've got deer to kill and no time to waste on family drama.

There are deer everywhere and I watch does milling around, bucks chasing does, bucks milling around and every combination thereof. It is deer hunting heaven and I've got a front row seat! Two or three deer come into bow range but I don't get a shot for one reason or another. It makes me no never mind, I'm just enjoying the show that a lot of folks never get to see. Somebody once said that nothing ruins a good deer hunt like killing a deer.

So this goes on for a couple of hours when I hear some deer walking around on the hillside below me. A doe and her button buck fawn come out of the brush to partake of the salt lick for a while. It's further than I want to shoot so I wait to see what develops. The fawn looks to be pretty good size and I will put an arrow through whichever deer that provides me with an opportunity. Slowly, Junior feeds away from his mother and steps out into the middle of the food plot. I'm a little cold so I decide to draw on the deer just to loosen my muscles a bit. At the same time that I make this decision, Junior gets an itch on his off side and decides to scratch it with his head. This extends his front leg on my side giving me a shot too good to pass up. I complete my draw,

*Two Days continued of page 11*



pick a spot behind his shoulder and send my lucky arrow his way. The young buck bounds down the ridge with the arrow sticking out of both his sides and I mark the spot in my mind where he goes out of sight.

I'm a little smarter this morning and remember to bring my compass with me. While I'm still in the tree, I take a reading on the place where I last saw the fawn and while I'm doing that I notice Mom milling about in the same area. I am pretty sure the deer is dead there so I lower all my stuff to the ground and get ready to have a look. When my gear is all stowed away, I grab my compass and

start making a bee line towards the marked spot. I see no reason to follow the entire blood trail because I know the deer was hit well. When I get within 20 yards of the marked spot I find a lot of blood and I see little Junior piled up just a short distance away. He is lying on my arrow and I don't see the point sticking out of him anymore so I fear the worst for its condition. Sure enough, it is broken but I find my high-dollar broadhead so all is not lost. I, once again, thank the deer's spirit for the meat he will provide my family as I hook him up to my drag line. This time I get to go downhill and that,

combined with his smaller size, make the going much easier. Soon he is on the side of Deer Highway and I go fetch my truck to haul him home. I get him field dressed and in short order he is hanging up next to the doe from yesterday. I can't help but smile as I reflect on my bow season so far. I killed three animals with the same arrow and two of them were only 24 hours apart. While my hunting skills played a part in this bounty, I would be foolish to overlook the fact that good fortune had more to do with it than anything else. I am okay with that; I would rather be lucky than good any day of the year.

## From the Designer

Elise Haverstick



**H**ELLO AGAIN! It's time again for a new edition of the newsletter and a brand new edition of the "From the Designer" section, or as I call it, ramblings about my life.

Any way, I have fantastic news to share with you all! I am now an official, and employed graphic designer! On December 4th, I started my brand new job at the *Ash Grove Commonwealth!* I am their graphic designer, so I am essentially in charge of laying out the weekly newspaper and updating the website with the new stories from the paper.

It is a wonderful feeling to be employed again after 7 months of applying, interviewing, rejection, and unnecessary stress. I really like my job so far

and I am excited to continue learning the ropes there so that I can fully take over the newspaper and take some work off the plate of my coworkers.

As much as I love my job the drive into work is about 40 minutes and the once a week trip to the main office for print day is about 50. Thankfully I have an arsenal of cd's and the radio to keep me awake and content during my drive. But the drive is well worth it to have a job a) in my field, and b) not in retail.

Now that I have a real job, I said goodbye to Target with a fond remembrance of my coworkers, and a skip in my step up on realizing that a) I have nights and weekends back, and b) I don't have to deal with the masses of people that come into Target, especially the ones that turn into crazy people during the holiday season. I had the joy of working Black Friday and answering the phones, and I am so glad to say that I never have to do it ever again.

For those who have never worked Black Friday, it is a unique kind of crazy in which your sanity will be tested and most likely broken when you tell the ten millionth person that we are out of the 50" TV they want and then listen to them complain that they real-

ly want it and proceed to see if they can get special treatment because they are entitled to that item. It's funny, I thought I was entitled to enjoy Thanksgiving with my family and not deal with entitled people who have no regard for the retail employees that make your beloved shopping experience possible.

Okay, rant over. Long story short my life is pretty good right now and I am excited to embark this new path and see where it takes me. Happy holidays and I will see you at the Festival in February!



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**W**HEN TELLING MY COUSIN, Jeff Adams, that I was going to hunt mule deer in Wyoming, I could sense a strong interest when he said, "That sounds awesome." My response was, "You want to go along?" His voice now seemed to hit a higher gear when he assured me that he had enough vacation but would need to run this by his wife. His wife was very supportive, telling him that this was an opportunity he should not pass up, that he would not take on a trip like this on his own. Plus, he would be able to go with someone who had been there. Yes, I have been there many times, without bringing home any meat. But, I have developed great friendships and have been a member of BOW (Bowhunters of Wyoming) for many years. My wife refers to my out-west hunts as, "Larry's Wyoming Walk About". Call it what you will, as long as I am able to go. There is something special about camping and being in the high country wearing your day pack and carrying your longbow. Missouri does not have the mountains and animals the western states enjoy.

My wife was happy to hear someone was going with me. The planning and sharing of information began immediately. We entered the 2015 drawing for regional mule deer tags. I built a folder for Jeff with older forest service maps, highway maps as well as over-all cost of tags, food, gas etc. to prepare him for what was in store. We went over equipment, shooting broadheads and fine tuning our bows. (Both Jeff and I shoot Sky longbows - he shoots aluminum & I shoot wood arrows - we both shoot Bear broadheads) We agreed on a hunt schedule of two weeks and talked about food likes and dislikes



to generalize a menu so we could take most of our food with us. My travel trailer has a refrigerator plus provides more storage space than when tent camping. After many e-mails, texts, phone calls, meetings etc. we were ready to leave over the Labor Day weekend. We stopped at Mitchell, South Dakota the 1st night and camped on Cabela's parking lot, which is just off of interstate 90. We were one of 14 campers that night. Across the street was a Walmart that had campers on their parking lot as well. In the morning we crossed into Wyoming, heading for Mike & Susan Barrett's driveway for our 2nd night. As usual, we received a warm welcome from Susan who prepared great elk burgers along with fresh vegetables from her garden. This was the first time that Jeff had tasted elk. He now wants an elk tag. After an evening of reliving old stories and catching



*Sharing continued of page 13*

up on each other's lives, viewing Mike's trophies etc., it was time to head for the camper. Our plan was to go into the mountains on Monday when all the locals were coming out in order to avoid the crowds and related holiday traffic. As we worked our way up the switchbacks, we were meeting a string of campers heading home. We stopped at many of the lookouts so Jeff could take in the views of the towns below as well as the beautiful mountains and skyline. We were approached at one of the lookouts by a gentleman wanting to know if my trailer was a retro. I wasn't aware that people were taking old trailers and updating them. I assured him that this was an original and I have owned it for 39 years. It only goes out in the weather when traveling or hunting.

After stopping for lunch at one of the lodges on the mountain, we headed for our starting point in the southern portion of the mountain range. We were hunting and camping in the national forest. Better

known as public area, we would share the area with everyone that has the same idea of spending time in the wild pursuing the various species they might have tags for. This time of year, most bowhunters are chasing elk and we were one of the few having only deer tags. We were able to locate a suitable camping spot where we could glass from camp, not too far off the road. Well, maybe a little too close to the road. We did eat some dust as the outfits passed by along with ranchers bringing out sheep and cattle for the fall round up.

After spending a couple days learning the area, finding good glassing locations and generally getting use



to the altitude, we were starting to feel almost normal again. It takes a bit of time to get over the change for us flatlanders coming from 600 feet above sea level to 9500 feet. We were seeing mostly does and small bucks so we started to consider moving north where I am more familiar with the area, plus the roads were much better which allowed us to cover more ground. Glassing can be a group thing, but stalking should be independent in different directions. We did spend part of that third day with my good friend, Mike Barrett, who was quick to educate us in the art of glassing and locating deer. Jeff soaked up all the information Mike willingly shared, including how to take pictures through his spotting scope. I think most of Jeff's pictures are through his scope. After spending a few hours in Spotting Class 101, we had a much improved approach to locating deer. Spotting was the easy part. Moving in close is the challenge.

On the afternoon of the third day, we did move north and found a good camp site in the timber further off the road. We started glassing and locating deer that same day. The tough part was finding them back as they entered the timber or



*Sharing continued of page 14*

disappeared over the mountain you were glassing. When you arrive where you had last seen them, the area looks much different than a mile away. But, as Mike would say, "Welcome to mule deer hunting".

Having planned our trip for two weeks allowed the proper amount of time of spotting and planning stalks rather than hurrying through each day. After a few unsuccessful walks in the timber, we settled in on one area where we were having repeated contact with deer. Jeff's excitement grew when he bumped a nice 4 x 4 twice without running him out of the country. When we met later, I enjoyed his excitement and expressions in reliving the morning. I wish I could have recorded his description of his heart jumping against his chest with his arms and legs shaking and feeling like they were going to sleep. He obviously did the right thing by backing off and not pushing him. He was able to see this same buck on the 2nd day, but could not get close enough for a shot. On the third morning he was working his way through the new growth when he found the buck feeding above him. After closing to within 25 to 30 yards, he felt the shot was a little long, but that this might be his only chance. As he relived the story, he was still excited telling how he had trouble holding his bow arm still while drawing on the buck. He said that watching his arrow go under the deer left him with that empty feeling when you know you just blew it. Back at camp that day, Jeff could not shoot enough arrows at the bag target. I suggested he shoot only one arrow and make it count. He then shot one arrow and pulled it before walking back for a 2nd shot, etc.

About midday, Gary Laya came to our camp for our usual two-year visit and Jeff relived his disappoint-

ing story, asking for Gary's take on whether or not the deer was driven from the area. Gary encouraged him to go back and give it another try. You are on his turf where he likes to be. Go slow and find him again.

On that third evening, I dropped Jeff off at the same area before leaving for a different ridge. I told Jeff that if he did connect, that he should drag him downhill to the road so we could load him in the truck. He laughed and said okay. As Jeff later told the story, the wind was in his favor as he entered the new growth and began his stalk/search. He would move slow, short distances and sit; listening and watching. After several sessions of sneaking and peeking, he spotted his buck bedded in the grass between a clump of new growth. As he was placing an arrow on the string, the buck stood up and was quartering away at 10 yards. Again, his body was shaking along with his bow arm which he was able to get under control. When he released the arrow, he watched it enter behind the rib cage going forward. The deer jumped, but was only able to stumble, staggering forward and finally fell. Jeff was now absolutely overwhelmed. He was on his first out-west hunt and was successful with a long-bow on a spot-and-stalk hunt. It doesn't get much better than that!

I returned to where I had dropped Jeff off and found him walking up the road without his bow which I assume meant success? After seeing his grin and how pumped he was I knew we had some work ahead of us. At a fast-forward rate, he relived his story as he assured me he left him by the road where we could get to him. However, because he was hunting without his day pack, he didn't have his knife and brought the deer downhill without field

dressing it. He said he had to stop a bunch of times, pulling it over logs etc. After a good laugh, we parked the truck next to the deer where we took hero pictures before field dressing and loading it on the truck. It was a good thing he was young and strong or we would have never gotten the deer in the truck. We did include a happy hour that evening in celebration of his success. I reassured Jeff that he shouldn't let anyone tell him how lucky he was. He hunted this deer for three days, on the deer's turf without giving up.

The next day Jim Young and Gary Laya came by camp for another welcomed visit. They too enjoyed sharing the fun of hearing Jeff repeat his stories along with his continued excitement. I believe since us three were almost twice Jeff's age, it reminded us of our younger days. Gary & Jim helped with hanging, plus skinning and caping the deer. What a fun day! Enjoying good friends and welcoming a new traditionalist to our way of life. This was truly, 'Sharing the Tradition.'

After processing the deer and getting the meat into coolers, we decided to leave the mountain a day early to get the meat and trophy home in good shape. We again headed for the Barrett's driveway where we would spend the night and take a wonderful hot shower before hitting the highway for home. Thank you Susan!

When returning home, the meat went in the refrigerator and the head to the taxidermist. Jeff is continuously talking about when we return for our next hunt. I think he would leave to hunt again tomorrow if the season was open and he had a tag. This is the first of his once-in-a-lifetime hunts, which will be repeated and continued for many years. I fully understand his feelings.

“WHAT IS A WILDLIFE COOP?”

“What are you going to do with my pictures and information?”

“Does that mean anyone in the coop can hunt anywhere?”

“Just how is this going to benefit my property or hunting?”

These and many other questions were asked by some of the neighbors and me at the first meeting. By “neighbors”, I’m talking a landowner that may be adjoining your piece of property or may be few miles down the road. Everyone at that meeting was curious about this so called Coop and just what it would mean for our local wildlife or how it may impact hunting on our own property. After listening to the presentation by a couple of neighbors I felt this was something I would be interested in participating in, or at least find out more about it.

This initial meeting was in 2012

and I am happy to report it has been a great benefit for our local wildlife population. I felt it would greatly improve not only the number of deer and turkey we see but also help with the quality of the deer. I have not been disappointed. Although our deer herd is not growing as fast as we would like we are seeing an improvement.

An important party in the success of this program is the Missouri Department of Conservation. Another group has been the Quality Deer Management Association and their local representatives. These groups have provided us with information and resources to help us understand some of the data we have started collecting and help with management suggestions and ideas.

Our Coop is growing and more neighbors are showing up at some of

our meetings and functions. Best of all, we have all got to know some of the neighbors and their family. Many of them were born and raised in that area, or have kin folk there, but I suspect many of you are like me and have bought property in an area similar to this.

I thought I might share some of the things we have done because I feel it would benefit all of us to some degree. I know several of the Coop members attended the Chronic Wasting Disease meetings and also voiced opposition to allowing the crossbow in the archery season.

Camera Surveys are one of the first tools we started with to find out our deer herd numbers. This consists of having the area drawn up in 100-acre grids and placing corn out with a camera set on it to count numbers of deer. The first year we had just a few landowners with about 900 acres included. In 2015 we had about 3000 acres in the survey and expect 4000 acres next year. Many of you will recall we had a couple of drought years and an outbreak of EHD and a tick infestation in this period. We saw a decline in deer and feel this was a major impact on our local herd. We ran this bait for a three-week period in early August. One week of baiting to get things going, then two weeks of survey. Both MDC and QDMA have information on how to do this survey. Unique bucks are easy to count and record but does and fawns are where your herd growth is! It is hard to tell much difference in does and fawns so there is a formula for total numbers so that involves counting EVERY deer in your pictures! Yep it takes some time to go through several thousands of pictures but how else are you going to know?

The author’s buck caught on camera





Based on the number of does and fawns from the camera survey on my property, and also some neighbors', some of us decided to give the does a break to try to build the local herd. We also know that some people in the area count on venison to feed their family and, as always, it is up to the hunter to make their personal choice. I also requested the other people that hunt on our place to please pass up the does. This year I am seeing a few more does and fawns so I feel it is working. Funny thing is one of my bordering neighbors, who does not participate in the Coop, was telling one of the other members that since I was participating in this Coop thing they have not seen as many deer because we were killing them all. Truth is, there had only been one buck taken off

Managed deer mean nice bucks! our place and the Coop member knew this so they were able to explain the benefit of belonging to the Coop to this family and what has really been taken off our property. This same family usually took 4-5 deer every gun season. This season they also reduced their harvest so we all should see a difference soon. Communication among members on deer numbers will help us all! We also have had meetings on habitat improvement, another big benefit for all wildlife! Some of these include food plots, timber stand improvement, controlled burning, and other practices. We have even helped each other on projects with equipment and manpower. We also have had a demonstration on trapping predators as well

as plant identification to help control invasive species and promote those most beneficial to wildlife.

A few other benefits we have seen are less trespassing problems. We feel this has to do with the neighbors knowing if a strange person or vehicle is in the area. I have had several dogs running deer and everything through our place this bow season. I made a call asking one of our members if he knew who they may belong to. He did not but told me he would make some calls and the last couple times out they have not been around. They may show up again but maybe the person they belong to got word that I did not appreciate them running free on our place. Since none were wearing collars and I had not seen them at any of the neighbors I was at a loss of where to go about them since I do not live out there.

All of our properties do not connect so don't think you have to have everyone in your Coop adjoining. Each property owner controls what they decide to shoot or not shoot on their property. We just share the information we gather with everyone so they can make their decisions. You also do not open it up to any Coop member unless of course you want to. All we ask as a member is to share information on what is taken on your property.

Our Mayfield Hollow Wildlife Cooperative is not the only Coop in the State and others may be different but I have seen a big difference in our area since this has formed. Not only in the quality of the bucks on our survey but the willingness of members and neighbors to share information and help improve the area for all.

Feel free to contact me for information as well as Missouri Department of Conservation or Quality Deer Management Association.



## »»» Thank you to my UBM Family →

I WANT TO THANK the members of UBM for the generous gift in my father's memory. The St. Francis Borgia Grade School was very dear to his heart. He attended the school in his youth, then over the years, volunteered at the school in a number of different capacities from coaching, scouting and finally as part of the volunteer maintenance crew. During those 82 years of life he maintained a friend-

ship with a core group of 10 guys that started in that grade school. I just want to say that the friendships I have developed over the years with UBM hold a special place in my heart. It reminds me of my dad and his friends. I truly appreciate the support given to me during this time. I also want to add that my mother was impressed as I introduced all of the UBM members that showed at dad's wake. She knew I

was involved with UBM over the years and after meeting you stated that she understood why I spent so much time with such a great group of people. Thanks to all once again. Looking forward to seeing everyone this winter at the festival.

Sincerely,  
Mike McDonald

## »»» Subtle Change of Tradition → Ernie Kon →

TRADITION HOLDS STRONG, and the season's been true. Fairly favorable conditions in our neck of the southeastern Missouri woods have contributed to a good amount of time spent afield, and an appreciated amount of whitetail action. For me, this is the season of traditional transition. After fourteen years of pursuing game with recurve I've made the transition to longbow. Confidence grew quickly, and I was fast to fall in love.

Arrows are in the air, and it was love at first grip. During the progression of summer my shooting discipline was decent as I watched the velvet grow on some of the local bucks from our back door. Among that handful of bucks, the most desirable would later make a couple appearances on a trail camera, as well as an appearance when I had bow in hand. This particular nine-point has good mass and a good spread. The five-side is a fairly strong antler, and although the tines aren't particularly long on the four-side, the mass is pretty good. The sce-

nario that played out did not dictate a close enough encounter for a shot opportunity, but patience has been the name of the game so far.

A generous amount of opportunities to harvest whitetails have blessed my outings, but the wait for a bigger buck has remained predominant in my mind set. As the rut was really starting to kick in the bucks were behaving like the optimist bow hunter expects them to. A particular event had me ready in anticipation to draw as a good buck ran by my stand full sprint after "the tail". Fifteen yards is sweet, but my confidence isn't quite there yet to carry me through the fast paced love



*Subtle continued of page 18*



chase moving shot. Another buck encounter had a good seven-point tip toeing all around the edges of the drop zone, but just didn't play in to the part I'm casting for.

By the Thursday before rifle season, aka my last opportunity before rifle season, the eagerness to harvest a good buck with longbow is mimicking the rut activity representation on a line graph...

The early morning was refreshing, and a couple does had already been detected moving through the area. About an hour in, I picked up movement through the woods on the next finger over. Roughly seventy yards away the rack became visible through the trees, and I could tell he was a decent buck. The small disruptions of my rattling sequence captured the buck's attention, and lead him to changing course towards my direction. When the buck got in my vicinity he couldn't really decide on his next move. As I patiently waited for the right shot, watching his mannerisms and checking out his eight-point frame, it seemed like minutes were passing. After some waiting, he stopped pretty much broadside about fifteen yards away. I drew my bow and settled to shoot through a reasonable hole through

some nearby limbs. The arrow was released, the lower branch limb was the deflective defense, and my fine pointed projectile sailed over the back of the intended target. It's hard to be too disappointed in the miss when you're grateful just for the experience. Rifle season has run its course, and I did manage to harvest a decent buck by means of firearm. As I finish this up my head is already back in the woods. Tomorrow is my day off, conditions look amazing, and I'm eager to spend some hours in the stand. The peak of the rut is over, and it's time to regroup and devise a plan for success. With a little good fortune I'll be able to break in my new longbow and feel the uplifting greatness of harvest.

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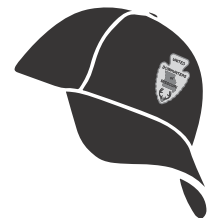
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THE WIND WAS NON-EXISTENT and my breath hung in the rays of my green head-lamp as I made my way toward the “Turtle Stand”. It was a beautiful and typical late October morning. Light frost covered the fescue as I crossed the field and headed into the timber. The forest floor was damp and relatively quiet. The temperature later in the day would surely make the upper 50’s or low 60’s.

The Turtle Stand sits in the middle of a typical patch of west central Missouri timber. There are oaks (mostly red and a few whites), hickories (both shag bark and smooth), scattered cedars and a few walnuts on the edges of the field. It is difficult to enter this stand without bumping deer and this morning was no exception. I gnashed my teeth and kept walking as I heard a deer bound off through the timber. My schedule puts me in the stand 30 minutes before pink light. I sit, or nap, in the dark to let the woods quiet down. Just as the treetops were starting to silhouette in the eastern sky I heard deer walking. Then I heard one of my favorite fall sounds; a buck grunt! It was too dark to make them out let alone shoot, but I could see dark blobs when they moved. They were within 25 yards as they traversed by their way to some unknown destination. I smiled with the anticipation of what the morning might bring.

It was the day before Halloween and the woods were alive! As the sun rose, so did the wildlife. Squirrels were everywhere! Both reds and grays were tempting me with the closeness of their activities. I love fried squirrel and do my best to put a few in the oil every season. But it was too early in the hunt to think squirrel gravy right now. Within

200 yards of me I could hear turkeys fussing and fighting over who would be in charge this day! Within minutes the deer parade started. Eighty yards to the east, a doe was running north with a small buck in hot pursuit. This pair seemed to be new at this ritual, unlike the pair that walked by me in the dark. Twenty minutes later an 18 month old buck came from the north, heading south, with his nose to the ground. Was it same buck that had chased the doe north? Maybe; but not sure.

The next whitetails I saw were to the west and also headed north. There were two of them and I am just sure I saw nice horns on the second one. This was one of those days we wait all year for. Maybe I’ll see this buck later, not sure.

As my morning went on I saw more deer to the south and two small bucks walking the fence row north of me. One was on one side of the fence and one on the other. One was a spike and the other a 3-point. The spike came under the fence and the 3-point jumped over the fence. I chuckled to myself that the 3-point had too much rack to try and go under that bottom strand of barbed wire. Once they swapped sides they turned to face each other and then started a friendly game of sparring thru the fence! Smiling, I watched. In spite of all the game I was seeing I had nothing

within range of “Agent Orange”. That is the name of my trusted Black Widow recurve. It is crafted from Bocote wood and Osage Orange wood. We have been together since 2008 and have stood over many fallen creatures. Side-bar: the wife doesn’t get why you name your Traditional bows. I have tried to explain it to her, but it seems to be useless....

It is now going on 10 o’clock and things have quieted down somewhat. It is SOP for me to stay in the stand till 11 o’clock this time of the year and sometimes longer. I am pretty regimented when it comes to my hunting procedures. I try to stand 45-50 minutes of each hour and sit for 10-15 minutes. I had only been sitting for maybe 5 minutes when I heard him coming. And yes, I was sure it was a buck! The steady, I-don’t-care-who-hears-me, sound of his gait told me so. He



*Good Enough continued of page 20*

ing from behind me and I couldn't tell which side of the tree he would appear from. By the time I could, he was coming into my peripheral vision on my left side. He was too close for me to try and stand. I had to wait for him to pass and make my decision quickly. Once he got in front of me, my in-depth brain waves took over and I came to the intrinsic decision that "he is good enough for me"! The problem was that he was walking almost straight away making the angle very sharp. I had managed to get to my feet by now but was wondering if I was going to get an opportunity for a shot. Then he stopped! The morning magic was continuing.

He now lowered his head and started licking the dirt on the root ball of a fallen tree that has been laying there for many years (minerals, I guess). This gave me the time I needed to assess the shot. Too much of an angle, I would have to go in at the back of the rib cage. I waited. He continued with his dirt dinner for probably a full minute and then raised his head and started his march, of unknown destination, all over. I raised Agent Orange, brought the string half way back and softly mouth grunted. He turned right, stopped and stared a hole right through my tree! I didn't move. Many seconds later he twitched an ear, turned his head back to the left and I completed my draw. The crease behind the leg was my point of focus when the string

left my fingers! The arrow flew beautifully straight and struck a couple of inches lower than my focal point. His front end immediately dropped and he was plowing leaves with his brisket as he tried, in vain, to make his escape. The Woodsman broadhead had severely damaged the off-side front leg as it cut across the top of his heart. He never fully regained his balance and grace as I saw him go down. His death run had lasted

after I shot him. More memories.

I lowered my bow and descended the stand. I walked straight to the buck and gazed at him. He was gorgeous! A wide and even 8-pointer, with nice mass to boot. I always find myself in a calm and reflective mood at times like this. Yes, I am excited at my accomplishment. It is something to be proud of. To beat a wild animal in its own environment and on its own terms with archery equipment is a definite challenge.

But also to

know you have taken the life of this magnificent creature should give you cause to pause. It is a very complex and reflective situation. Yet it seems very natural. I know I am probably preaching to the choir but never take it for granted



Deere cart

no more than 10-12 seconds! After almost forty years of bowhunting I am still in awe of the lethality of a well-placed, sharp broadhead! I hear another deer running from my left! I swing my head around as what appears to be another 3 ½ year old slides to a stop at 30 yards and starts looking around for what was making all the noise. He has an 8 point rack as well. Maybe heavier than the buck I just shot, but narrower and darker. He looks around for a minute or two and then starts the stiff legged walk to the north, jumps the fence and fades into the timber. I am sure he thought there was a buck chasing a hot doe with all the commotion my buck made

and always treat it with respect. There may come a day when we don't have the opportunity to walk the woods with bows in hand.

Now, as you all know, the work begins. I head back to the camper, shed a layer of clothes and then knock on the farmer's door. I have been hunting on this property for many, many years. They were neighbors of my grandparents and after my grandparents' property was sold they allowed me to continue to hunt on them. They are not just landowners they are good friends. And as you can see from the picture, they just got a new Deere cart too!!

Hope you have had a successful and memorable season as well!



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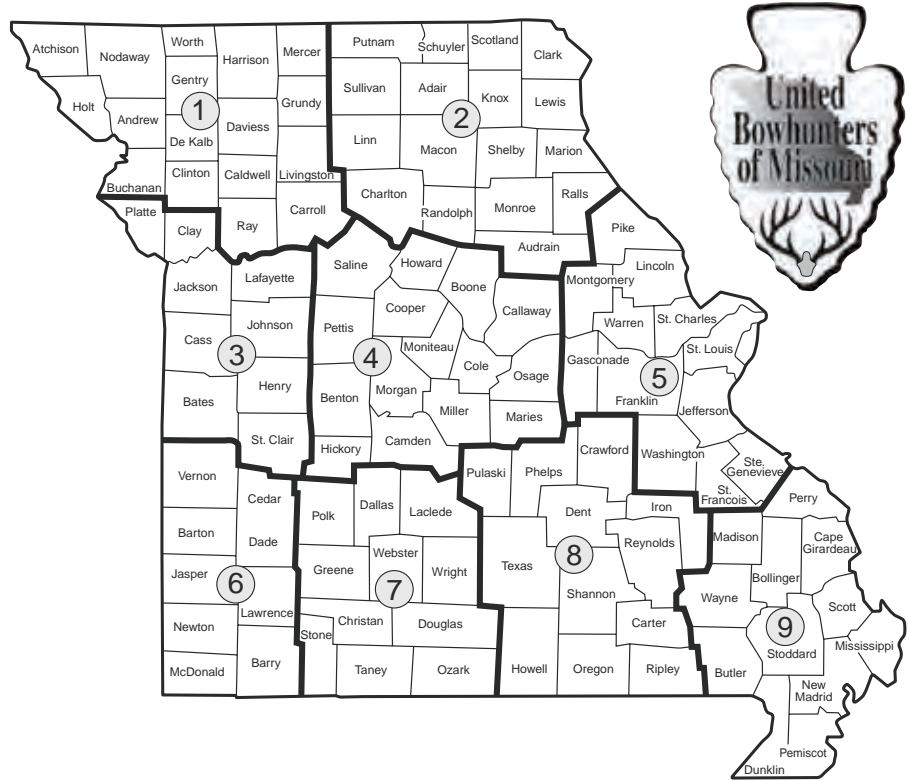
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