

ISSUE 10 - FALL 2024

THE TRACKER

MICHIGAN CHAPTER SCI

RHINO

HUNT

ZAMBEZE

**DELTA
UPDATE**

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ON THE RIGHT TRACK

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- C. To educate youth, sportsmen and the public in conservation of our wildlife and our forests, which are our natural heritage.
- D. To share our hunting experiences and information among our membership.
- E. To operate the association as a non-profit organization, consistent with its charitable purposes, while providing enjoyment for our members, always with the goal of helping to conserve the animals that we love to hunt today for those who will come to love the sport tomorrow.

SCI'S CODES OF ETHICS

Recognizing my responsibilities to wildlife, habitat and future generations, I pledge:

- A. To conduct myself in the field so as to make a positive contribution to wildlife and ecosystems.
- B. To improve my skills as a woodsman and marksman to ensure humane harvesting of wildlife.
- C. To comply with all game laws in the spirit of fair chase, and to influence my companions accordingly.
- D. To accept my responsibility to provide all possible assistance to game law enforcement officers.
- E. To waste no opportunity to teach young people the full meaning of this code of ethics.
- F. To reflect in word and behavior only credit upon the fraternity of sportsmen, and to demonstrate abiding respect for game, habitat and property where I am privileged to hunt.

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Jim Naber jnaber@naberstaxidermy.com	616-889-4202
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Scott Sieracki scott.sieracki@charter.net	616-443-3500
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Denny Sprick dlsprick@gmail.com	616-443-4403

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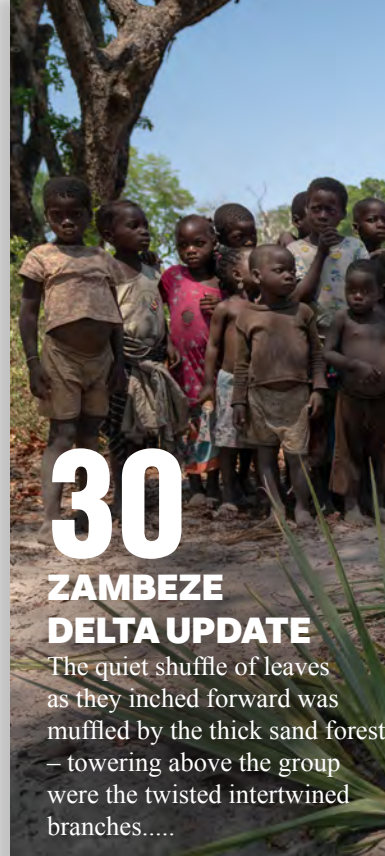
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30 ZAMBEZE DELTA UPDATE

The quiet shuffle of leaves as they inched forward was muffled by the thick sand forest – towering above the group were the twisted intertwined branches.....



32 LAKE MICHIGAN KING

Nothing is better than reeling in a big fish. On July 21, 2024, I awoke at 4:22 a.m. as I was really excited given that had been waiting for this day for 2 years





EDITOR'S NOTES:

Editor's Notes: Welcome to the Fall 2024 issue of your Tracker magazine! As always, this is your magazine and your contributions are needed and appreciated. We need your stories and pictures to make it a success! The deadline for submissions for the Winter Issue is January 1, 2025.



Did you have a great hunt here in Michigan or North America this past fall? Did you go on a hunt bought from our annual fundraiser auction? We would love to read about it! How about sending some pictures from youth hunts, whitetail hunts, western hunts? We have a Member Adventure Page to share your photos. Your Tracker also has a page for those fun and unique trail cam photos.

We really appreciate and enjoy articles submitted by our youth! This month two of our youth members have written about their adventures. Brooklyn Workman writes about her turkey hunt with Chad Wangerin. Andie Olsen wrote about her fishing trip with her dad, Dan, Don Dixon, and Lee Murray. I'm sure that everyone will enjoy these adventures, written in their own words, as much as I did! Thank you, Brooklyn and Andie, for sharing your exciting adventures with us!

Besides the two great stories by Brooklyn and Andie, Larry Smith tells of he and Diane Thompson's adventures in Africa. Larry played an important role in conservation by doing a "green" hunt for a rhino. Diane experienced her first African adventure. We also go to Louisiana for a fishing trip based on a houseboat. This unique and fun adventure was won at the 2023 fundraiser auction.

Your Michigan SCI Chapter has once again been busy with conservation as well as promoting hunting and humanitarian work. The Fall Tracker has important updates on our youth programs, community involvement with the Sensory Safari Trailer, and the incredible work we are doing for conservation in Mozambique with Ivan Carter.

As always, we do reserve the right, at our sole discretion, to edit or refuse any submission. If you would like to submit an article or pictures, please send them to me at: trmoelker@gmail.com or 5132 20th Ave. Hudsonville, MI 49426. Additionally, I can be reached at 616-889-1003.

Thank you,

Todd Moelker, Editor



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LOUISIANA HOT ISN'T JUST A SAUCE

On August 9 my wife Lynda and our friends Dan and Cathy headed down to Louisiana. I'm guessing that many of you are already wondering why anyone would go to Louisiana in August!



12

OLD POWDER VS NEW POWDER



PREZ SEZ

ONCE AGAIN, FALL IS IN THE AIR! LEAVES ARE CHANGING, TEMPERATURES ARE DROPPING, AND BOW SEASON HAS BEGUN.

Hopefully, you are getting your tree stands and blinds set and gearing up for firearm deer season. We are excited as we prepare for each monthly member dinner, and our annual fundraising convention February 7-8, 2025. Currently, we are seeking sponsors for monthly meetings, and various sponsor spots at the convention. If you are interested, let one of the board members know. Our goal is to raise as much money as possible to fund projects that promote, protect, and preserve hunting and fishing. Attacks on hunting are relentless and operating across all media platforms. We are also looking for members who are interested in helping out with events, and serving on our board. If you would like to make a difference, and be part of our energetic team, let me know!

*Dr. Michael Kwast
President, SCI Michigan Chapter*

ATTENTION SCI Michigan Members

Important information for our members such as chapter events, meetings and membership renewals will be emailed to every member that we have an email address for. If you didn't get an email reminder of our last meeting we do not have your email address. Please send your email to mvghareeb@gmail.com so we can get all of our emails on the list.

MICHIGAN CHAPTER UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, November 7

Monthly Dinner Meeting *Red Plaid Night*

Wednesday, December 11

December Monthly Dinner Meeting *Christmas Party*

Thursday, January 9

Monthly Dinner Meeting *Big Buck Night*

Friday And Saturday February 7-8

2025 Fundraiser Convention

Thursday, March 13

Monthly Dinner Meeting *Youth Night*

Thursday, April 10

Monthly Dinner Meeting

Thursday, May 8

Monthly Dinner Meeting: Buy Sell Trade Night

March 22, 2025

Save The Date: Youth Pheasant Hunt

August 15, 2025

Save The Date: Long Range Shoot



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To submit material to The Tracker:

Write: Todd Moelker,

5132 20th Ave.,

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E-Mail: trmoelker@gmail.com

Phone: 616-889-1003

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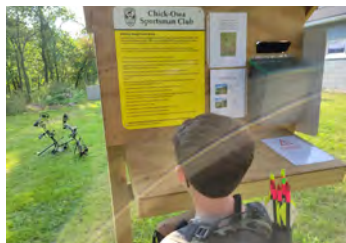
BERGARA
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The West Michigan Bowhunters have been working hard to bring the great outdoors to more people and conserve wildlife habitats.

By the Time You Open **This Fall** Tracker, the 2024 Archery Deer Season Will Be in Full Swing!

STORY BY PETE MIEDEMA



The West Michigan Bowhunters held a 3D tune up shoot at Chick-Owa Sportsman's Club on the south side of Zeeland.

Chick-Owa has been a partner with West Michigan Bowhunters in establishing a 3D archery range in the Lakeshore area.

August 15 was our second year to host an open 3D shoot as a tune-up for archery season in a somewhat realistic scenario. The 3D range is laid out in a wooded setting with foam animals set at varying distances with scoring rings in the vital shot areas.

We had planned for and anticipated about a 150 people but due to a constant drizzle all afternoon we ended up with about 80 people. We were blessed with the Centershot Ministries NASP archery team

led by Bob Fritz. West Michigan Bowhunters has helped sponsor the Centershot team the last 2 years.

This year, we also added some competition throughout the event with certain shots having prizes allocated. We had a long shot competition at the end with member Case Overweg initially winning the event and donating it back. Jeremy Reeths won the reshoot and won a 3D deer target. Jeremy then turned around and donated the target to the Centershot team. The event finished off with a hamburger and hot dog fry as well as just a few hunting stories.

Until next year we wish you all a safe and successful hunting season.





OLD POWDER VS

NEW POWDER

At some stage in your reloading career you will surely come across some very old powder or ammunition at a garage sale or someone will give you some just to get rid of it.

Not long ago, I was given some very old Hodgdon 4831. It was so old that it was in 1 lb. paper bags like you might buy fresh ground coffee way back in the 1950's. The bags were brittle from age, but the powder looked good inside. I checked with the manufacturer, 8. E. Hodgdon, and sure enough they said it was from about 1960 vintage, and maybe even late '50's so it is 50+ years old.

If you come across any powder with a rusty look or if it smells of ammonia, destroy it. In fact, the best way to dispose of it is to throw it on your lawn or garden as it is a great fertilizer because of the ammonium nitrates in it.

If powder is "too old", it usually will have a rusty look or be a very dull color or sticky. This old powder I just received was perfect in all appearances, but the proof is in the shooting. I made up 5 shells with this old H4831 and 5 shells of the new H4831 so I could compare them. The results are listed below along with some other comparisons of new and old propellant.

The old adage of "If in doubt, don't", really applies to old powder. But most

likely useless in that it does not burn well and might stick a bullet in the barrel, and getting that out will not be fun. I'd love to recommend you buy an 8 lb. keg of powder rather than a 1 lb. can every month which could be of a different lot number, but at today's prices, it's not likely to happen.

When you buy a new can of powder, it is surely going to be a different lot number from the one you were loading. For Winchester and IMR propellants (and probably most others), the manufacturer achieves lot-to-lot consistency by using what is called a Reference Lot. Upon making a lot a particular propellant, the new lot is tested alongside the Reference Lot. Only those lots that meet very narrow requirements for density, velocity, and pressure compared to the Reference Lot area designated "Canister" and released to the reloaders. This process ensures that reloading data remains relevant and the expected velocity is achieved with safe pressures. Incidentally, those powder lots that do not meet the requirements for Canister are used for factory ammunition where pressure and velocity are controlled for each application.

Just in case during your "house cleaning" or yard sales you come across some primers (either rifle or shotgun) that appear

to be old, don't fret much about that either. I now have some OLD 1950 vintage Herters Rifle primers and after using 500 so far, I've had no misfires or duds as they work just fine. Same goes for other brands of primers I've used over the recent years, as they all seem to work just fine.

Feel free to contact me at BlauwkampT@Gmail.com if you need help with something

Test results comparing propellant lots show velocity levels remain consistent over time.

Cartridge	Bullet	Propellant	"Old" Propellant	"New" Propellant
.270 Win.	140 gr.	56.0 grs. H4831	2845	2912
.30/06	180 gr.	54.0 grs. IMR-4350	2680	2736
.30/06	180 gr.	58.0 grs. H4831	2577	2661
.300 Win. Mag	180 gr.	73.0 grs. H4831	2911	2990
7mm Rem. Mag.	160 gr.	61.0 grs. IMR-483	2850	2820

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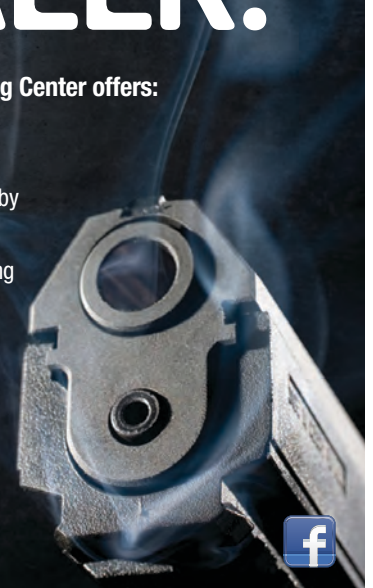
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Brooklyn Workman

TURKEY HUNT

hey it's brooklyn!!

**I wrote up
a little
summary of
the hunt this
morning.**



STORY BY BROOKLYN WORKMAN

It was the morning of April 20. Chad and I went into the woods and we got into the blind at around 6 o'clock. As the sun was coming up the turkeys began to gobble. We could recognize at least 5 toms gobbling. Chad started to call. Within a few minutes some hens wobbled down the trail. A short time later after calling Chad spotted 2 toms in the distance, we waited for them to get closer. They would walk and then stop and then walk again. Chad kept telling me to get ready but then they would continue walking so, I had to wait until they stopped again. My turkey was between a big tree and a little tree at 21 yards. He finally stopped and that was my chance. I put the red dot right on its neck area. I shot him and he stood there and then proceeded to plop on the ground. I shot him at 6:55.





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LAKE MICHIGAN

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On July 21, 2024, I awoke at 4:22 a.m. as I was really excited given that had been waiting for this day for 2 years. My SCI friend, Don Dixon, had won the trip at the Chapter's auction from Captain Tim Becker of Powderhorn Charters and invited my dad and I, but we had to cancel it many times due to bad weather.

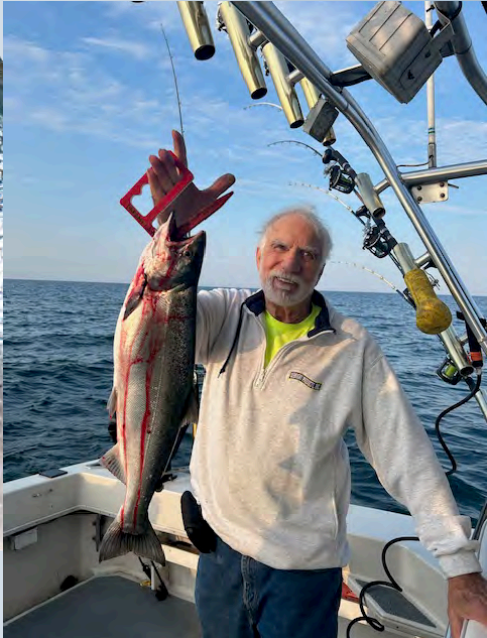
We arrived in Holland in the pitch black and met up with Mr. Don, Lee Murray, Captain Tim and his first mate, Ethan. We headed out in Lake Michigan and soon found ourselves in deep water, where Tim and Ethan began setting up and casting lines. The weather was perfect and the lake calm. Mr. Don said I could reel in the first fish, and by 7:15, we had a bite. My dad took the pole from Ethan while I reeled. It took about 5 minutes to get my 20-pound King Salmon in the net. It is the biggest fish I've ever caught. I was really excited but when it flopped around on the bottom of the boat, I screamed.

Mr. Lee was next, and he caught a good-sized Coho, which, according to Captain Tim, is the best eating big fish in Lake Michigan. Mr. Don then caught a nice steelhead. My dad got the

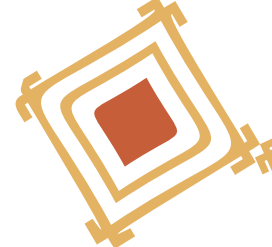
next turn, and he also reeled in a steelhead. Now it was my turn again and soon another fish was on the line. However, it was a very long line that was over a football field long. My dad had the pole and I reeled for a while, but then had to take a break so then he reeled. We switched off and on reeling until the fish was in the boat. It was another steelhead that Captain Tim said was likely the largest that they had caught this season. Mr. Don caught another steelhead, and I also caught a lake trout at the end of the trip. We also lost a couple of Kings.

We got back about 11 a.m. Captain Tim put our 7 fish on the board and took some photos. He and Ethan also cleaned the fish for us so we could split them up. It was very fun with Mr. Don, Mr. Lee, Captain Tim and Ethan, and I cannot wait to do it again!

Nothing is better than
reeling in a big fish.



Average elevation: 260 m
Minimum elevation: 169 m
Maximum elevation: 582 m



African

Adventure times two

I had been thinking about a darted rhino hunt for several years. The idea intrigued me.

Practically speaking, I had nowhere to hang a mounted rhinoceros, so a darted hunt seemed the way to go. The idea took full bloom at our MI Chapter 2024 fundraiser. I spoke with Pieter Vivers of Marupa Safaris based in South Africa. Pieter and I go way back. He was the PH on my first African Safari in 2008. I have hunted with Pieter many times over the years since that first safari. We are like family. So we set the date for

the rhino hunt and I started counting the days!

Here is where the safari trip gets interesting. My girlfriend, Diane, had never been to Africa. She also had never hunted. That was about to change. I had asked her the year prior to go with me to Africa.

However, she was unable to secure the time off work. This year, we planned ahead and Diane was able to make the trip with me. She also was ready to try hunting.

We left Grand Rapids on May 23, 2024, and flew to Johannesburg. We stayed overnight at the Afton Safari Lodge located very near O.R. Tambo Airport (Joburg International Airport). The next morning, we took a short flight to Kimberly where PH "GC" picked us up. We had lively conversation and excitement was in the air as we traveled the next hour to the Marupa Safaris ranch location in

Kimberly. After we unpacked and had lunch, we headed out for a casual drive, sited our rifles, and started the hunt. I had not hunted this particular property of Pieter's previously. We had a great dinner that evening and went to sleep early, as we were tired from our flights.

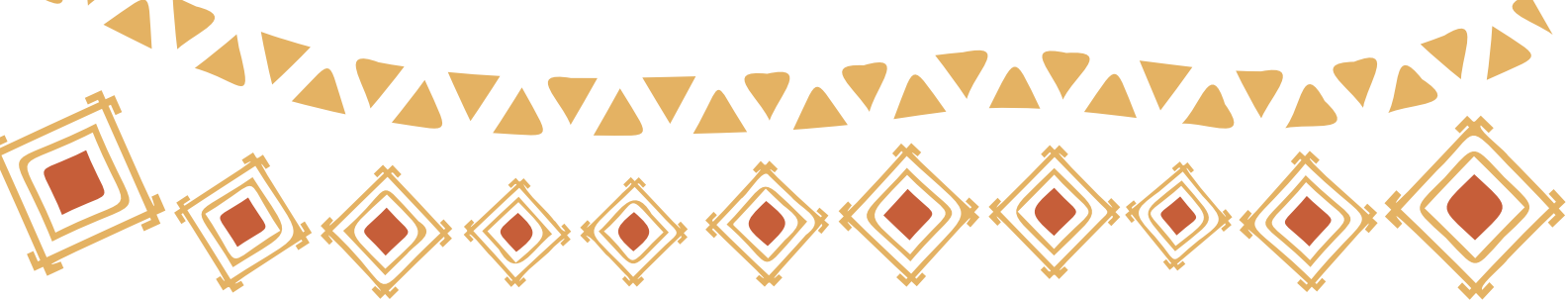
My rhino hunt was set for May 29. We decided to have Diane try for her first African Plains Game—a white blesbuck. We hunted hard for the first full day with no luck. As I explained to Diane that's why it is called "hunting" and is not as easy as it might seem.

Around mid-morning the next day our PH, Patat, spotted a very nice white blesbuck. The stalk was on. Diane made a good shot, but not a fatal shot. After an hour of good tracking by Patat (and his tracker) we located the animal. Diane made the kill shot. We were both relieved. She had told me that if the blesbuck got away wounded, she would not hunt anymore. Thankfully, it ended well.

The next day we went into Kimberly and toured "The Big Hole". It is a diamond mine that had been worked out. The hole is approximately 40 acres and over 700 feet deep. We also toured the Diamond Mine Museum located on that same property. It was very interesting as well as informative.

At last, my rhino hunt day was upon us. It was a little windy, but warm with blue skies. We had about a two-hour drive to the ranch. The owner is Alexander Steyn, a no nonsense kind of guy nicknamed Rambo. After coffee and introductions, Alexander produced a small replica of a rhinoceros. This was to show me where to place the dart. The butt, hams, or neck were all okay. Next he had me shoot at a target with practice darts at about 30 yards. This was about the maximum yardage he would let me shoot. I got the feel of the gun, trigger, and trajectory of the dart. We were ready to dart a rhino! Everyone piled into 2 vehicles and away we went. We soon caught up to a group of 3 rhinos. The stalk was on. Alexander, myself, and GC, were on the stalk. We could not catch up to this group and they knew we were after them. We went looking for others. We found a similar group with the same outcome. You can't catch up to them when they





know you are after them. We tried a different area of the ranch and found another group of 3. The wind was right. They did not see us. We got in front of them and waited in ambush. Alexander told me to take the lead rhino when I could shoot. The rhino was eating with his head down. He was facing me and kept coming closer and closer and closer. Finally, he turned slightly to the side and I shot him in the neck at a little less than 20 yards. He was up close and personal and looked as big as a tank. He turned with the other two and ran off. We raced to the truck to follow. Since there is no helicopter involved we had to keep him in sight from the truck. I can share that it was quite a ride. After about 20-25 minutes he slowed down and his two companions left him. Alexander pulled the safari vehicle about 100 yards in front of him and had me get out. We walked over to his right side and Alexander told me to hold the rhino's front horn and walk with him. I cannot describe what a feeling that was. To walk with that rhino while holding his front horn is the highlight of my long hunting career. It ranks right up there with anything fun, crazy, or remarkable I have done in life. I had to watch out for his front foot stepping on me. That would definitely leave a mark! Alexander then efficiently placed a special protective cloth over the rhino's eyes. After he went down, we took photos and measured his horns (over 28" long with a 27" base on the front horn). Blood samples were then taken, vitamins were given, and he was marked with blue spray paint on his rump indicating he had been darted. Alexander made one final inspection to ensure the rhino had no signs of infection or open

wounds from its environment. You very quickly understand this man is a perfectionist when it comes to his rhinos, his ranch, and his very organized life. It was an honor to meet him and have the opportunity to work together on this very special hunt.

Within a period of approximately 15 minutes the rhino was given his recovery injection. We quickly moved to the trucks. He came to, got up, wandered around a bit, and then set off to reunite with his companions. What a thrill the entire experience was. It was certainly like nothing I had ever experienced. We then left back to Alexander's lodge for a lunch and celebration of the hunt. A very nice conclusion to the rhino hunt with more to come at Alexander's ranch that day.

After lunch, we went out to get Diane her second Plains Game—an impala. After a short time of looking we found a nice one. Diane made a good shot. But again, there was tracking and follow up involved. After a short time, she got on the sticks and got the job done with a very nice impala "in the salt". We headed back to Marupa Lodge. We had some drinks and a fine dinner. Sleep came easy after an incredible day in Africa.

The adventure continued with another very unique experience. Pieter had purchased several animals, all Plains Game, from a neighboring ranch. It was "capture and move" day; all hands on deck. A veterinarian darted the animals from a helicopter. When sedated, a land cruiser moved them to Pieter's property. Almost 30 Plains Game, oryx, kudu, hartebeest, blesbuck, and impala were moved safely.

Our 10-day adventure was coming to a close. But one more fun day was in store. We visited a ranch about an hour away where the owner raises lions. He actually had one set of white lions. The set consisted of a male, a female, and 2 cubs. Being up close to African lions is a very cool experience. In the afternoon, we tried to get an oryx for Diane on this same ranch. They were on high alert with a strong wind blowing.

My story would not be complete without the telling of the "trophy coffee pot". Diane travels with her own small coffee pot and coffee. I have learned to steer clear of her until she has had her coffee in the morning. Toward the end of our hunt, her coffee pot gave out. Patat and his girlfriend,

Denise, took us into Kimberly to “hunt” for a new one. After 6 stores, 2 malls, and most of the day we finally located one. Apparently, brewing coffee pots are a rare species in Kimberly. I had to tease Patat that it took him much longer to track a coffee pot than it did to track a white blesbuck. I guess all's well that ends well. Diane was as happy with the coffee pot as with her white blesbuck and impala.

We had a great time at Marupa. Give it a try—you won't be disappointed. I told Diane that in my 11 previous times on safari in Africa, it had only rained once and was rarely cold. Of course, the night before we left, it turned cold and started raining. It rained hard and was quite uncomfortable on our trip from Kimberly to Port Elizabeth. Diane did well there, in the Eastern Cape, with 2 one-shot kills. But that is a story for another time.



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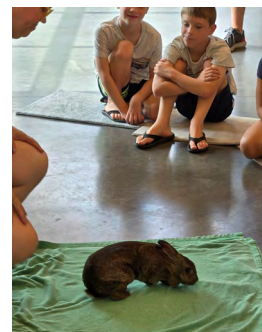
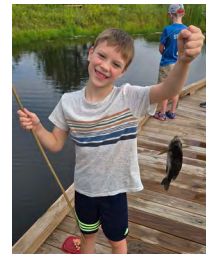
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At Safari Club International our moto has long been,

Our Michigan Chapter is definitely all that, and more! We are also “First for Youth”. Getting our youth involved in hunting and fishing is key to preserving and perpetuating our outdoor lifestyle here in Michigan, around North America, and throughout the world.

Already this year, we have had the following youth events:

- Youth Night monthly dinner with the Discovery Center putting on a great program.
- Youth Pheasant Hunt at Haymarsh Hunt Club
- Hunter’s Safety Classes in Norton Shores
- Multiple fishing trips with Powderhorn Charters
- Orange Crush youth shooting team
- The Outdoor Discovery Center Kids Day
- Sportsmen for Youth Day in Muskegon
- Hunt2Heal
- Wildlife Center Passport Program at Legends Ranch





is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide accessible, safe and comfortable outdoor experiences to people with physical disabilities to improve mental health.

A barrier free lodge and 640 acres of accessible land provide an outdoor haven for hunting and other outdoor activities that removes many of the barriers to reconnect with nature.

Our program consists of a full weekend (Friday - Sunday) of hunting, meals, bonfires and other fun activities in the great outdoors. There is an application and selection process we have implemented since our hunting weekends are limited. The opportunity is available to all, with no cost.

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Dear Safari Club International Michigan Chapter,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$5,000.00 that you made on 2/13/2024. Every act of your generosity helps us further our mission. Your gift will help us get more people back into the outdoors to experience nature, camaraderie, and emotional and spiritual well-being. Your gift is allowing us to realize a dream. It's great to get back out into the woods. All that have wanted to do is to share the hunting experience that gave me my life back so that I can help as many others who might also be experiencing a life-changing disability. It was the thing that helped me more than anything else. Thank you again for your most generous support and your willingness to make a difference.

*Sincerely,
 Carson Nyenhuis
 Founder*



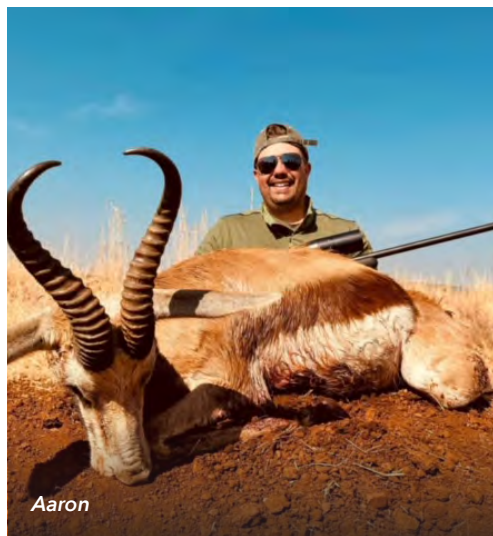


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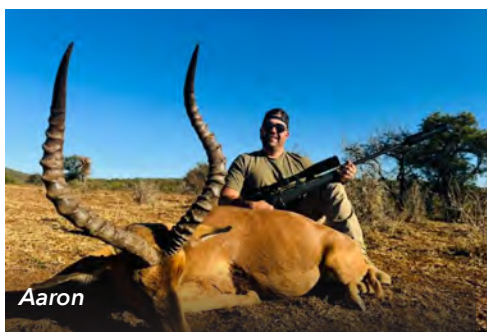
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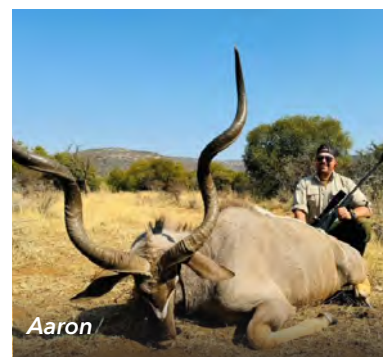


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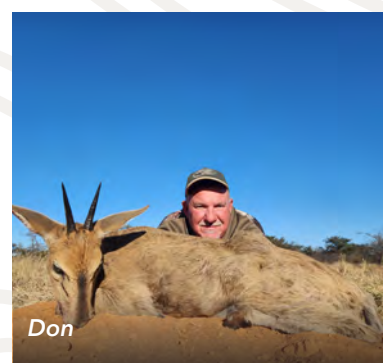
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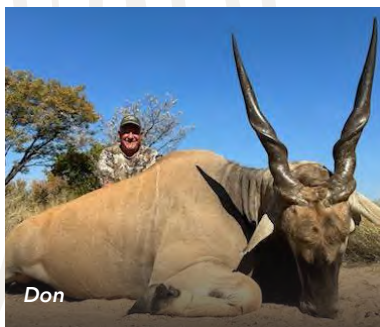
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LINDA

JAY



Louisiana

Hot Is More Than A Sauce



On August 9 my wife Lynda and our friends Dan and Cathy headed down to Louisiana

I'm guessing that many of you are already wondering why anyone would go to Louisiana in August! Well, that's a good question for which I thought I had a good answer. The fishing along the gulf coast is reported to be best for the most species that time of year. The fishing was hot, but the weather was even hotter! The lowest nighttime temperature was 81 and the heat index rose to 110 during the day! It was humid enough that I thought about trading in my lungs for a set of gills! Lynda and I had bought Safari Unlimited four night and three days houseboat fishing trip donation, [Thank you Drake Quincy Dawson for this unique and fun donation!], at the 2023 Michigan Chapter Convention. After spending several days at a vacation rental house on Lake

Pontchartrain and seeing the sights in and around New Orleans we headed Southwest to Port Fourchon where the Cajun Queen is docked. There we met Captain Nate who could double as Jack Sparrow from *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Nate showed us through the boat and after we got settled in, we were treated to a Louisiana style shrimp boil for our first dinner. The shrimp were huge and as fresh as they come!

Our first morning of fishing started at about 6AM. We left the dock in Nate's 26 bay boat powered by a 300 HP Suzuki outboard and headed out through what seemed to be endless miles of channels and mangrove islands. We were targeting speckled sea trout this morning. They served as a good warm up and provided a lot of action.

I'm not sure what made the little series of islands, Nate chose to fish, better than the others we had passed on our 25-minute run to this location, but it sure held a lot of fish. We caught 50 plus trout. Many of them were too small to keep but all gave a good fight. Besides trout, we also caught several gaff top catfish, lady fish [slimy, skinny little buggers!], and like everywhere we fished there were sharks! Lady fish would leave my hands coated in a thick slime which I was washing off in the 90 degree

water of the gulf. I decided that it might be best not to rinse my hands in the water after a particularly aggressive shark stole a good size trout Dan was fighting, right next to the boat!

As the sun moved higher in the sky and the temperature rose the fishing slowed so Nate took us to a rock jetty with some deeper water, currents and wave action off the rocks. He was hoping we would pick up some redfish here, but the action was all catfish and sharks. They're fun to fight but not what we were after. Our first morning of fishing came to a close and we motored back to the Cajun Queen. It's hard to describe what it felt like to step from a sunny 95 degrees with high humidity into the air conditioned CQ where the thermostat was set to a wonderfully cold 68 degrees! After lunch and a siesta, we headed back out for an evening of fishing. The run back to the CQ, after an evening of fishing, provided a beautiful view of the setting sun. This became our daily routine. Up by first light to fish, cool down with lunch a short break mid-day, and then back on the water in the afternoon to evening capped off with a beautiful sunset while motoring back to the Cajun Queen. The title of this story starts with "Louisiana

va



Hot” so I should probably write a bit about it. The heat was really something to experience and it wasn’t just the air temp and humidity! The waters we fished were 90+ degrees! The Cajun Queen has a 1,500 gallon holding tank for its water supply. This tank, I assume, sits down in the belly of the boat and the water in it was also 90 degrees! There were no cold showers on board and the water heater didn’t have to work very hard! Stepping outside the air-conditioned cabin of the CQ resulted in fogged up glasses every time, even before sunrise in the morning. Despite the heat, there was usually a breeze blowing and we were on the water fishing so it never seemed oppressive. Oh, the CQ also has an ice machine so there was no shortage of ice and cold drinks available.

Fishing salt water and connecting waters adds a whole extra level of planning and tactics because of the tides. Much of our fishing strategy was planned around the low tides. Everything seemed backwards from what I would have expected! I would have thought that the key would be to find deeper and cooler water, but it seemed just the opposite. Our second morning we ran about an hour to a different area to target redfish. The area we fished was shallow

mud flats at low tide. The water was only about 12-15 inches deep, but for some reason the reds were in there feeding on crabs and other critters. In this shallow water any disturbance spooks the fish so after fighting an few reds and having most of them then eaten by sharks we headed back to the rock jetty where we fished the previous day. Lynda and Cathy caught most of the sharks, which were intentionally broke off at the boat, but Dan caught the big bull redfish for our group with three 40+ inch trophies!

The morning of day three found us making a run out to the oil rig structures for a different type of fishing. Captain Nate carefully motored up to the down current side and we hooked the structure with what looked like a big shepherd’s crook with a 30-foot section of rope tied to it. Now it was time to try for some big fish! Ladies first, as Nate baited up a couple stout rods with large chunks of cut bait and gave instructions on how to slowly fish down through the water column. Dan and I, not quite having our sea legs under us, were busy doing the most awkward fishing dance you’ll ever see, on the front deck, as we cast jigs and bait up to the structure of the oil rig. Lynda and Cathy

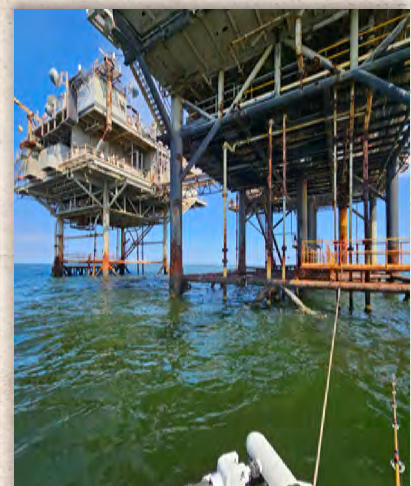
both hooked into sharks which gave them an incredible fight. Lynda was fighting a 4 foot shark and had it up to the boat when a shark, big enough to eat the 4 foot shark ghosted up under it. After a second pass the bigger shark seemed to be scared off by the boat and disappeared. We decided this wouldn’t be a good place to fall out of the boat! The number and variety of fish around the oil rigs was truly amazing but with the clear water our target species seemed to be line shy. Nate switched out Dan and I’s rigs with lighter tackle and we immediately hooked into some bigger fish. The problem was that with the lighter tackle we couldn’t keep them out of the rigs and they broke off almost immediately. Cathy hooked into what we thought was another shark but when she was finally able to get it up to the boat Nate saw that it was a big cobia! Cobia travel in small “wolf packs” and are very aggressive so Nate felt confident that we would get a chance at another one. Dan had just gotten his minnow baited hook back in the water after breaking off on a fish when a cobia wolf pack appeared and came right up to his bait. Nate was pretty excited to have these aggressive cobia around and urged me to cast my minnow at the wolf pack as

well. When my minnow hit the water, the largest of the cobia instantly turned and grabbed it and when the line tightened and the hook set it rocketed out of the water! What a fight! Whereas Cathy's cobia hit deep and bulldogged down in the depths, mine tail walked and fought across the surface! What a blast! After an exciting battle, Nate landed it and we celebrated again! Fishing slowed after this so we moved to a different oil rig which didn't provide any action. After one final move, Dan also caught a nice cobia. But, as with the big bull redfish he caught this cobia had to go back. Slot limits require the release of all redfish over 30 inches and the cobia limit per boat is two. That evening we once again enjoyed some fast action for reds and trout as the sun made a most impressively beautiful retreat below the horizon.



Louisiana was hot!

But what a great time with friends seeing New Orleans, riding on a paddle wheel river boat to see a War of 1812 battle site, visiting a couple plantations and learning about the sobering and sad history of slavery. Louisiana was hot! The fishing was as hot as the water temp! It was great fun catching such a wide variety of fish from so many different areas and with so many different fishing techniques. Captain Nate did a great job of keeping all four of us actively fishing despite very different skill levels and he was a great cook as well! If you want an interesting and widely varied adventure. Louisiana and the Cajun Queen are a hot option!





SCI Michigan Chapter 2025 Annual Fundraiser February 7 & 8

PURCHASE EARLY!!

BEFORE JANUARY 10TH

Friday Youth (20 & under) Price	\$10
Friday Adult (21 +) Price	\$25
Saturday Member Price	\$125
Saturday Non-Member Price	\$150

JANUARY 11TH - FEBRUARY 6TH

Friday Youth (20 & under) Price	\$30
Friday Adult (21 +) Price	\$45
Saturday Member Price	\$145
Saturday Non-Member Price	\$170

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Friday Youth (20 & under) Price	\$40
Friday Adult (21 +) Price	\$55
Saturday Member Price	\$155
Saturday Non-Member Price	\$180

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ZAMBEZE DELTA UPDATE



The quiet shuffle of leaves as they inched forward was muffled by the thick sand forest – towering above the group were the twisted intertwined branches of Msasa trees so indicative of the healthy primary forest, the edge of which was now just 15 yards ahead as it opened into one of the wide circular wetland depressions that Coutada 11 was well known for. This stalk had started just 15 minutes earlier as the custom-fitted Land Cruiser had rolled to a stop and everyone had dismounted, loaded rifles, prepared shooting sticks, checked the wind and begun the approach. As the bush suddenly thinned out an incredible scene unfolded in front of them, indeed exactly what they had hoped for.

It was the last half hour of daylight. The sun had turned from a scorching white heat to a red orb suspended above the pristine wilderness, over 50 animals of five different species littered the open pan, warthogs in abundance in the classic kneeling pose were in small groups, a lone sable bull arrogantly strode across the distant treeline, reedbuck whistled and danced for each other as a small group of hartebeest, heads down grazed quietly in the evening light, but the species they were after, indeed the species that some would argue to be one of the most beautiful, the common nyala was present in abundance – over 30 individuals in small groups were scattered across the pan.

The PH pushed his binoculars to his eyes, looking carefully at each and every one of the dozen bulls out in front of them – the wind was perfect, the hunters were hidden and time was on their side.

This is a scene that could have taken place on any one of several dozen similar pans

within this incredible ecosystem, arguably home to the largest sedentary (not migrating) population of wildlife on our planet – an area boasting a 3000% increase in wildlife population over the last three decades.

The question begs to be answered... As compared to hundreds of other landscapes in Africa where wildlife is constantly under poaching pressure and where habitat is being lost at an alarming rate – what is different in Coutada 11?

The difference is one man and his team. Mark Haldane and his team at Zambeze Delta Safaris had a vision over 30 years ago – the area following a long and brutal civil war had been heavily poached, the community, like many communities in Africa, impoverished and remote, had turned to the wildlife as a source of food.

I have always said that appreciating the simple beauty of a wild animal is a concept that can only be understood by someone with a full belly – Indeed if you have no food security all that matters is the nutritional value of everything you see!

Haldane understood this and instead of simply building a team of very capable game guards (antipoaching team) he also set about building relationship with his community – helping with schools, clinics and most importantly helping the people of Coutada 11 find some food security.

The last several seasons have seen over 60 tonnes per year of meat derived from hunting activities delivered to the village communities in the area – in return for a zero poaching

Equally important through the Ivan Carter Wildlife Conservation Alliance, the Michigan Chapter of SCI has become involved in the largest multi-year grant to date, one that serves the wildlife and ecosystem of Coutada 11 in the most profound way.

policy the people have learned that they can rely on these deliveries of much needed protein.

This is you see, an area where the people practice “slash-and-burn” agriculture, the sandy loam soils have largely been leached over millennia of much of the nutrients they need and so local people have taken to slashing down the forest and burning it so that the resulting ash feeds the soil, sadly this is a short-lived scenario and every couple of years a family is forced to slash a new field. This results in hundreds of acres of forest being removed each year.

The tractor, seed and fertilizer that has been and continues to be funded by Michigan Chapter has led to the ploughing and preparation of a huge field where rice and other grains are grown, this has been dramatic – it has reduced to almost zero the cutting of new fields, its meant that for the first time in history the people in the area have begun to have some food security and the fact that they completely understand the source of the funding, they are, again for the first time, seeing immense value in the wildlife and natural landscape of the area they call home.

Indeed, this is profoundly successful, yes indeed this saves hundreds of acres of forest and yes indeed this is a solution that perhaps, in the near future will allow the people of Mozambique to recognize the simple beauty of wildlife and not just the food value.

So, if you are a member of Michigan Chapter of SCI, I want to personally thank you because you are helping me and the people on the front line that I partner with secure more wildlife in a healthier ecosystem in a very measurable way!



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- Logo display at all monthly member meetings for 1 year
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- \$500 raffle ticket package

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- Logo on front page scimichigan.org website for 1 year
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- \$1,500 raffle ticket package

\$7,500

SILVER SPONSOR

- Logo display at 2025 Annual Convention
- Verbal sponsorship acknowledgment during event
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- Logo on front page scimichigan.org website for 1 year
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SATURDAY DINNER SPONSOR

- Logo display at 2025 Annual Convention
- Verbal sponsorship acknowledgment during event
- Logo display at all monthly member meetings for 1 year
- Sponsorship acknowledgement in Tracker Magazine
- \$500 raffle ticket package

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FRIDAY DINNER SPONSOR

- Logo display at 2025 Annual Convention
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- \$500 raffle ticket package

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- Verbal sponsorship acknowledgment during event
- Logo display at all monthly member meetings for 1 year
- Sponsorship acknowledgement in Tracker Magazine

SCI-MI SEPTEMBER MEETING

70 adults and kids enjoyed our first member dinner of the new season.

It was good to catch up with fellow members and friends. Our chapter President, Mike Kwast opened with remarks about what we've been up to and reminders about upcoming events. Don't forget to make plans to attend our 52nd annual fundraiser! It is being held February 7-8, 2025. Once again, we will have first-rate entertainment on both Friday and Saturday nights! Reserve a room and enjoy a great weekend! The event is being held at the VanDyk Mortgage Convention Center, Muskegon, Michigan.

A delicious dinner followed the pledge of allegiance and Mike opening with prayer.

After dinner, Jim Naber gave the membership update. It included a recap of the 3rd Annual Member Long Range Shoot at Two Hats Ranch. This really is an annual event not to be missed!

Jim also informed us that for the month of September, a \$150 Kuiu gift card is available with any three-year membership or membership renewal. Youth chairman, Bobby Mills, gave an update on various youth events

we've participated in such as the Outdoor Discovery Center (Holland) and Sportsmen for Youth event (Muskegon). He also announced that the next youth pheasant hunt will be in March 2025.

Member Dale Ringerwole spoke about the Orange Crush shooting team at Kent County Conservation League we help sponsor and how it helps build character as well as teaching shooting skills. Our Chapter's support for the Orange Crush and its 32 participants continues with a recent donation of \$500.

Member Geoff Newmeyer presented the program which was about his Jan Oelofse Legacy Award Hunt. Geoff was very thankful for the support of our Chapter in making this hunt of a lifetime possible. The lucky winners for the night were:

Liily Naber became the youngest youth member to win the youth gun. She is just 4 months old and received quite a round of applause on her win!

The jewelry winner was Judy VanderArk

The gun winner was Michael Moelker



The lucky winners for the night were:



Liily Naber became the youngest youth member to win the youth gun. She is just 4 months old and received quite a round of applause on her win!



The Jewelry winner Judy VanderArk



WANTED

SHARE YOUR TROPHIES FOR OUR CONTEST!

It's time to share your trophies
and adventures at our Annual SCI Fundraiser.

FEBRUARY 8TH — 9TH, 2025



All entries must be received by Friday January 10 2025 by 5:00PM. (No exceptions)

A photo of the trophy must accompany the score sheet & must be scored by Certified SCI Measurer.

Submit your SCI Score Sheets to:

Jim Naber • Phone (616) 455-2880 • NabersTaxidermy.com • Email: jnaber@naberstaxidermy.com

Or Mail To: Naber's Taxidermy Studio, 34 - 76th St. SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49548

You can find a list of SCI Scorers and Master Measurers in the membership directory of the Tracker Magazine. Any animal may be entered but only those meeting the SCI minimum will be judged.

Trophies entered must be exhibited at the fundraiser (no exceptions).

Please bring your trophies to the Muskegon Convention Center

Friday February 9 2025 between 9AM and 4PM

All Best of Species awards will be presented Friday at the Outfitters' Night.

Best of Continent and Best of Show will be presented at Saturday's fundraiser.

The following criteria will be used in judging the February 2023 Michigan Chapter SCI Trophy Contest.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. CATEGORIES OF ANIMALS:
a. Free-ranging
b. Estate | 2. CATEGORIES OF AWARDS:
a. Best of Species
b. Best of Continent
c. Best of North America Estate
d. Best of Show
e. Most unusual (no score required) | 3. CATEGORIES OF METHOD OF TAKE:
a. Rifle
b. Bow
c. Crossbow
d. Muzzle loader
e. Handgun |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

CONTEST RULES...

1. All entries must meet SCI minimum score. (Except "Most Unusual")
2. Trophies must have been taken "fair chase" and within the past three years.
3. Trophies entered must be exhibited at the annual fundraiser.
4. North American Estate animals cannot win Best of Show.
5. A specific animal may be entered and judged only once.
6. Must be a Michigan SCI member to enter.

Best of species for each category is awarded to the animal with the highest score in its category.

Best of Continent and Best of North American Estate is awarded to the animal that scores closest, numerically, to the top score in the International Record Book. To find this score, the rank of the entered animal is divided by the total number of ranks in the International Record Book.

Best of Show is awarded to the animal with the highest numerical score for the species in the SCI Record Book.

Pursuant to the SCI Record Book, "Estate Animal" and "Estate" is defined as:

An "Estate Animal" ... is any game animal kept for a long time within an Estate ... even if taken outside of the "Estate."

An "Estate" will be any property that uses an artificial or unnatural restrictive barrier, in most cases a fence, which restricts or confines the movement of game animals.



Safari Club International

Michigan Chapter



SCI & Michigan Chapter Membership Form

New & Renewal

SCI Membership

- ☐ \$65 One-Year Annual Membership (New & Renewal)
- ☐ **\$150 Three-Year Membership Special (New & Renewal -\$45 savings)**

SCI Michigan Chapter

You must be an International SCI Member (see above) to join a Chapter (both memberships need to be in sync)

- ☐ \$25 One-Year Annual Membership
- ☐ **\$50 Three-Year Membership Special (\$25 savings)**

Join the SCI Michigan Chapter as a Life Member

You must first be a Lifetime Member of SCI before becoming a Lifetime Chapter Member (Regular-\$1,500.00, Seniors 60+ \$1,250.00)

- ☐ \$300 one time due; if age 59 and below
- ☐ \$200 one time due; if age 60 and above

Youth Membership Renewal (21 and under)

- ☐ \$25 One-Year Annual Membership (SCI and MI Chapter)

Please Print:

Member's Name: _____ Street Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ SCI Member # (renewals) _____

☐ Cash ☐ Check Credit Card: ☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐ Amex ☐ Discover

Credit Card #: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Name on Card: _____ CCV#: _____

Please make checks payable to "SCI Michigan Chapter" and mail to:

Michelle Ghareeb
11155 Bennett St. SE
Lowell, MI 49331

SAFARI TRAILER



On September 5, Jay and I took the Safari Club's Sensory Safari Trailer to Buist Electric's Hunting and Fishing Family Event.

STORY BY STACEY PLATZ



The event was held at their Byron Center Headquarters. Their employees, family, and friends were invited to attend. They had food, activities, and raffle prizes for everyone. In addition to Buist Electric, Outdoor Discovery Center, Sportsmen Against Hunger, Naber's Taxidermy, and Barracks 616 were present. Jimmy Gretzinger was their keynote speaker for the night and did a great job. The company is faith-based and they are the most wonderful people I have ever worked with. Their Company Mission Statement says it all: *TO HONOR GOD IN ALL WE DO, CONSIDER EMPLOYEES' WELL-BEING AS ESSENTIAL, PROVIDE CUSTOMERS WITH SUPERIOR SERVICE, AND SHARE OUR RESOURCES WITH THOSE IN NEED.*

Challenge Shoot Roundup

*40 shooters
gathered at Two
Hats Ranch in Big
Rapids, eager to take
on their incredible
“Confidence Course”*

This rifle course is something to see! It is laid out along a 4.5 mile trail winding through the wooded and hilly 2 square mile property. There are 10 stations with 15 silhouette targets at ranges from 30 to 450 yards. This course is like sporting clays except with rifles and it is a literal blast to shoot! After signing in, and enjoying coffee and donuts, everyone headed to their assigned stations for the shotgun start. Unfortunately, shortly after starting, the rain began and everyone headed back to the clubhouse. Lunch was served early and shooting continued when the rain ended. Once again, the team from Long Range Archery and Firearms had the highest score. In reality, everyone who participated was a winner. It is always a win-win spending the day with fellow sportsmen shooting a super fun course that presents realistic hunting scenarios. A big thank you to Colby Bettis and Two Hats Ranch for once again hosting us at their amazing facilities! Also, a shout-out to Jim Naber, for organizing the event.

Co-sponsors for the event were:

Silver Bullet Firearms
Long-Range Archery and Firearms
Station sponsors were:
Naber's Taxidermy
Bill's Taxidermy
Alert Inspection Services





HUMANITARIAN DONATIONS 2024

We would like to thank all of you who donated to our Humanitarian Fund this year. All monies donated go directly to causes that support events for challenged youth and adults, veterans, others with special needs, and organizations that support our mission and goals. Your continued support enables us to help so many in so many ways!

— \$3000.00 —

Skip & Sheri Weller

— \$1000.00 —

Kevin Brenner

Stan & Jan Buell

Mike & Quincy Kwast

Jim & Sandy Naber

Jim Novitsky

Joe & Debbie Pedersen

Jay & Stacey Platz

Robert Wynalda

— \$750.00 —

Jerry & Sandy Swett

— \$700.00 —

Dave & Alvera Kidder

— \$560.00 —

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— \$550.00 —

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— \$250.00 —

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— \$50.00 —

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SCI MICHIGAN CHAPTER 2024 CONVENTION SUPPORTERS

The SCI Michigan Chapter Board of Directors wish to thank the following people and companies who have generously donated cash or merchandise for our 2023 fundraiser.

Afrihunt Safaris	Hidden Horns Game Ranch	Prime Archery
Alan Reinemann	Hines Corporation Larry Hines	Rainy Pass Lodge
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Grand Valley Sporting Goods	Okie Hides	
Great North Real Estate	Powderhorn Sport Fishing	
	Prairie Wings Outfitters	

SCI MICHIGAN 2024 DONATION LIST

The SCI Michigan Chapter Board of Directors wish to thank the following people who have generously donated cash to this year's Annual Donor Drive as well as to the other fund drives held during the convention.

We are very thankful for each donor. Your donations make the important work of SCI and SCI Michigan possible.

Alma and Stony Bing	Michael and Suzanna Lesiow	Dan and Julie Olson
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David Kidder/Kidder Safari Co.	Jan and Lee Murray	Rodney and Jeanette Winkel
Mike and Quincy Kwast	Ron and Kristy Northman	
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***If we missed recognizing or thanking anyone, we apologize.
Please let us know so it can be corrected in our next Tracker magazine.***

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