

KENTUCKIANA HUNTER



KENTUCKIANA CHAPTER - SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL

FOURTH QUARTER 2012



Photo by Clay Monarch

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Visit Our Web Site: www.kentuckianasci.org

President's Message

By Bill Hook

As I write this message as your newly elected president, my mind keeps wandering back to some of the very able leaders whose shoes I have to try to fill. Mike Maddox did a tremendous job as president, and I will be hard pressed to match his leadership.

The good news is that I won't be going on alone. I have great support from our Officers and Directors and a very active membership. During my term, I will be asking all of you for your help to continue SCI's legacy as the premier hunting organization dedicated to preservation of the sport, conservation of wildlife, and outdoor education of our youth.

We have quite a bit to do this year from continuing to support our youth education programs, military and veteran appreciation events, Wounded Warriors Program, Hunters for the Hungry and of course raising money for these and many other projects through our annual fundraising banquet.

The trick is to make a significant difference for us and future generations. We can accomplish this while maintaining our special flavor as a close-knit, fun-loving group of volunteers working for what we love. I am looking forward to what promises to be a grand slam year for the Kentuckiana Chapter SCI!



Who Are Education Sables?

By Sherry Maddox, SCIF Sables President



Founded in 1984, by the women of SCI under the leadership of Audrey Murtland, the SCI Foundation (SCIF) Education Sables are committed to continuing our outdoor heritage through education.

While attending an SCI Spring Board meeting in 2000, I attended the Sables General Membership Meeting. I was impressed with the passion and enthusiasm this group of ladies had for education and listened as they discussed their support programs. The fundraising efforts to assure that their programs' funding would continue included a Luncheon, Show, and Auction during the annual SCI Hunters Convention. Since that initial meeting, I have served on Sables committees, been elected to Director and Officer Positions, and am currently serving my second term as SCIF Sables President.

Sables are leaders in educating others about the value of hunting in promoting our hunting and outdoor heritage. Today, Education Sables are Safari Club International members – women and men - who choose to dedicate their time, energy and resources to SCI Foundation education programs. All money raised by Education Sables is dedicated to educational programs. **SCIF Education Programs** include the following:

American Wilderness Leadership School (AWLS) – Conducted at Granite Ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, this program provides conservation education for educators and students. Established in 1976 with the vision of providing education with a useful hands-on experience that educators can use in the classroom, AWLS has provided a credited wildlife management program for over 5,000 educators who reach more than a million students annually. The AWLS's student centered course has provided a similar wildlife education program, as well as a fun challenging experience, for over 1,300 students. The AWLS offers 6 educator sessions and 1 student session each year between June and August.

Hands-On Wildlife (HOW) Kit – The purpose of the H.O.W. program is to provide an instructional tool for educators to teach conservation and wildlife ecology, as well as the positive role of hunting. Distributed through retail sales and a gifting program, the H.O.W. learning kit contains pelts, replicas of skulls, scat and tracks of four North American Animals: beaver, coyote, raccoon, and rabbit. A poster and a curriculum quick-guide with lists and descriptions of resources that can be used to enhance instructional strategies is included in each kit.



College Scholarships – Currently, SCIF Sables Hunting Heritage Endowed Scholarships are at 5 universities. SCIF Scholarships are awarded to 2 year upper level and 4 year undergraduate students. All scholarship recipients have declared majors in

wildlife ecology or natural resources management.

Grants – Grants are awarded by SCIF Education Sables through three primary processes. SCIF Education Matching Grants are provided to SCI Chapters to support local education programs. Grants are also awarded to partners to support national and local conservation and shooting sports programs. Chapter Youth Program Grants are awarded to Chapters who have established a plan to implement and sustain youth education programs administered by the Chapter. Unlike Matching Grants, these awards are based upon the Program Plan Outline and the submitted application. The utilization and allocation of these funds take place at the Chapter level.



Spotlight On



Help Feed Hungry People

By KHFH Board of Directors, Mike Ohlmann, Chairman

In July 2000, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources asked the Kentuckiana Chapter of SCI to take its regional program of processing and distributing deer to homeless shelters and food banks statewide. Since that time, Kentucky Hunters for the Hungry (KHFH) has grown into a program which annually produces 60,000 to 70,000 pounds of venison which in turn provides over 500,000 meals to hungry people.

YOU can be a part of this great program by harvesting an extra deer this year and delivering it to one of KHFH's many processors. Just visit our website at <http://www.huntersforhungry.org> and click on "processors."

If you would rather help KHFH from the comfort of your home, just click on "how you can help" and "donate funds." We accept your tax deductible checks or donations through Pay Pal. \$60 will process a deer and produce 440 meals for hungry people. Thanks in advance for your assistance.



The Best Laid Plans

By Walt Cato

Bud Smith was meat hungry. In a few short months, he would be a sailor in the U.S. Navy headed for action in the Pacific theater during World War II. For the time being, before enlistment, he was living at home with his parents and several siblings. The country remained, more or less, in the grips of the depression. Money was in short supply in his household and hearty dinners were rare.



An old timer told Bud that bobwhite quail could be trapped and Bud became convinced that a successful effort would yield the raw material for a sumptuous dinner. At that time, quail were numerous in Kentucky, not only in farming country but in suburban areas where there was untilled land with ground cover.

Bud described his efforts to provide a quail dinner as follows:

"Following the directions for making a trap, I dug a little trench on the lot next to our house. The trench ended in a hole I dug. I deposited corn kernels in the trench and a double handful in the hole. I covered the hole with an old lace curtain and placed rocks around the edges to hold it in place. The theory was that a covey of birds would follow and eat the trail of corn in the trench and go into the hole. Once in the hole, they would not be able to retrace their route and escape through the trench.

"Next morning, I checked the trap and, sure enough, there were 5 or 6 birds in the hole. I carefully lifted one corner of the lace curtain and put my hand in the hole to grab a quail. The covey flushed through the opening and all of them flew away. I decided to reset the trap and, if successful, shoot the birds. With one shot, I could kill enough birds for dinner.

"The following morning, I armed myself with my 16 gauge Browning automatic. The previous hunting season, Junie McClellan had borrowed it and while hunting had fallen in the snow and plugged the barrel with snow. Shortly thereafter, he had fired at a rabbit causing about 5 or 6 inches of the muzzle end of the barrel to split. After I repaired it, the barrel was only about 18" long and, of course, was a cylinder bore. The gun, I felt confident, was the ideal weapon to bag the trapped quail.

"I crept up on the trap and to my delight, there were more birds in the hole than there had been the previous day. I backed up a few paces, lined up on the hole, and let drive. Rushing up to the hole I looked inside. I couldn't believe it. I had missed the whole covey. They had flown away unscathed. I must have gotten excited and shot high. That was the end of my quail trapping. The Good Lord did not want me to have fried quail and milk gravy."

Then and now, the very idea of ground sluicing a covey of quail is abhorrent to sportsmen/conservationists.

The bobwhite quail has disappeared from its former ranges all over the Southern U.S., including Kentucky. A number of reasons have been given for the bird's decline in population including increased predation from coyotes and protected hawks, elimination of cover due to development of land and clean farming practices, the proliferation of fescue in place of warm season native grasses, use of pesticides and, in central and eastern Kentucky, the severe winters of 76-77 and 77-78.

Sportsmen in Kentucky have become increasingly aware of the need for affirmative efforts to be made to restore bobwhite populations. The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources has a restoration program in effect and works with land owners to create and restore habitat for quail. Both hunters and birdwatchers should become involved in the effort to repopulate the countryside with this desirable bird. Their work will be rewarded when, once again, the rapturous bobwhite song can be heard on summer days.

Editor's Note: For information on how to restore quail populations in your area, contact the Ky. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Resources at 1-800-858-1549 and ask to speak to a "Private Lands Biologist". Also, you may learn about the Kentucky Quail Project at www.facebook.com/KentuckyQuail

HABITAT IMPROVEMENT CHECKLIST BY KDFWR "FALL AND WINTER"

October - November

- Leave a portion of crops standing all winter for wildlife
- Leave food plots fallow for two years minimum
- Plan for next year's projects
- Do not fall plow crop fields
- Order catalogs for seedlings, shrubs, or seeds for spring
- Flood moist soil management units

December

- Check for wildlife use of habitat improvement projects
- Check fences to keep livestock out of woodlands
- Hinge-cut cedars and/or create brush piles
- Plant tree and shrub seedlings
- Conduct timber stands improvements

January

- Contact wildlife biologist to discuss upcoming planting season
- Take soil samples to determine soil nutrient needs
- Prepare firebreaks for upcoming prescribed burns
- Order seeds for spring planting



2012-2013 Officers and Board of Directors

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Editor's Note: Tom Monarch, a Junior at St. Xavier High School, is the 16 year old son of Katie and Ed Monarch of Louisville, Kentucky and the grandson of Alice and Sam Monarch of Hardinsburg, Kentucky. In June of this year, Alice, Sam, Tom, and Clay (Tom's 13 year old brother) went on a hunting trip for Himalayan Tahr, European Red Stag, Fallow Deer, and Arapawa Rams in New Zealand with outfitters Ewan Bennie and Steve Millard of "Hollyburn Trophy Hunting". Tom wrote a story about the first part of his "on foot" tahr hunt in the Southern Alps (Cook Mountains) of New Zealand and that article, which tells about the first leg of the hunt, will appear in an upcoming issue of **SAFARI Magazine**. Below is the story of the second leg of that hunt.

New Zealand - The Rest Of The Story

By Tom Monarch

The next day was a travel day as we headed south cross country to Hollyburn Deer Park to hunt European Red Stag, Fallow Deer, and Arapawa Sheep. Upon arrival, we settled into a very welcoming, very nice, very comfortable lodge. Although we had known that the weather could be wet and dreary, Ewan had said June was one of the best times to hunt as it was winter in New Zealand and the stags and fallows would be foraging for food and they would be easier to find. The flora in the hunting area (called a "park") is so thick and so lush, it is virtually impossible to locate the animals unless they move into an open area to feed.

As Ewan had been away from home guiding for an extended period of time, there were several things around the farm and park which needed his attention; accordingly, Steve, Clay, and I spent the first morning trying to locate either the red stags or the fallow deer, but we were unsuccessful. After our unproductive morning, Ewan joined us and we went out in full force. ATVs sped us over dirt roads, through the forest, and across a creek to the nearby 4,000 acre hunting park where we soon spotted two enormous fallow bucks in the distance feeding in a clearing on a ridge. It didn't take long for Ewan to confirm that they were both trophy quality and that one was gargantuan! Steve and Clay moved off to the left and Ewan and I headed up the mountain. Slowly, I crawled up and onto the ridge and set up. As Ewan came in behind me, he whispered that I should take the one on the right.

I went through the routine in my mind: place the crosshairs behind the shoulder, control the breathing, take a deep breath, let 1/2 of it out, and squeeze the trigger . . . squeeze the trigger. When the white puff of smoke cleared, there was a beautiful fallow buck on the ground! Ewan's face was filled with joy and a firm congratulatory handshake followed!

Clay and Steve soon rejoined us and we made our way over to the fallow. The buck was beautiful! Through binoculars, Ewan had speculated that the fallow would be a new world record with a muzzleloader and my hopes were that Ewan was right! After careful examination, Ewan commented, "I'm certain this fallow will be a new world record with the muzzleloader!" I was ecstatic! He was massive! He was amazing! I was in disbelief as we set up for photos! The shot had been good! We had stalked to within 90 yards of this veteran deer, and the deer had had no clue we were there!

When we arrived back at the lodge, Pap was blown away at how big the fallow was. I could see the pride in his face as he

looked at me and then at the buck. Pap was astonished at the size of the fallow. Measurements would be taken later, but, for this day, there was no doubt: he was a monster fallow!

Early next morning, we headed back to the same area where I had taken my fallow in search of a big fallow for Clay. Even though it was winter in the South Pacific, the vegetation in this particular area was unusually green and lush, and with cover nearby, Ewan opined that the fallow would come into this area to feed. Also, a couple of weeks earlier in this same area, Ewan had seen a group of red stags running together now that the "roar" was over.

As we slowly worked our way into the edge of the area, we spotted two giant red stags feeding on the side of a ridge in the distance, and Clay's plans for a fallow went on hold. Both stags were well over our 360 inch minimum and when I saw them, I was amazed. I knew the stags would be big, but I had no idea they would be **that big!** Clay immediately wanted the wider stag, and I went for the more massive antlered one!

Steve, Clay, and I followed as Ewan led us along the edge of the forest to keep us from "sky-lining" ourselves. Unknown to us, as we were crawling around the forest's edge, the stags were grazing down the mountain face. When we got to where we could see around the edge of the forest, the stags were only 75 yards from us! With my stag being closer and the wind on my side, it was decided that I would take the first shot. I got set up easily the first time but just as I was ready to shoot, my stag browsed its way behind some brush.

I readjusted and realized that in the excitement, I had forgotten to put in a primer! I reached into my pocket, got a primer, and again focused my attention on the massive antlered stag. I had thought the stag's body would be a little bigger than a mule deer, but as I tried to decide where to place the crosshairs, I was awestruck as I saw no big distinction between his neck and his shoulders which had to be massive to balance that magnificent rack on his head! I could see the energy it took to move his antlers as he fed. Soon, I refocused and the crosshairs fell into place behind his muscular shoulder and I mentally went through the checklist: primer is in, safeties are off, control my breathing, steady the crosshairs, take a deep breath, let 1/2 of it out, and squeeze the trigger. I squeezed the trigger and as the smoke cleared, I saw nothing! Both stags had disappeared behind the bushes! I looked to Ewan, but he, too, had been buried in white smoke and had seen nothing! Even though the shot had felt good, that panic feeling struck as we turned to Clay and Steve to see what they had seen. From their vantage point, they, too, had seen



Tom with Pending Muzzleloader
SCI #1 Fallow Deer



Tom with Gold Medal Red Stag

nothing.

The four of us made our way over to where we had last seen my stag. As we approached, I got a glimpse of him! All of the thoughts that I had had for my fallow were magnified for this European Red Stag! I had never seen anything like this up close! He was unbelievable! After wows and quick congratulations, Ewan and Steve formed a plan to take Clay's stag before it had time to disappear into the thick vegetation of the forest which lay behind us. Clay's stag had run down one side of the mountain and up another then stopped abruptly on the skyline. He was stunning silhouetted on the mountain top!

Ewan and I watched as Clay and Steve, hidden from the stag, worked their way toward Clay's prospective trophy. Ewan and I stayed between the red deer and the forest and just in sight of the deer. Ewan explained that stags can't count. As long as the stag could see us, Ewan opined that the stag would not bolt and run. He could not get back to the forest without coming toward us and if he went in the other direction, he would run into Clay and Steve.

Clay and Steve radioed that they were in position. The plan was for us to move slowly up the forest line, so that the stag would, more likely than not, move back down the mountain where Clay was set up. Unexpectedly, as Ewan and I moved up the mountain, we spooked a world class fallow deer and sent it down the mountain into Clay's path.

The pressure was on Clay! He had two "ginormous" animals headed in range in his direction and he was hunting with a muzzleloader which only has one shot! Which animal would he choose: a monster stag or a gigantic fallow! It was every rifle hunter's dream and a muzzleloader's nightmare!



**Clay with Pending Muzzleloader
SCI #4 Fallow Deer**

Ewan and I heard a shot! Neither of us could see which animal came into Clay's scope first. Momentarily, we saw the massive fallow crest the ridge, then fall into the bushes below. We silently celebrated but we waited.

A few minutes later, we heard a second shot. Clay had reloaded his muzzleloader just in time for the monster stag to make



Clay with Gold Medal Red Stag

a fatal move! Again, we waited. Via walkie-talkie, we soon learned that we had two huge stags and a beautiful fallow on the ground that would be headed to the meat shed and to the Record Book.

We couldn't wait to see Pap! Pap was ecstatic and

filled with happiness as the stories abounded and congratulations circled us! I felt really lucky to be in New Zealand! I had been told that the animals would be grand and that with Ewan and Steve, we would be hunting the best of the best, but this wonder filled day was beyond my wildest imagination!

The hunt was to conclude with Pap, Clay, and me hunting for three enormous Arapawa Rams that we had caught a glimpse of running together in the hunting park area. The plan was for Pap

to take the first shot before the rams scattered as Clay and I were younger and could climb mountains easier, but it did not work that way! As soon as we topped the mountain, the rams spotted us and ran down one side of the mountain and up another! Ewan, Ruth (Ewan's daughter) and I took off after the rams while Pap, Clay, Mamaw, and Steve moved in a different direction hoping to intercept them. Ewan, Ruth, and I dashed down one ridge and scampered up another. As we eased up to a vantage point, we found the rams 120 yards across a ridge and uphill from us. For the first time, the shot required me to shoot from a prone position. I army crawled up and onto a knoll which was higher than the bushes in front of me. As I rested on my elbows, surprisingly, I found that the prone shooting position was remarkably stable. I slipped the primer in place and went through my mental checklist, squeezed the trigger, and watched the smoke bellow from the end of the muzzleloader.



**Tom with Pending Muzzleloader
SCI #1 Arapawa Ram**

When the smoke cleared, the ram was still standing! I had waited to squeeze the trigger until I knew the shot would be good; however, as he stood motionless, I began to question myself because the last thing I wanted to do was to cripple an animal. Three seconds later, the ram crumpled to the ground. The three rams had all been huge and I could not tell which one was the biggest. Just before my shot, Ewan had whispered to take the one in the middle. Later scores revealed that I was wise to take the advice of my guide!

There was little time to celebrate as the two remaining rams disappeared over a ridge to the left. It took some astute planning for Clay and Pap to get their rams. I joined Steve, Mamaw and Pap and we set up on a ridge near where we hoped the rams might appear while Clay, Ewan and Ruth headed southwest in an attempt to head off the rams and get a shot.



**Clay with Pending Muzzleloader
SCI #3 Arapawa Ram**

The plan worked. Clay, Ewan, and Ruth

came into our view only after we directed our attention to the blast of Clay's muzzleloader and saw the plume of white smoke. As we watched his ram fall, Pap's ram came into view. Only moments later, Pap's muzzleloader filled the air with white smoke and his ram went down. There was a mad dash down from different directions as we made our way to the rams!

As congratulations circulated and photos were taken, Ewan confirmed that all three rams would make the Muzzleloader Top Ten. If the measurements hold up through the drying process until they make the record book, the Muzzleloader Top Ten will show my Arapawa Ram at #1, Clay's at #3 and Pap's at #4. It is awesome having the three of us appear together in the Record Book again. Our New Zealand adventure had been fabulous! Our Knight Rifles and Barnes Bullets had performed to perfection! We had hunted as a family and worked as a team!

KYSCI Youth Event 2012

By Colonel Mike Abell



Being an Army Officer and an Airborne Ranger, I'll volunteer for anything. So, when I was asked to help with this year's Kentuckiana SCI Youth and Apprentice Hunter Education Program, I said, "Yes, absolutely," without hesitation. I am proud to be associated with any event that reaches out to new hunters and helps them get started in the sport.

A few weeks went by before the event, and I got to thinking. I must admit that I was apprehensive that my colleagues at KYSCI could run an event for such a large, diverse group and make it look like anything other than organized chaos. Plus, I pondered that most of my colleagues have long since raised their children and I was worried that they wouldn't have the patience for a young flock that wasn't their own. Well, I was wrong on both counts! The entire event, from concept through execution, was quite well done; so well in fact, that I had few suggested improvements for next year.

Remember, I currently command over 2,000 troops and have been an operations officer multiple times, the last time for over 13,000 troops in Iraq; consequently, I don't give praise for the planning and execution of training events easily. On the morning of August 4, 2012, I watched as 66 young people and a host of parents signed in and received SCI t-shirts. There was excitement in the air as the 30 plus adult instructors and volunteers and 2 youth instructors (Tom Monarch and Clay Monarch) soon had the group divided up and headed to their multi-disciplined stations. Simultaneously, apprentice groups headed to muzzleloader, shotgun, rifle, archery, tree stand, blood trailing and tracking, field prep, ethics, anatomy and physiology stations while the youth who were studying for their "orange cards" headed to the classroom.

After watching the first few rotations on the first day of the event, I had one recommended improvement for next year's course of instruction. We needed to teach a class to the advanced students on what to pack in their day pack and some rudimentary survival/emergency procedures. After lunch on Day 2 while helping clean up, I went out back and, to my surprise, found Youth Instructor Tom Monarch teaching that very class. I sat down and watched Tom teach and I thought, "Daggum, he did a great job!" When the class was over, I went up and shared some wisdom and gave him my complements.

I learned that over the nine years of the Youth & Apprentice Hunter Education Weekend Program, the Kentuckiana SCI Chapter has developed and refined a written instructional curriculum which each instructor follows. I was also impressed with the equipment and supplies the Chapter has accumulated over the years from SCIF Youth Grants, Kentuckiana Chapter Funds, and private donations from the membership. Our Chapter's ability to accomplish this mission is due to the generosity, expertise, and hard work of our dedicated membership and to SCIF grants. A special "Thanks" goes out to Chapter Member Rick Davis, who kindheartedly gives our Chapter free range of "White Oak Elk Ranch" where the participants can see elk, whitetail deer, and fallow deer in person.

At the end of the two day event, we accomplished our mission which was to assist new hunters, young and old, in obtaining their hunter safety "orange card" while helping apprentice hunters improve their skills. Moreover, we did it the way KYSCI always does it: we exceeded the standard! It seems to me that when our small Chapter sets its collective mind to doing something, it is very well done!



Photos by Mike Graham

IMPORTANT NOTICE

HUNTERS' & FISHERMEN'S RIGHTS AMENDMENT IS ON THE NOVEMBER 6th BALLOT



Comments by Sam Monarch

Following is ballot language for "House Bill 1" that Kentucky voters will be asked to address on the November 6, 2012 ballot:

"Are you in favor of amending the Kentucky Constitution to state that the citizens of Kentucky have the personal right to hunt, fish, and harvest wildlife, subject to laws and regulations that promote conservation and preserve the future of hunting and fishing, and to state that public hunting and fishing shall be a preferred means of managing and controlling wildlife?"

Do your research, become informed, and tell your family and friends to vote "YES"! The above Amendment to the Kentucky Constitution is intended to protect our future right to hunt, trap, and fish in Kentucky. The Amendment is supported by Safari Club International, the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources and the League of Kentucky Sportsmen.

Safari Club International President John Whipple issued the following statement endorsing Kentucky's Right to Hunt & Fish Ballot, "Successful passage of this constitutional amendment on Election Day will mark an important step to protect hunting, fishing, and trapping opportunities for future generations of sportsmen and women."

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 1, 2012

SCI Military Pheasant Hunt at *Clover Creek Hunting Farms* in Breckinridge County, Kentucky. (Call Mike Maddox [502-253-9679] to volunteer.)

January 23 - 26, 2013

Safari Club International's "Greatest Hunting Show on Earth" Convention in Reno, Nevada

January 25, 2013

Sable's Luncheon, Show, & Auction in Reno, Nevada

February 23, 2013

Kentuckiana SCI Chapter Fundraiser Banquet at the Holiday Inn Hurstbourne in Louisville, Kentucky - Mark Your Calendar Now

KREEK TATERS

Editor's Note: Upon request of the participants of the *KYSCI Youth & Apprentice Hunter Education Weekend*, Kathy Ohlmann has secured Mary Simms's recipe for "Kreek Taters".

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1 - 10 lb. bag of red potatoes | 2 - bunches of chopped green onions |
| 2 - sticks of unsalted butter | 1 - large bag Hormel Real Bacon Pieces |
| 2 - sticks of margarine | Garlic Salt to taste (Mary adds about 1/4 cup) |

Chop and boil potatoes with skins on; Drain; Chop butter and margarine and add to potatoes; Add bacon and onions; Sprinkle with garlic salt; Use an old time potato masher and mash to your liking. These are better the next day.

Hunting Espania

By Ivan Schell

Huntinspain is a multifaceted hunting operation with its home base on a ranch about 30 miles outside Salamanca in northwest Spain. The leader of this operation is Alfonso Fabres, Sr. who has been in the business of hunting for over 40 years. Alfonso Sr. has a doctorate degree in architecture and urbanism and personally guided the present King of Spain when he took the world record Spanish Ibex. A photo commemorating the event graces the Fabres family's historic home built in the 1700's. That home sits just a few miles from the hunting lodge complex consisting of a main lodge, ancillary lodges and related service buildings. My wife, Ann, and I occupied the room in an ancillary lodge utilized by the King of Spain on his visits (see photo which shows the extensive collection of game trophies contained in the main and our auxiliary lodge). The family home also overlooks the bull breeding operation which supplies 4-5 year old bulls for the fighting rings throughout Spain. These bulls have pedigrees running back many generations and are bred for their aggressive attitude. Alfonso Jr. graciously gave us a tour of the



Alfonso Fabres Main Lodge Trophy Room



El Toro

family home, practice ring, and current crop of bulls.

I became aware of Alfonso and his hunting operation as a result of an offer of a hunt donation for our Chapter's 2012 winter fundraiser. Last February, I met Alfonso Jr., who now runs the business end of the operation, at the SCI International Hunter's Convention in Las Vegas. In addition to securing the donation for the fundraiser, I became personally interested in hunting in Spain. Ann and I had toured Spain on two previous trips and had enjoyed the food, cultural and historic sites, and welcoming people. So, when the hunt came up during the auction, I was delighted to be the successful bidder. Fabres offers Red Stag, Fallow Deer, Mouflon Sheep in Salamanca, and the grand slam of four Spanish Ibex (Gredos, Ronda-Coast, Beceite and South Eastern Ibex) at hunting areas in the mountains of Spain. Also offered are wild boar, Chamois, Roe Deer, Balear Boc, driven partridges and duck shooting. While the hunters are chasing these various species, the non-hunting spouses can explore Salamanca and a number of other nearby points of interest.

Alphonso Cruxate, who is employed in the operation as a guide for hunting or spouse explorations of the regions, picked up Ann and me in Madrid on August 17, 2012 and transported us to the ranch. We became the first hunting guests of the season for Fabres. Cruxate embodied the pervasive extension of hospitality that we experienced throughout our stay. Upon arrival, we met Alphonso Sr. and Jr. as well as Fernando Martinez who was to be my guide for the week. Fernando is from Bilbao, home of the Guggenheim Museum, and freelances for the Fabres in addition to

running his own outfitting business.

At 0630 on the first day of the hunt, Fernando collected me at the lodge and drove 30 minutes to a small town to pick up my game keeper, Loren. The Fabres employ five game keepers for their various leased properties in the Salamanca area. We then drove up into the mountains of the national park (Las Batuecas) surrounding the small town of Aldeanueva de la Sierra and parked about halfway up the mountain. The protocol was to walk in single file: first the game keeper, then me, and bringing up the rear was Fernando, the guide. Fortunately, Fernando was fluent in English because Loren could not speak a word of it. Two hours into our hike, consistently up and up the mountain, we had seen exactly no animals and I was concerned that we were going to have a non-productive time of it. However, at about 0900, we rounded the backside of the mountain protected from the sun and spotted 15 fallow deer. We intently glassed the animals over the next hour and discovered that they were mostly females and juveniles. The animals filtered back into the woods to bed down and escape the heat, and we returned to the ranch for a brief respite before being introduced to an unexpected treat.

Eleven other hunters from Spain had come to the ranch for some bird shooting which I had not known about and, accordingly, had not planned to participate in. However, Alfonso Sr. invited me to join the Spanish contingent for some pass shooting of clays and live pigeons thrown from a central tower. Stations dug into the ground in a semicircle around the tower served as shooting pits for one hunter and one loader. Fernando served as my loader as I employed a matched pair of 12 gauge side by side Ayerietta shotguns. This, of course, was great fun and after about an hour, we



Pigeon Ring Competition

took a 30 minute break on the veranda for refreshments. Following the rest period, we then moved to a friendly competition of pigeon and quail shooting around a ring. Apparently, this kind of competition was popular in the U.S. during the last century and is still quite popular in Spain. There were four fixed positions in a semicircle where each shooter took a turn at trying to kill the pigeon or quail before it left the ring. In addition to launching the birds from the elevated tower, throwers who would stand next to the shooters also tossed pigeons. Grasping the birds by their wings, the throwers launched them into the air over the ring in much the same way that a discus thrower might fling the discus. Again, in order to score a point, the bird had to be taken so that it would land within the ring. These Spanish shooters were no strangers to the game and, in fact, the lodge was filled with trophies won by Alphonso Sr. in the pigeon ring. My contribution of 10 euros to the pot was just that – a contribution. I was schooled as well as entertained.

After the pigeon shoot came an elegant lunch on the veranda replete with Spanish wine. The other shooters were to go back out in the field for more pass shooting after the meal, but I excused myself to rest for my evening hunt. That evening we spotted more fallow deer, but nothing worthy of the trophy fee. Then, it was back to the lodge and dinner served by uniformed staff at about 2200. Naturally, partridge was on the menu. The



Elegant Post Hunt Lunch

late meal schedule of the Spanish coupled with jet lag and short nights demanded afternoon siestas, which we gladly adopted.

The next morning came early as we picked up Loren before exploring a new hunting area in the park. Once above the tree line

on the mountain, we could see for a long distance over the knee-high scrub oak. Fernando spotted a mouflon on the mountain top behind us, but he was not on my wish list, so we ignored that animal. Almost simultaneously, Loren caught our attention pointing to a huge boar making its way toward us from the summit on the adjacent mountain. Quickly, Loren set up his shooting sticks and just as quickly I was on them searching for the boar in the Zeiss Victory Scope which topped the Blazer .300 Win Mag I had "hired" from Fabres. As luck would have it, the boar stopped and reversed course, but slowly enough that I was able to place the crosshairs on its right shoulder and touch off a 60 meter shot that planted the tusker where he stood. The animal was a grizzled veteran with long sharp cutters and made a fantastic trophy. Interestingly, it was also the only boar we spotted during the entire hunt.



Big Cutters



Grizzled Boar

That evening we sat at a water hole hoping to spot a red stag or a fallow deer worthy of a shot. Even though we heard male fallow deer engaging each other's antlers, none made an appearance at our water hole. Success eluded us for the next couple of days, but we continued to explore new locations and decided to come off the mountain and hunt the flat areas featuring open areas of golden vegetation peppered with single oak trees and oak groves. These properties were owned by Fabres's cousins and turned out to be the sweet spot for fallow and red stag. Loren dropped off Fernando and me with a radio and proceeded to scout the property in the cool of the morning. Good populations of fallow, red deer and mouflon inhabited the area. Within an hour, we spotted our target animals and joined Loren for the final stalks. First, the fallow buck I had chosen from a male group stood half way behind an oak tree at 100 meters with just his head and neck exposed. This animal



Fabulous Fallow

had wonderful palmated antlers with mass their entire length. I carefully squeezed off a shot which punctured the deer's left shoulder and it collapsed where it stood. After completing the obligatory photos, we left this animal for recovery later in the morning while we attempted to find and take a red stag we had spotted earlier. After a binocular assisted visual search of the area, we found the red deer and moved in to assess the trophy potential of each member of the bachelor herd. Loren and Fernando debated vigorously, although I could not understand a thing they said. Eventually, Fernando pointed out to me which animal Loren thought was best and I agreed with him. As we had been debating the merits of each animal, the stag I wanted bedded down about 175 yards out. I decided to take the shot from a solid rest and thought that I had made a precise hit. Unfortunately, the configuration of the vitals of a bedded animal are not the same as that of a standing one and "my" stag stood at the shot and started to move off. Although I could tell it was really sick, the stag was clearly not finished. As its head and shoulders were obscured by another oak tree, I put another round through its lungs. That did the trick and my trio of Spanish trophies was complete. Although not as large as my New Zealand stag, this one had great mass and qualified for the "royal stag" description reserved for stags with at least six points on a side. It was a beautiful animal and I was delighted to take it.

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Royal Red Stag

The hunting at an end, Alfonso Cruxate took Ann and me on a sightseeing tour of the antiquities in local areas including Roman ruins and walled towns in which residents had fended off Napoleon with the assistance of England's General Duke of Wellington. We also toured a mountain top monastery which was also home to some semi-tame ibex. However, I will have to return if I wish to shoot an ibex with anything more lethal than a camera.



Secretive Ibex

While some of the hunts offered by Fabres are totally free range (ibex and boar), hunts for deer on the mountain's national parks were partially enclosed high fence areas, and hunts in the valley were totally high fenced. However, all trophies were earned through hard hunting. The expense of these hunts is comparable to African hunts (daily rate and trophy fees) and the style of hunting on the ground is also similar. Hunting with the Fabres is a great way to experience Spanish and European hunting, and the facilities and people of this operation are top shelf. I personally wish to thank the Fabreses for donating this hunt to the Kentuckiana Chapter. If you wish to investigate a hunt with Alfonso Fabres, the website is www.huntinspain.com.

My First Prairie Dog Hunt!

By Michael Graham

On June 17th 2012, Mike Maddox and I set out for what was sure to be an adventure on the Kansas-Colorado border hunting prairie dogs with other members of Kentuckiana SCI. As Mike and I made our way out West, I found myself thinking back on the preparation and planning that had gone into this little expedition.

Mike spent quite a bit of time with me prior to our departure, ensuring that I was properly equipped for the type of shooting we would encounter. I had quite a bit of fun planning and building my rifle platform. I started with an M&P 15 5.56 with the stock 16" barrel that I had owned for a few years and had mostly stripped down to the receiver to start from scratch. The first thing I did was order a new barrel and upper assembly from Stag Arms. I went with the 24" stainless bull barrel because I felt the additional weight would help steady me on the longer range shots. From there, I moved my attention to the butt stock and grip ordering an adjustable Magpul sniper stock and ergonomic grip to enhance the look of the rifle. They were very functional, but to be honest, I cared more about how they looked than how they worked (I'm a kid at heart).

Mike advised me to thoughtfully consider the quality of the scope to be used, not only for this hunt, but also because it would serve me well for future hunting. Mike, a strong proponent of Leupold scopes, suggested I invest in a quality scope. To be sure I was on the right path, he guided me to Gary Roman for the final piece of advice on which model to purchase. In the end, I decided on the Leupold VX-3 4.5-14x50mm (30mm) Side Focus. I hesitated to pull the trigger on this deal because of the higher cost of the scope, but after a little more research and some final confirmations from Mike and Gary, I was confident that it was the right scope for me.

Now, after spending the better part of 6 weeks ordering and assembling all the parts, I was ready to hit the range and put it all to the test. Mike and I scheduled our first day of long range practice at Knob Creek Gun Range because it afforded us the opportunity to get out to 300 yards with relative ease. As we started putting rounds down range, Mike and I noticed my groupings were not that great at 200 yards and beyond. After I turned the rifle over to Mike for a few shots, he quickly surmised the problem, which was the stock trigger!

In all my planning and preparation, I failed to consider one of the most important updates which can improve a rifle's longer range accuracy. After another quick call asking for advice, this time to Bob Edwards, I ordered a Timney Trigger (factory preset at 3lbs). I was amazed at how easy it was to install and set up. It took only 15 minutes to swap out the old trigger for the new one. Although I had been hunting since I was 10 years old (with a small 15-20 year hiatus right in the middle), I was inexperienced at any type of shooting over 100 yards. Taking this into consideration, Mike spent quite a bit of time working with me on trigger control and breathing and I was

amazed at how much I improved with small changes in my technique. Quite literally, after a few more trips to the range, Mike and I were extremely pleased to see much tighter groupings out past 200 yards.

Now that I've given you the background, I can get back to the task at hand, which is prairie dog hunting. Mike and I decided to take our time and drive over the course of 2 days which would ensure we had plenty of time to stop at Cabela's in Western Kansas City. After 2 days of easy driving, Mike and I finally arrived at Rebel Ridge Outfitters which was located in Syracuse, Kansas. We drove up to our host's (Matt Gould's) home, where there were already several other SCI members waiting and getting to know each other. I wanted to mention all the members of the hunt, so if I make an error or omission, please forgive my memory. We were greeted by Shawn Woodward and his girlfriend, Trudi, along with Paul Best and his 12-year-old grandson, Harrison Graft. We also met up with Dennis Toews and Bob Dilla just before the Monarch's arrived. Charles Monarch brought along his cousin, Ed Monarch, and son, Dean Monarch, and grandchildren, Josie Monarch, Samuel Monarch and last, but not least, Madeline Monarch.

Since everyone had finally assembled, Matt Gould held a safety meeting and provided maps for the various hunting locations we had available. Mike and I grouped up with Paul and Harrison and picked out two fields located next to each other located just across the Colorado border and the rest of the group picked fields nearby with some of the fields still located on the Kansas side. It was all set: we would leave before sunrise the next morning and get to our locations so we could get set up right after sun up. Let me assure you, I had no clue what I was in for when we got there. I couldn't believe the sheer volume of dogs in each field. There were prairie dogs everywhere I turned, thousands in these fields!

Mike and I started in a 50 acre field and we had a pretty good morning, taking a little over 100 prairie dogs between the two of us. At around 11:30, we decided to call it a morning and get out of the 100+ degree heat. Mike Maddox had made sure we were fully prepared for the sun and heat by buying some umbrellas and



Mike Graham and Mike Maddox showing off their shooting tables.

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**Chapter Liaison, Sherry Maddox
explorer111749@aol.com**

attaching them to our shooting tables with a rigging system he'd developed. I couldn't have been more thankful after using them because it got real hot, real quick.

After lunch, Mike and I switched fields with Paul and Harrison and got back to the business of shooting prairie dogs. Our afternoon was about like our morning with confirmed kills of a little over 100. Mike had purchased for us little "door counters" that you click to get head counts of people. We would shoot, then click, then shoot some more and then come back and make some more clicks. The tally quickly rose as we became more acclimated to the conditions and terrain and distances. Mike and I both were using range finders, but we soon realized there was not much to get a reading from, so we referenced our ranges by certain landmarks we'd picked out. After a while I would pause and grab the binoculars and start calling them out for Mike because the dogs would get wise to us and make themselves scarcer within 200 yards.

Mike was using a bolt action .223 and he was deadly accurate with it. Although I had a higher total kill count for the trip, Mike's percentages were twice that of mine. I was able to walk in the shots using multiple rounds in the clips, while Mike would have to come off the scope each time he reloaded. I did let the excitement get the better of me and I really started putting a lot of rounds down range. Mike was also using higher quality ammo (FIOCCHI ballistic tip compared to my Federal FMJ) and it really made a difference in the longer shots. The ballistic tip ammo surely added to our enjoyment during the day just because of the sheer force of its impact.

With every hit Mike made, there was the accompanying "SLAP" of the impact a second later as the sound reached us. Then there was immediate laughter as the delay created a cartoon effect. Now don't take my killing of prairie dogs as sadistic because these things are a pure infestation on the farms and around the communities. Their mounds create hazards for livestock and they carry all sorts of diseases. We were doing a service to the community by eradicating them. Now with that out of the way, I can say without any guilt that we celebrated our prior planning and preparation every time a prairie dog went flipping up in the air.

I put away my FMJ ammo and grabbed my Hornady Zombie Max, just so I could get in on the same action. After doing this for several hours, the dogs became sparse and difficult to find within range. After a while, their little heads started peeking from the tops of the mounds as close as 25-50 yards, but they never presented enough target to hit. That's when Mike and I changed the game a little. I pulled out my modified 1942 Mosin Nagant 7.62x54 and started leveling prairie dog mounds. I would compare it to an M1 Abrams tank at sand castles on the beach. Mike would

spot and I would bury the cross hairs just a few inches from the top of the mound and squeeze the trigger usually right as the dog was peeking out. Did we kill a lot of prairie dogs this way? No - but it sure was a lot of fun trying.

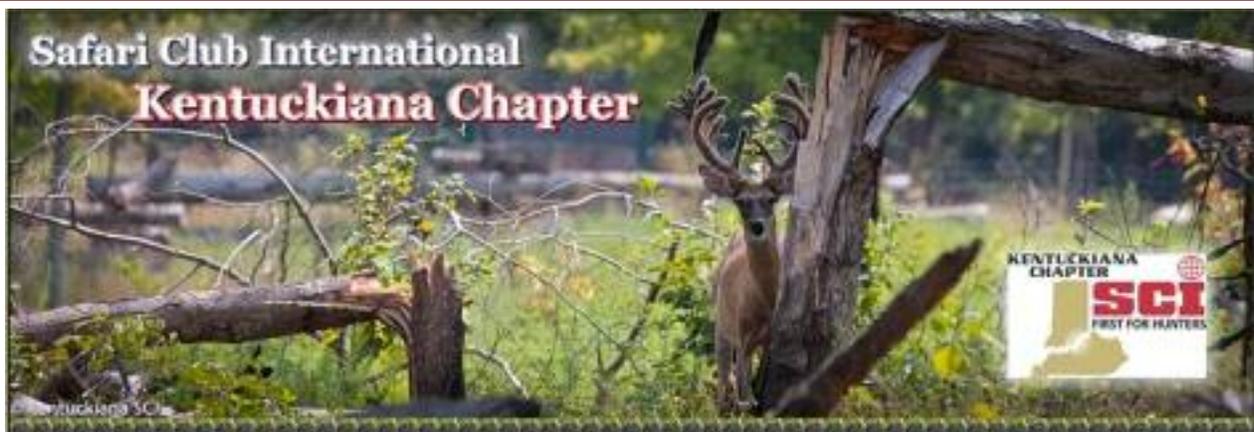
As we came to the end of our 3-day hunt, Matt Gould arranged for some trigger time on his Barrett M82A1 .50 Caliber. Matt provides this opportunity as an extra little bit of fun to those guests willing to spend the \$8+ per shot. Matt provided tracer rounds as well as standard rounds and set us up on a range with a 24"x30" steel plate at 1,000 yards. I had never shot a Barrett before and was not about to pass up the opportunity. I believe there were 3 of us who opted for the Barrett and I was the second one to shoot. We had strong 30mph crosswinds at varying locations down range which made the shot very difficult (as if shooting 1,000 yards wasn't difficult enough).

Shawn Woodward went first and put 5 rounds down range, and then I followed up with 15 shots, hitting the plate with my first round (pure luck), but missing 14 times after that (see below). Dennis Toews closed the show with 10-15 shots and I think it's safe to say that we all walked away wanting our own Barrett .50 caliber, at least I did. *I don't think I could convince the wife that a \$12,000+ rifle capable of shooting through engine blocks is a practical purchase but, maybe someday, I'll build up the courage to try.*



Mike Graham on the .50 Cal

The entire group had a great time on this trip and if everybody had half as much fun as I did, then they're sure to be thinking about a repeat trip next year. We had wonderful accommodations in Syracuse and Rebel Ridge Outfitters surely delivered on a fulfilling hunt. We saw the occasional mule deer and I saw my first pronghorn. Some of our group even encountered a prairie rattlesnake or two, and Matt Gould's Barrett M82A1 .50 Caliber added to our adventure.



HOME PAGE IMAGE OF CHAPTER'S NEW WEBSITE NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The Blue Bag Brigade

By: Nancy Stevens (Hunter's Wife & Mom)

A wondrous thing is happening in Africa today, and it is thanks to Safari Club International. Hunters may volunteer to take a "Blue Bag", which is provided to hunters free of charge by SCI, on their hunting adventure to assist children in communities of need. The hunter fills the Blue Bag and the bag is large enough to fit in quite a bit, but the "Blue Bag" is about much more than the items we filled our Blue Bag with.

These bags, filled with gifts by the hunters, can barely begin to scratch the surface of the tremendous needs of the native children who literally walk miles to school and live in one room homes with outhouses for toilet facilities. Some of us can't even imagine living a life like that. The reality made me tearfully sad.

What this Blue Bag did provide to my family (husband, Lowell and sons, Ivy and Slade) and me was an opportunity for us to meet with children of an impoverished community. It gave us a reason to make the time to communicate with people across the globe that we would never have otherwise meet. It provided us with a snippet of everyday life in Africa.

Our Professional Hunter, Vlam Myberg of Madubula Safaris, organized the children to meet us in front of their homes or at their school. We picked up those children who were waiting at their houses and drove them to school. Much to our surprise most of them got dressed up in their school clothing even though it was winter break. They were excited to meet us but a little hesitant. Although their English was broken, some could speak better than others, conversations began. We passed ball, talked, took photos, and handed out treats. After they became more comfortable, many of the children asked me to take photos of them with their friends. They then came up and looked at the images on the digital camera and broke into huge smiles. I promised I'd send the photos back to them.

Despite their different circumstances, they seemed to be just like us. The girls giggled and wanted pictures with our boys. The boys played ball. Some of the mothers surprised us by walking about a mile to meet up with us at the school. I believe they just wanted to see what their children were up to: just as I would have done. There was an obvious sense of community, a sense of belonging, and a sense of love for each other. Above all, they seemed happy. Their smiling faces and laughter touched my heart. I truly believe this is what God meant when he said "Love thy Neighbor".

My plea is this: if you're traveling to Africa or any remote isolated region, take a Blue Bag! You will not know what you are missing until you do. Make the time, fill the bag, and get ready for the smiles. The reward will be a wonderful memory for you and for the children you're helping.

