



Traditional Archers of New Jersey



EST. MAY 21, 1992

"Protecting the Future by Preserving the Past"

Off the Shelf

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**Traditional Archers of New Jersey, Inc.***Off the Shelf*

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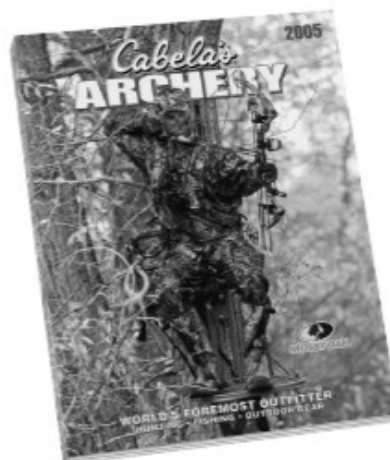


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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is winter and already and another busy summer& fall have come and gone. This past spring past Governor Corzine signed the Sunday Bowhunting Bill and those of you that presently work on Saturday can finally enjoy a day of Bowhunting on Sunday. Before I continue, I would like to apologize to Jim Farley, our co-shoot coordinator. In my last address, I had him down as "John" instead of "Jim" and many of his friends emailed me. He also called me on the typo and I finally admitted for the first time that I made a "mistake". Jim, we appreciate all of your hard work. You are always ready to help set up any of our TANJ events, especially when there are kids involved that want to learn archery. Jim and I have been talking about setting up "Archery in the Schools" in Asbury Park N.J. and by next year we hope to accomplish our goal.

We would like to thank TANJ members Darlene & Tony Mascino for donating a Trad Tech Deerslayer bow that she won at Whittingham. We had a Texas-Wac-Em shooting contest at the July Big Foot this year to "Support our Troops". Darlene's 45# bow along with another one donated by Black Knight (B.K.B), were the top two prizes. After the event, Paul Winans President of Black Knight, and their membership, came up with an additional one hundred dollars to help our cause, TANJ was even generous to match BKB's kind donation. That's a total of six hundred dollars. I have a contact whose son is over in Iraq. His name is CFO Jared Helms, Bravo Battery TF-1-113thFA 30th HBCT. I spoke to Jared last week and I know that he will distribute all the items to many people in his company. Also included in the many boxes were TANJ & Black Knight's Big Foot T-Shirts and a TANJ newsletter. As you read this on Nov 28th, 8 boxes have recently been shipped to our Troops for the Holidays. These brave soldiers are protecting America's freedom Abroad "God Bless them All."

Back on July 2nd I received a call from Gene Grodzki of BKB and the CJAN webmaster telling me that he could not get the usual Robin Hood Goblet that was always presented to the winner of "Last man Standing" during their Bigfoot weekend. He wanted to know if we could we help? I called Irene Bower that night who then gave me the number of Silver Stag Knife Co, within a few days, I had a knife laser engraved and shipped to us for the contest. On the knife, TANJ had engraved "Last Man Standing" on one side and on the other side "B.K.B. & T.A.N.J. 2009. " We would also like to thank Irene Bower who will engrave the Big Foot image on the butt of the antler knife. The "Last Man Standing" was again a great event and the Black Knight membership went above the call of duty to make sure everyone had a good time. We had over 40 Traditional Shooters compete and at least one hundred spectators rooting for the field and after one and a half hours of shooting, Paul Orlick came out on top. He is now a proud TANJ member.

In August, TANJ sponsored the 3-D archery range at the Central Jersey Rifle and Pistol Club in Jackson for CJRPC annual "Wounded Warriors" Day. Those that came to help teach the soldiers and their families were Mike Tully, TANJ, Horace Eckman & Al Choma -Wa Xo Be and Tom and Tyler Robinson of CJRPC, who spearheaded the Archery event for that day. Tom and Tyler brought all the 3D targets and also took the time to set up all the moving targets on the range. They spent hours before and after the shoot and we at TANJ salute them and are glad that they are now TANJ members. Many Wounded Vet-

erans and their families gave thanks. TANJ will be having an Archery Day for the "Wounded Warriors" in 2010 at the Oak Ridge Range in Union County sponsored by TANJ & the Gut Yankers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank TANJ member Mike Tully (Gut-Yanker) for his invaluable assistance with the "Archery Day" event at the Somerset County Fish and Game Association of Bridgewater, NJ. Mike I worked with a large number of teens and adults, and showed them the basic points of archery and how they could further pursue this fun and exciting outdoor activity. The TANJ moving target was a big hit in demonstrating what is achievable with practice and dedication to archery. In all approximately one hundred and twenty five men, women and children of all ages were given a fun and informative introduction to the world of archery. I would like to thank John Zampini, the Archery Chairman of the SCFGA for a great day. We appreciated the invite to their First Annual Archery day which I hear will now be a yearly event.

In the last issue you saw a section devoted to Al Reader, our TANJ brother, one the 4 TANJ founding Fathers. Al Reader passed away back in May. Some of his friends have already sent donations in his name to be used for any Youth Archery program. His friend, Joe Naske, had Columbia Knife Co. make up twenty five commemorative knives and had them numbered one to twenty five along with Al's email name. The knives were for sale at Denton Hill and twenty were sold within one and a half days. A good percentage of the money collected was donated back to TANJ. We are now in the process of setting up an "AL Reader-Archery for our Youth" program in New Jersey in the future. Cody Gaudlip our first Junior Council member, already has found a school in Jackson and he is talking to that School Board for the upcoming 2010 semester.

Please take the time and look at our webpage. It was just updated by our webmaster Rob DeStefano & Jorge Coppen our Vice President. Many thanks to Rene Allegre our new merchandise director because you can now purchase any TANJ merchandise on line. Our new Ash & Cedar T-Shirts, Black Long Sleeve Arrow Crew Neck Shirts, Green and Sand Sweatshirts, 2 types of Window Decals, TANJ Suede Patches, (which are Iron on). Rene is also working on and soon to be coming in 2010, custom camo TANJ baseball hats. All items are shown on his web page, as you can see there are new tabs on the left side of the page making the site so easy to use. Ron Schwartz owner of KME Sharpeners, called me to state how great the TANJ website looks. He liked the way his company web page looked as a link and appreciated our help. He stated since our meeting two years ago at Whittingham he could not believe how many bowhunters from New Jersey were buying his broadhead & knife sharpeners and how many also mentioned that they were TANJ members. If you don't own one of these broadhead or knife sharpeners, please check them out. To me, there is not a better product of this type on the market.

In closing TANJ will again have a booth at the New Jersey Outdoor Sportsman Expo on January 14th-17th 2010. We need volunteers to man the tables for the 4 day event!!! All we ask for is two hours of your time. Last year we had over 10 members come to help out and we saw many archers who



want to switch back to the "Traditional Way." We will be sending around an email and please if you can make some time and step up and help out, we need your participation.

Our annual "Cabin Fever Shoot" will be held at Black Knight's range in Jackson, N.J. on **Sunday February 28th, 2010. See you there!**

I would like to thank **Ron Ellison** our membership director for always being there when we need help and appreciate our weekly phone calls about TANJ business. We also tip our quiver to **Jorge Coppen** our newsletter editor who as you know has done an outstanding job on our TANJ newsletter.

I wish everyone a "Happy Holiday & New Year"
Gerry Doc DeCaro

El Presidente



Rock Star meets Rock Star...

Went to the PNC for some much needed R&R on July 8th and while listening to the Lynyrd Skynyrd band, guess who sat next to me and my son Charlie waiting to go on. He was enjoying the music...none other than Kid Rock himself. What a nice guy and he wanted my autograph too! His show was the best we have seen and he is a real entertainer and brought the house down and played until the wee hours of the morning.



TANJ ARDENT ARCHERS



STIM WILCOX

Dr. R. Stimson "Stim" Wilcox earned his M.S. & Ph.D. in Zoology from the University of Michigan in 1969. This led to more studies in Australia on a Fulbright Fellowship. Returning to the United States in 1972, he took temporary positions at Perdue University and Kansas State University, then moved to Binghamton University in 1976, where he retired.



Stim has been making bows since he was a child, where bamboo splints and privet hedge arrows were exciting things to make and shoot. The bow-making experience that led to his new book "*The art of making self bows*" came mostly from the last 16 years of experimenting with hundreds of bows and many woods. Every word in this book stems from a love of archery and the pleasure of sharing the information and ideas about making wooden bows. The book has been written from the heart.

"*The art of making self bows*" is now available at www.wilcoxbows.com or www.authorhouse.com

This book is understandable and fun to use. The topics range from cutting and curing wood through building a selfbow of almost any type and finishing it. Beginners and advanced bowyers should find the book worthwhile. There are extensive descriptions and directions, supported by over 200 color photos. Besides how-to directions, there are sections on heat-bending, splicing billets, shaping handles, and treating knots, cracks, etc. Suggestions on how to make a bow with only a few measurements, reduce hand shock, eliminate stack, stabilize arrow flight, shoot where you look, and increase arrow speed.





Bob Lee Interviewed

By Rich Lopez

1) Can you please tell us a little about your upbringing?

I was the middle son of five children and was blessed to be part of a wonderful family. We were part of the great depression, so we knew what hard times were! My parents were God-fearing people and were constantly sacrificing for us.

I've lost one brother and one sister over the years. The other two live in the Houston area, so we are still together a lot.

2) When did you first get interested in archery?

I spent my early years in Austin, Texas and was in a sporting goods store one day and saw a mounted hawk with an arrow through it while clutching it with one claw. This just set me on fire and that started my life long love for archery. I immediately started making crude bows and arrows.

3) When did you build your first bow? Can you describe it?

We moved to Houston from Austin in 1941, when World War II started. My Dad was a heavy equipment operator, so he went to work operating a gantry in one of the shipyards that manufactured landing craft..

I met my wife, Charlotte, in high school and we were married about a year and a half after we graduated from high school in 1945. We just celebrated our 61st anniversary in December of 2007.

After the war, Dad started his own business in the excavating and construction field and my two brothers and I went to work with him. Later my brothers and I formed our own company. During this time, I stayed interested in archery and bought my first bow from a company you probably never heard of -- The name was L. E. Stemmler-- I ordered an 80# bow. What a mis-

take that was! It arrived in the mail and I started trying to string it up. I finally got the bow strung and tried to draw it, I was sick to say the least. I got in touch with Stemmler and they were kind enough to let me return the bow for a lighter one. I shot this bow until I heard about an archery club in Houston. I went out and checked it out, met the members, and joined right away.

A little later, a young man by the name of Fred Hurd joined the club. We became fast friends and began hunting together. In the warm months we hunted alligators. At that time, they were not protected, so we hunted on weekends at night and would shoot the archery range during the day. We took some very large alligators - the largest being 14 feet long.

We started building our own arrows and finally set up a shop in Fred's garage. Before long, we started building arrows for our fellow archers. Our arrow business started to grow and soon we had more than we could handle. Fred was a pilot for a major oil company and soon we had to make a decision about what we were going to do. Fred was happy with his job and wanted to stay with it - the shop was all I could think about, so I finally approached my wife and told her that I wanted to make archery my life's work. She told me that if that was what I wanted to do, she would be with me.

I went to my brothers and told them what I wanted to do. My family thought I had lost my mind, and that was the beginning of "Wing Archery".

After constructing a building in my back yard, archery was now my full time business. I had started with Fred in 1951 and then sometime in 1952 moved into my own shop. I have covered a lot of history to get to building my first bow. I wanted to build a bow, but had no knowledge as to where to begin. There were no books or instructions available, so I just used my imagination. I drew out a bow the way I thought it should be, built a form, then cut strips of tire inner tubes to provide pressure to press the bow to the form. The only fiberglass available was made by a company named Panther glass. I



made a crude sander to sand the maple laminations for the limbs. I laminated some rosewood for the handle and glued my first bow using the strips of rubber to pull the bow down tight against the form. I cut the bow out to shape, then glued nocks on the ends. I shaped the nocks, put in string grooves and strung it up -- the bow was perfectly straight and weighed 55#. I thought there was nothing to building bows. It was easy ---I lost the next three bows that I tried to build. I think the good Lord let me build that first bow so I wouldn't give up. I have always said, that if I hadn't built that first bow, I probably wouldn't have stayed with it and never have gone into the bow business.

4) What was it like back in the “heyday” of archery? Were more people target archers or was bowhunting always in the background?

Back then there was three types of archery. There was target archery, field archery and of course bow hunting. The big difference was that in target and field we all used longer, lighter bows. Most bows ranged from 66” to 70” and 35 to 40#’s. I would say that for the male archer, the most popular was 69” and 38#’s. We would shoot a regular round of 28 targets that ranged from ten yards at 6” round face to 80 yards at a 24” face. Four arrows each target.

The major tournaments were 56 targets - 4 arrows each, and each day for two days. Target archery was never as popular as field archery, but was what was used in the Olympics.

We would shoot the tournament bows up until about a month before hunting season and then everyone would get out their heavier hunting bows and start shooting them to get ready for the hunting season. Die-hards like Fred & I would shoot both because we hunted year round.

5) What possessed you to get into the bow making industry in the day?

There were a lot of times when I have asked myself that same question, but the simple answer is the love of it.

6) Can you tell us about your time with Wing Archery? What happened to it?

I have already addressed what got me into Wing Archery, which was my love for the sport and the challenge that it has presented to me over the years.

As for the history of Wing Archery, I started the company in 1951; moving to my building in 1952. I was there until 1955 when we built some larger buildings in Bellaire, Texas. All the time, we were growing in the national market. In 1958, they held the National Field Archery tournament in Grayling, Michigan. I decided to go and set up a booth. When we went up to Grayling, our production was about six to eight bows per day. The acceptance of our bows was nothing short of unbelievable. Dr. Fred Simmons of Houston won first place and we returned home with new additional dealers that upped our production to thirty bows a day. I wanted to leave the Houston area and bring up my daughter and son in a smaller town, so in 1965 we relocated our plant in a new 20,000 foot building in Jacksonville, Texas

Shortly after moving to Jacksonville, we accepted a contract from Colt Firearms to build them a line of bows. Our production by this time had grown to over 100 bows per day. We



were running three shifts. Somewhere in this period of time, the compound bow came into being and at first I didn't think it would go anywhere. How wrong could I be! It really took off, but I could never accept it. To me, it was destroying the archery that I loved.

About the same time, we were being approached by several large sporting good manufacturers to acquire us. I was disenchanted because of the compound bow, so in 1968 I de-

cided to sell to Head Ski. About a year after they acquired us, they got in financial trouble and sold to A.M.F. That was a death sentence for Wing Archery. I had agreed to stay on and manage Wing for five years, when I sold to Head Ski. A.M.F. was a very large company with many divisions and archery is an ever changing sport. If we wanted to make a change in our line or whatever --we would have made a report, send it to Sports Group. Eventually, they would send it to the Corporate group for approval. Months later if you were lucky you would get an answer, by that time you didn't need it. The market had changed. As a result of this and other things, as soon as my contract was up - I turned in my resignation. We were building 300 bows per day when I left and two years later A.M.F. closed Wing Archery. I should have gone in and bought Wing back, but I was too hardheaded - I was sick of the route the sport was going and wanted nothing to do with it.

It was not until ten years later that traditional archery started a come back. My son “Rob” was after me to go back into archery business, so we started “Bob Lee Archery”, producing a



line of traditional bows. We have kept it small, so that we can work directly with the archers. It has been a very enjoyable time for me, working with Rob. I have taught him all I know and he has followed me in making archery, his life's work.

7) As a collector I am very fond of the Presentation bows, and have collected many over the years, The 1965-66' PII is my favorite. The PI and PII are fantastic bows. Can you please tell us about their concept and construction.

When I introduced the PI, it went on the market for \$100.00. This was unheard of - there was nothing on the market even close to that price. All the centric said that there was no way that this bow would sell at that price. Well that was the year that Dr. Simmons won the national tournament shooting the PI and he blew them away. We went into production with a six month back log. Needless to say, it was the most popular bow on the market at that time. The PII was something that I suppose was just meant to be, I was on a airplane on my way to hunt and of course I had to put my bows and equipment in with my luggage. I worried that they would damaged or twist them. I was sitting on the plane, thinking about them and light came on in my head -- if those bows were in three pieces, they would be safely under my seat instead of in the luggage compartment. I couldn't get that off my mind and couldn't wait to get back to Wing with the idea.

As soon as I got back, I started working on the concept. I reasoned that for the limb to be strong enough for a joint, the attachment area would have to be radius, which I later found out was not necessary. I designed the bow the way I wanted and built a pilot model. It was a beautiful shooting bow, so then I needed to find out if the joint would hold up. I built a shooting machine that would pull the bow back and dry fire it. Dry firing a bow is the worst thing you can do to it. I felt like if the joint would hold to that torture, it would hold up to anything the archers would put it through. It would shoot until the nocks would break off the ends. I cut them off, put new nocks on, put a shorter string on it and go again. It amazed me, everything else went, but the joint held up. Now I felt that I was safe in producing the PII. The rest is history. All the bowyers began manufacturing a takedown bow, even in the compounds.

8) I see your current line of bows resemble the older line of Wing bows to a degree. Is that on purpose?

You know I think you can see the personality of the bowyers in

any of the bows on the market, if they have used their own ideas.

9) I understand Bob Lee is a family operation, can you tell us about your family?

This is the thing I am most proud of --I am 79 years old now and Charlotte just retired in January of 2007. She has been with me ever step of the way. I mentioned earlier, she was what kept me going on so many times. If it were not for her, I know I wouldn't have made it through. We have been together really all of our life and I thank God that he put her in my path.

Rob is a son that anyone would be lucky to have, we work together every day and have for all of Rob's adult life. I am so thankful for the opportunity to do so -- I have taught him all I know and I really think he is better at it than I am. He is also wonderful working with the customers. I guess you can tell that I love my family.

10) I noticed a great many compound archers switch back in the 80's to traditional, and I am seeing this again. It appears to be cyclical. Can you comment on this trend?

I have felt all along when we got back into Bob Lee Archery that a very large percent of our customers are, or have been, compound shooters. I really think that they have a desire to try this style of shooting. It is more demanding to learn and as a result is more satisfying. I think there will always be both styles.

11) Your current line of bows are phenomenal. I have been a proud owner of several. Can you comment on the materials available back in day vs. today? Are bows any different?

We use glass laminations from Gordon Composites. We have used Gordon glass as long as I have built bows. Their glass has improved dramatically over the years. Both from raw material improvement as well as their equipment. I just attended an appreciation meeting recently at their plant. Their suppliers and manufacturers were given a two day tour of their facilities in Colorado. It was a very informative visit and so much different than their plant when they were in California.

Our bows can be no better than the glass we put on them -- Thanks, Gordon Composites!

12) I met you several years ago at the Denton Hill shoot. I had the honor of having my picture taken with you. If you remember, I was that tall handsome man that looked like Howard Hill ...just kidding. Did you ever spend any time with some of the other greats in archery history such as Fred Bear, Pearson, Hill, and the sort? If so, what where they like?





Yes! I knew all of these as well as others. Fred and I were good friends although we didn't have an opportunity to get together very often. I respected him as a good and honorable competitor and I think he did me. I have picture of him and the tiger that he took -- he signed it -- To Bob Lee, a good friend and keen competitor. Ben Pearson was also a good friend and one that I have always felt was not given the credit for the great contribution that he made to archery.

He should be remembered as the "Bowyer for millions of little archers" for his ability to mass produce low end equipment for beginners. I only met Howard Hill on one occasion. I made a sales call on Kittridge Bow Hut in California years ago. Kittridge was tied up with a customer and Howard was sitting there. I introduced myself and told him of my admiration of him. In the conversation it came out that he was not a target shooter, in fact, he told me that he just could not hit still targets. He said, that the average field shooter could out shoot him on a range, This just blew my mind. He said, if it were alive or moving, he could hit it, but no a target on a bail.

Glenn St.Charles was a close friend and a very big contributor to archery. Most of them are gone now and I miss them all.

13) Back in the day, one would see Brazilian Rosewood, East Indian Rosewood, Bubinga, Maple, Walnut and Shedua as the norm in bow construction. Today, I see there are countless exotic woods available for bows these days. Can you comment on why this is so?

We are presently, among other woods, using Bubinga, Walnut, Maple and our own wood that we process. We call this "Dura Wood" - a hard Ash we impregnate with a Mortimer and dyes that makes a beautiful wood that is stronger as well as beautiful with Brown & Black glass. We also used this process at Wing. It actually makes a plastic wood.

14) Any heroes? Any role models in your archery career?

All the ones mentioned above are heroes in my book.

15) Do you have any favorite vintage archery memories that stand out?

I have many memories that stand out. Too many to single one out.

16) If you were to transport yourself back in time... what period in archery history would it be?

There were many times in the past that I remember fondly. I cannot go back and really don't know if I would. I love my life where I am right now.

17) Back to your bows, do you have any plans on new models to be introduced?

We just added a one piece hunter model in 54" length. Additionally, we have just added a 15" riser in the take down models that is 4" shorter than the 19" model. This gives us lengths from 54" to 64". With so many bow hunters now using the pop up ground blinds, the shorter bows are in high demand.

18) I have shot several of your bows and find them beautiful, great feeling, easy to shoot, smooth on the draw and very fast. Is there any special design feature that creates such a great spectrum of equipment of enjoyment?

First of all, thanks for the wonderful compliments. I need to get you to write our ads. We are constantly working to improve our bows. There are many designs that go into a good bow. The trick is to find what works best. Wish I could be more specific than that.

19) What is the one piece of advice you would give a new traditional shooter to aid him on his bow selection starting out?

That's easy - most men want too much pull weight. Get something that you can comfortably hold. I think it has to do with male ego. Remember, I told you about my bout with the 80# bow.

Secondly, if I'm going to try to help anyone with their form - I'd rather have someone that has never shot a bow, than someone that started on his own and developed a bunch of bad habits that I would have to try and break.





20) I know you have taken countless game animals with bow and arrow. Do you have a specific hunt that is most memorable?

I would have to say that the Alaskan hunt that I had stands out in my memories. It was a fourteen day hunt in which we collectively took 4 Caribou, 2 Moose and 2 Sheep - they all made the book.. The men that I was with, the camp, the country. Everything about it brings good memories back.

21) Do you have any bow hunting goals or plans for the immediate future?

As I said earlier, I'm 79 almost 80 now, so I am not planning any big hunts. I have had some good white tail hunts recently with Rob and that's probably about all I'll do in the future.

22) What was your greatest bow hunting accomplishment?

I really would have a hard time picking out one hunt. All of them have special memories for me.

23) Have you been bow hunting as long as you have been involved in archery?

Yes, except when I was a youngster growing up in Austin, Texas.

24) Any hair raising stories?

I've really only had one serious incident in my hunting experiences. This was on one of mine and Fred's gator hunts. We stuck a 10 ½ foot gator one night and worried with the guy for several hours. The way that we hunted them was out of our 17 foot canoe. We used a heavy solid steel arrow with a harpoon head. The arrow was attached to 16th inch steel cable attached to 8" bowie. We used a 10 ft. rod attached out in front of the canoe to hold the cable. The objective was to ease up on a gator when we spot them in the water. When you shine your light on their eyes they glow. We would shoot them in the jaw muscle with the harpoon. When they are hit they take off and take the bowie with them.

The next objective then is follow the bowie and when the gator stops, hopefully, we can get a broadhead arrow into their lung area from the side. You cannot penetrate their backs with an arrow. We always used a 65 pound bow and if your lucky and get an 1 inch penetration in their back. We had not been able to get a good shot into his side and finally at day light we got him close enough to the bank for me to get out with the bowie and try to ease him toward the bank so maybe one of us could get a shot into his lungs.

Well it was day light and I started easing him toward the bank. I could tell that he spotted me and here he came, like a

race horse right at me. I was trying to get up the bank, but it was slippery from the rain earlier.

I don't know whether he thought he had me or what, but he began rolling like they do when they get something, but Fred was able to get a good shot to the lung and the gator headed back into the water. With all of his rolling, he rolled the cable up around his neck and out into the water he went. I was his for the taking. It a miracle that he didn't get me.

Well the arrow in the lung did the number on him and after grappling for awhile, we were able to snag him and pull him out. That was one hunt that I will always remember.

25) What do you see for the future of traditional archery in general for the 21st century? Good, bad, or indifferent?

I think that there will always be a future for traditional archery. Compound archery has really helped archery because it has brought so many more into the sport, making it more popular.

We will get our share of them when they get tired of the compound and want to try traditional. I think as long as there are red-blooded men, there is something in us that desires to see an arrow arch in the sky.



Bob Lee and his son Rob conducting some quality control inspections

**GOD BLESS OUR TROOPS!!!**

On behalf of the **Traditional Archers of New Jersey (TANJ)** we would like to thank the **Black Knight Bow Benders (BKB)** of Jackson, NJ for allowing TANJ to host our new "Texas-Wac-Em" Archery event at their **Annual Bigfoot shoot** back in July. During the two days we collected \$350.00. Thanks to the BKB membership for a recurve bow which was one of the top two prizes and for an additional \$100 donation which TANJ matched. A couple of TANJ members gave to the cause for an additional \$100 and we appreciate their generosity!!

With \$650.00 in hand, TANJ went on a "Operation Iraqi Freedom shopping spree." Then on Saturday Nov 28th, six boxes were sent to **CFO Jared L Helms, Bravo Battery, APO, AE in Iraq** and his company.

Included in the shipment were many razor blades, foot powders, shampoos, foot padding, baby wipes, Crystal Light & instant cocoa mixes, flagging, tapes, bandaids, beef jerky, gloves, socks, toothbrushes, toothpaste and tons of hard candy & cookies. We also included a large red star for the top of the Bravo Battery Christmas Tree and a half dozen each of TANJ & BKB t-shirts. I hope we can again send some more goodies after our Annual Cabin Fever shoot which will be held at BKB on Sunday Feb 28th, 2010.

God Bless our troops!!!

Gerry "Doc" DeCaro, El Presidente, TANJ

TANJ ROCKS!!!

Doc,

My son, Jared called me a little while ago and he has already received all of the many boxes of goodies that you sent him during his tour in IRAQ!! He wanted me to send you and your fellow club members a huge "Thank You and Happy Holiday to All! "

He also stated that everything was very much appreciated by himself and his Bravo Battery with so many much needed items. Wow !!!!! He also read your letter that was enclosed and will do as you asked and have some of his buddies put on your club shirts and take some pictures and I will forward them to you for your newsletter.

DOC, YOU ROCK ! God Bless you and the Traditional Archers of New Jersey & Black Knight Bow-benders of NJ!!!!!!



Robin Douglas Helms
RBC Wealth Management
Charlotte, NC



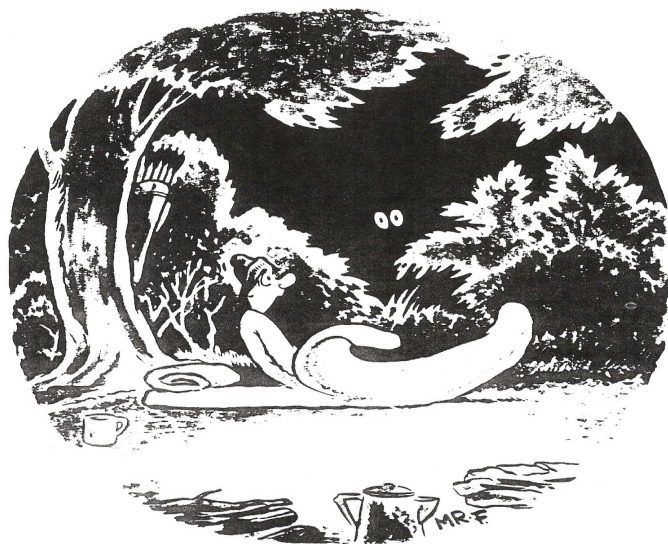
**TANJ****MEMBERSHIP
DUES**

Hello fellow TANJ members! We're almost at the end of another year. Where does the time go? It just seems to fly by faster and faster the older I get. Maybe someday I'll figure out a way to put the brakes on it. Before the year ends though, I would like to reach out to all of you who have not paid your **2009 membership dues. It is still only \$15 for a single member** and almost all of that money goes towards the cost of your four newsletters each year.

It would be very much appreciated if unpaid members could send a check soon because we will not be able to afford to send you newsletters in 2010 otherwise. This club is for and about Traditional Archery. We have a great newsletter that offers great stories, shoot information, club-sponsored hunts and outfitters. Don't miss out on a good deal! If you have a problem or concern about the club, feel free to call me at 732-600-2207 or email me at ron-bonj@aol.com

Sincerely, **Ron Ellison** Membership Director

PS-Our newsletter is for all members and any member can send us a story to print, place an ad for archery equipment or to make a comment. Jorge Coppen, our newsletter editor, would be happy to hear from you. His contact info is on the inside cover of the newsletter.

**TANJ**

Archery Archives

The legendary Charlie Kroll



Born June 12, 1918 **Charlie Kroll** was as an avid outdoorsman and bowhunter in his own right, and also happened to have married Fred Bear's daughter Julia Bear. He met Fred Bear in the early 1950s and Fred asked him to serve as camp cook on a 1952 hunt out west. Soon thereafter, he was employed by the Bear Archery Company in Grayling, MI..

On February 3, 2005 an outdoor show called "Rut n Strut Outdoors" videoed Charlie Kroll sitting at his fireplace at home in Grayling, MI. Jim Sheldon wanted to have Charlie do the opening and closing for their segment on the 2005 ATA show. Little did we know that he would leave us just 11 short days later on February 14, 2005. He died on his cedar swing overlooking the Au Sable River. So, what a fitting tribute to Charlie and the ATA to have him host the show.

One funny thing was you should have seen the look on his face when Jim Sheldon walked in carrying his compound bow. First thing Charlie said was "What are you doing with that in here?" In summer 2004 at the Compton shoot somebody asked him whether he had ever shot a compound or not and his reply was that he had "never sullied his hands." The segment aired on Monday, February 21, 2005.

To read more about Charlie Kroll visit this website in his memory: <http://kroll.fredbear-online.com/>



TRADITIONAL ARCHERY – ALIVE AND WELL IN NEW JERSEY

By Paul Catania

With all of today's high tech archery gear and the likely addition of crossbows into archery season, it was a welcome weekend for the Annual Whittingham Traditional Archery Rendezvous. Hundreds of archers gathered for a weekend to enjoy shooting the stickbow. This was the 17th annual shoot held by the Appalachian Bowmen at the Whittingham WMA in Sussex County.

Every spring this shoot joins archers from all over NJ and adjoining states. Camping was available and enjoyed by many. Various vendors set up tables displaying custom made bows, artwork, and vintage archery gear. The Traditional Archers of New Jersey were also represented and sponsored an Eagle Eye Qualifier.

For those of you experienced shooters there is no need to explain the thrill of watching a fletched shaft spin its way to the target and find its mark. Archers shooting handsomely crafted recurves and longbows use instinctive aiming techniques to achieve accuracy. No need for peep sights, kissers buttons, mechanical releases, fiber optic sights and the host of other gadgets which help us achieve pinpoint accuracy with our compound bows.

This type of instinctive shooting brings loads of fun and with practice produces deadly accurate hunting skills. The fun is in the simplicity of it all. You are relying on your honed shooting skills. Most bows are simply tuned by finding properly spined arrows and bracing the bowstring to achieve quiet arrow flight. Any new archers interested in learning to shoot a recurve or longbow... fear not. Most more experienced traditional shooters are willing to share their skills and get you started on the right track.

For this years shoot I was accompanied by two of my friends. The three of us are seasoned compound bow hunters, but have been electrified at learning the skills of instinctive shooting. Our gear consisting of





three recurve bows from years past. I shot a recently acquired Bear Kodiak made the year I was born. My friend Gary shot a Browning Wasp handed down from his father while Kevin shot a 1970s era Bear recurve. We shot feather fletched shafts off the shelf with leather shooting gloves. This was archery in its simplest form. We had fun ribbing each other at our misses, plenty of those, but also enjoyed nailing some of the tougher shots.

This 3-D shoot featured two 20-target animal ranges along with plenty of other challenging shooting. Stump shooting at unmarked distances was a blast. The shoot featured a four-hole archery golf course. Have you ever tried shooting over a tree line to reach your intended target? Cool huh? Another novelty type of shooting required

shooting with flu-flu type fletching to slow down the arrows distance. Aerial disc targets were thrown randomly and we were able to test our quick shooting skills on fast moving flying targets. The week-end shoot was a ton of fun with great camaraderie shared between bowmen.

In today's fast paced, technology-based society, the simple art of shooting a stick and string brings a welcome change of pace.

In today's fast paced, technology-based society, the simple art of shooting a stick and string brings a welcome change of pace. I would encourage every archer to support our traditional hunting heritage roots and don't hesitate to take a step back in time.

For the increased challenge, sheer fun and great feeling of accomplishment you can't beat traditional gear.





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A big thanks to TANJ!

Thanks to "Doc" DeCaro and Mike Tully from TANJ for their invaluable assistance with the "Archery Day" event at the Somerset County Fish and Game PA.

I had contacted "Doc" for some guidance and help in introducing our members, their children and guests to the sport of archery at our newly completed archery range. "Doc" offered sage advice and came down to work directly with youngsters in attendance. He recruited the help of Mike Tully, whose infinite patience working with the youngest archers (youngest was about 4 yrs. old) was nothing short of amazing! Mike was on his knees most of the day getting down to "eye level" with the kids. It was easy to recognize Mike's "touch" while introducing the youngsters to the fun of breaking a balloon or two while using archery equipment for the first time. Mike single handedly worked with approx. 30 children; That in itself was quite a feat requiring a unique level of dedication, professionalism...and sore knees! **See page 20 for more!**

"Doc" was his usual gregarious self, even after just moments earlier having emerged from an early morning in the whitetail woods! "Doc" worked with a large number of teens and adults and showed them the basic points of archery and how they could further pursue this fun and exciting outdoor activity. Doc's use of his "patented" moving target was a big hit in demonstrating what is achievable with practice and dedication to archery.

In all, approx. 125 men, women and children of all ages were given a fun and informative introduction to the world of archery. There were many big smiles, and some looks of surprise on the faces of the children after they would "unexpectedly" hit a bull's-eye, or pop a balloon once the careful guidance of Doc and Mike took effect. Needless to say, Archery Day at the club was a huge success, due in large part to the patience, dedication and teaching ability exhibited by Doc and Mike. It is men such as Doc and Mike, who's selfless dedication to introducing our youth to the world of archery, will keep the sport alive and well in NJ and around the USA. They are a great asset to TANJ and the archery community in general.

We at the Somerset County Fish and Game PA wish to thank these men for their tireless efforts in helping to make our club event such a success, and in helping to introduce our members and guests to the awesome sport of archery.

Outstanding job guys!



**Traditional Archers
of
New Jersey**

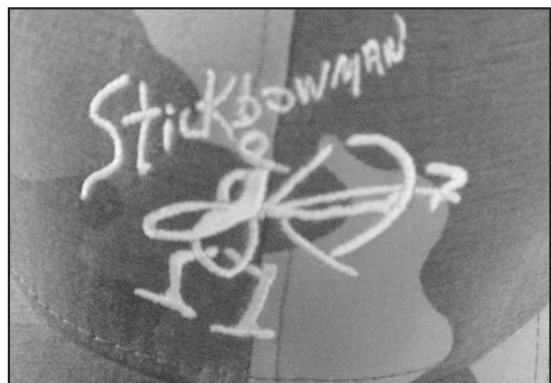
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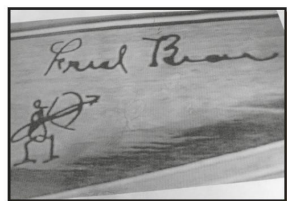
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Ron Zilkowski with another fine buck he harvested during the 2009 season!



TANJ VP Jorge L. Copen rattled in this buck on November 27, 2009 in Montana.



After seven long days of hunting in Missouri, John Decore harvested this dandy whitetail buck with a longbow.



Peter LeMasson harvested this unique 4-point whitetail buck with a Black Widow MA II (60"; 60#@29") using a 2213 tipped with a 150 gr. Stinger Buzz in NJ Zone 36.



A Funny Story — By **Ron Ellison**

Every once in awhile something happens to us that just sets off an uncontrollable, deep down, rip roaring BELLY LAUGH. You never know when it might happen. Sometimes it occurs at a most unexpected time. That's just what happened to me one morning in the dark early hours before sunrise.

It was late October and a couple of my hunting buddies and myself were on our annual hunting trip to Whittingham WMA. Every year we would spend 5 or 6 days there hunting deer and it was so good to just get away from it all at least for a few days. This particular year I also invited a friend of mine, John, to come along. I had introduced John to bow hunting the year before and he was excited to go on his first deer hunting trip. He couldn't get away for the whole trip though, so I gave him directions to the motel where I would be staying and he drove up early one morning to meet me.

John arrived well before sunrise and together we all headed off for our hunting area. Since John was new to the area I was going to take him along with me

while my other buddies went off in another direction. We had a good long walk ahead of us to get to some ridges I had in mind to set up a couple of ground blinds. First we hiked through some large fields and eventually we reach the woodlands. There was a hiking trail we would follow running between two ridges that would take us to our destination

Now in my early years of hunting I seldom used a flashlight to see my way because it was said that you would scare all of the deer right out of the county if you did. These days I've learned differently and I do use a flashlight, but that morning we headed into the woods without one. Now I knew these woods pretty well and I had followed this trail in the dark many times, but it is easy to wander off of it. That's exactly what happened this morning of course. Besides that, as I'm looking around in the dark I see a group of hunters across the way from us. How do I see them? They each have a flashlight and they're all shining in a different direction. "John, will you look at those idiots shining those lights all over the place. They're going to scare every deer out of the area". John does mention however, that they are probably on the trail that we lost. Well we may have lost the trail but I know where we are. We're between two ridges. You can't get lost. "Hey, lets just keep moving forward. Up ahead we can climb to the top of





this ridge on our left.”

So we start moving again but it's slow going not being on the trail and I can see that other group of hunters are catching up to us on our right. As I stop to analyze the situation John asks if I'm sure I know where we are. Right about now I'm starting to feel a bit agitated and I'm ready to ask John if he would like to lead the way. As I'm thinking about this I lean on a big tree with my left shoulder and without warning the whole tree falls over and me with it. “CRAAAAAASH”. The sound is thunderous in the dark early morning. Now I don't know exactly what happened but I'm on the ground next to this big tree and across the valley every light from those other hunters is shining my way. Well I don't know who started it but the next thing I know John and me are laughing. Not just a little laugh but one of those deep down, rip roaring, uncontrollable BELLY LAUGHS. John is doubled up and I'm on the ground curled up both laughing our fool heads off.

This must have gone on for almost ten minutes. We were simply beside ourselves. Every time we started to slow down laughing one of us would try to say something and that would just get us going again. By now the other hunters were almost out of sight, or I should say their flashlights were, and John and I were finally able to get ourselves under control and moved on. We reached the top of the ridge where I wanted to go but needless to say we did not see any deer that morning. Just thinking about what happened earlier would get us chuckling. Even twenty years later whenever we get together this story always seems to come up. Each time, John thanks me for teaching him how to bow hunt and I always smile and say “No problem. Glad to help”.

Well that's my funny story or at least John and I think it's funny. I'm not so sure about those other hunters who were there that morning. I have always wondered what they thought was going on across the way from them. [Probably some idiots who haven't a clue what they're doing] I'll bet each one of those guys remembers that morning though and still say to each other “Remember that time at Whittingham.....”



Peter LeMasson harvested this doe with a longbow a friend made him on the morning of Sept. 26 in Zone 36.



These three young traditional archers (L to R: Jessica, Cody and Christina) give Grandpa Al Klenk lots of proud moments on & off the range!





A big thanks to TANJ!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank **Gerry “Doc” DeCaro** and **Mike Tully** from "Traditional Archers of New Jersey" for their invaluable assistance with our **1st Annual “Archery Day”** event at the Somerset County Fish and Game Protective Assoc. which was held on Sunday, Sept 13th.

I had contacted Doc for some guidance and possible help in introducing our members, their children and guests to the sport of archery at our newly completed archery range. Well, not only did Doc offer some sage advice, but offered to come down to the club and work directly with any youngsters in attendance.

He also recruited the help of Mike Tully, who’s infi-



nite patience working with the youngest of new archers (I believe the youngest was about 4 yrs old) was nothing short of amazing! Mike was on his knees most of the day getting down to “eye level” with the kids. It was easy to recognize Mike’s “touch” while introducing the youngsters to the fun of breaking a balloon or two while using archery equipment for the first time. Mike single handily worked with approx. 30 children. That in itself is quite a feat, which I believe requires a unique level

of dedication, professionalism...and sore knees!

Doc was his usual gregarious self, even after just moments earlier having emerged from an early morning in the whitetail woods! Doc worked with a large number of teens and adults and showed them the basic points of archery and how they could further pursue this fun and exciting outdoor activity. Doc’s use of T.A.N. J.’s “patented” moving target was a big hit in demonstrating what is achievable with practice and dedication to Archery.



In all, approx. 125 men, women and children of all ages were given a fun and informative introduction to the world of archery. There were many big smiles, and some looks of surprise on the faces of the children after they would “unexpectedly” hit a bull’s-eye, or pop a balloon once the careful guidance of Doc and Mike took effect.

Needless to say, Archery Day at the club was a huge success due in large part to the patience, dedication and teaching ability exhibited by Doc and Mike.

It is men such as Doc and Mike, who’s selfless dedication to introducing our youth to the world of archery, will keep the sport alive and well in NJ and around the USA. They are a great asset to TANJ and the archery community in general.



Our club is the Somerset County Fish and Game Protective Assoc. If you're not familiar with the club, it is primarily a gun club with approx. 800 members, an indoor shooting range, an underground big bore range, and now a five station archery practice range and located in Bridgewater N.J. We the members of the Somerset County Fish and Game Protective Assoc. wish to thank these men for their tireless efforts in helping to make our club event such a success, and in helping to introduce our members and guests to the awesome sport of Archery.

Outstanding job guys! See you out there...!

John Zampini, Archery Chairman and your friends at the SCFGPA



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Guest Speaker - Monty Browning

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We will also need all names of people attending. If you wish to reserve a Table you must have 8 paid people attending.

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Last Man Standing - 2009

Dear Doc and Members of TANJ,

The Black Knights and the NJ Archery Community greatly appreciate TANJ's support of our Annual "BIGFOOT" with your generous and extremely cool gift of the engraved Silver Stag Knife. The lucky Traditional Archer, who wins this beautiful piece of art, will undoubtedly wear it with great pride.

Archery prizes, even at National Tournaments are often meaningless, lame and inexpensive. Bigfoot has tried to break that trend. TANJ and their members have added a lot of class to the shoot and "Last Man Standing" has become a cornerstone to the event. One of the main ideas behind BIGFOOT venue was to bring the entire Archery Community together at one event. Where else will you see Traditional, Dot, 3-D and Bowhunters all enjoying our beloved sport each in their own unique way?

Thanks again! Your Friends at Black Knights!
Gene Grodzki, BKB Event Coordinator
Paul Winans, President



Thank You

*The 2009 N.J. State
Champions Thank You
for your support!*



Venison Recipes:

Crock Pot Barbequed Venison

INGREDIENTS:

3 lb. boneless venison chunks
1 large onion (chopped)
1 1/4 cup green pepper (chopped)
2 tsp instant beef bouillon
Water
1 can tomato soup (10-11 oz.)
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp dry mustard
1 tsp Thyme
1 tbsp Paprika
2 Tbsp brown sugar
Buns

Remove fat from meat chunks and place the meat in crock pot or slow-cooker. Add onion, green pepper and onion to cover. Add bouillon. Slow cook until meat is well done and shreds easily with a fork. Let water cook down to about 1/2 cup of liquid. Add rest of ingredients and stir to mix. Simmer for about one hour stirring occasionally. Meat should be pretty well shredded by the end of the cooking time. Spoon over toasted bun halves to serve. Serves 6 to 8.



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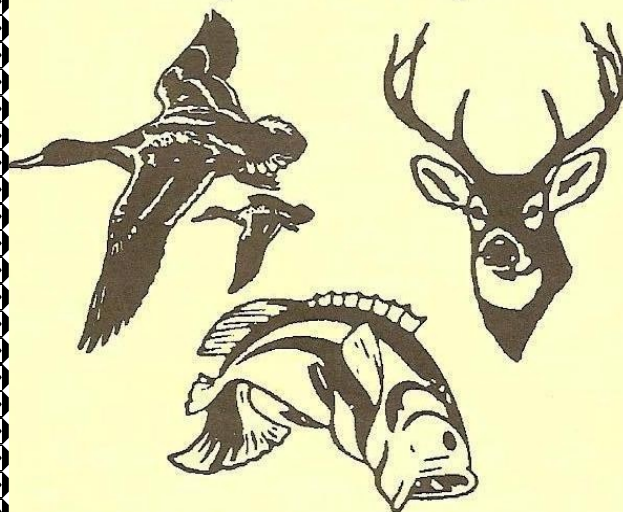
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**OLD SCHOOL ARCHERY ARTICLES**

Gleaned by Ray Tareila

There are a goodly bunch of books, magazines and pamphlets sitting in my archery cabinet. This is how I've learned about traditional archery, the collection of which starts from sometime in the 1920's to the 1970's. From time to time, I jump into the batch and just start reading. I had the idea to categorize my collection by topic and that's something I may do when I can't hunt or shoot any longer. But for now it might be interesting to place an article in each TANJ Newsletter so you can appreciate what was done in the past to analyze and improve our sport.

So, here we go, off into the past, to see what value is printed there. The first article is by Fred Bear from the annual NFAA Official Handbook published in 1943 (were you born yet?).

"Deer Hunting"
By Fred Bear, Detroit, Michigan

"After pondering the problem of just what to write in response to John Yount's request for an article on deer hunting, I feel, because of the limited pages that are allotted, it would benefit archers and archery most if they were devoted almost entirely to exploding some of the erroneous theories that enter into the proper tackle requirements for hunting.

This in turn will, I hope, light the fuse and finally blow up the assumption usually prevalent among archers that the adoption of the bow and arrow as a permanent hunting weapon will immediately brand the bearer a true sportsman of the first water. In reality, it is the kind of bow and arrows that will determine whether they are merely lazing along on the hunting reputation left by Young and Pope or are out to do themselves and this sport of Archery some good.

I realize that I am exposing both flanks along with some front and rear and that the barbs will sink deep and sometimes hurt. I am comforted however with the thought that my convictions are based on fact, not theory and that they are shared by many who successfully hunt big game with the bow and arrow.

While the title of this article would indicate that it was to contain information telling how an archer could find a deer, actually it is only a bait to entice you to read some cold hard facts about hunting equipment.

Many complete volumes have been written on deer hunting and these should be thoroughly digested by one going forth in search of these animals. Among the best are VanDyke's "Still Hunting" and Townsend Whalen's "Wilderness Hunting and Wildcraft." True, these are written on gun hunting but deer will be found in the same places regardless of whether you carry a gun or a bow. Your hunting technique will have to vary with each circumstance to allow for close shots than are necessary with a gun. You will be required also to adopt many of the Indian's stalking methods and to cultivate more patience in doing this. Also, book instructions on how to get intimate with a deer are very difficult and the technique had best be learned in the

field of experience.

Then too, with deer being so plentiful in most sections where proper feed and cover exists, it is not difficult for the most inexperienced hunter to see one. What we will be concerned about in the remainder of this article is the kind of tackle required to kill a deer in the most sportsmanlike manner.

Heretofore, requirements have been directed to the problem of hitting the animal, and killing effectiveness pushed back in second place. Whereas, good sportsmanship, humanness and the future of archery hunting demand that effective penetration and cutting qualities be the first requisite.

Accuracy shall have to be considered as secondary and only what part of it that can be built into the equipment without greatly sacrificing killing power shall be permissible.

Young and Pope made a very respectable record in proving the effectiveness of the bow in taking big game and established a precedent that we have not equaled. But they did not do it with inadequate tackle nor did they go hunting for big game until they had made numerable tests to determine what tackle did the job best.

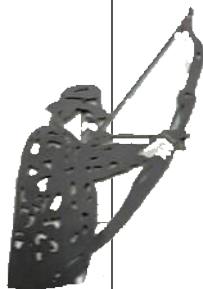
All of their findings are available to those who care to read them in the several books written by Pope. However, we needed to make progress to keep pace with modern times. We had to have faster bows and faster arrows.

Thanks to flight shooting we now have much better bows but unfortunately we have forgotten much about arrows.

Too few archers realize the importance of using a rather heavy arrow for hunting. The growing popularity of field shooting has created a demand for light weight, fast arrows and it is assumed by many archers that the same qualifications are proper for hunting. It is also a more or less common belief that a light arrow traveling fast will have as great a killing power as a heavier shaft going at a slower speed when both are shot from the same bow.

A great many archers have found through experience that the heavier shafts give better penetration although some cling to the light arrow theory. In order to determine the relative striking impact of various weight arrows, a bob was constructed by nailing together four pieces of wood resulting in a box nine inches square and fifteen inches long, open at both ends. This was filled with pieces of corrugated paper cut into squares which were kept in place by narrow slats nailed across the top and bottom of the ends leaving a sufficient amount of corrugated exposed to receive the arrows.

This bob was suspended, pendulum fashion, from four wires running to the ceiling (about 10 feet). A light weight wire "whisker" with a small piece of pencil lead attached was hinged to the back end so that it had a vertical travel only. The pencil end rested on a piece of graph paper just slightly below and back of the bob.





Six arrows were made weighing 300, 400, 500 600, 700 and 800 grains each. All shooting was done from a machine so that the draw and loose would be exactly the same for each shot. Eight bows (3 longbows and 5 recurved, probably static tip bows), varying in weight from 45 to 68 pounds were used.

The six arrows were shot from each bow and the performance of each recorded. The results were then grouped for each arrow weight, added together and divided by eight to give averages which revealed the following:

400 grain arrows hit 20% harder than 300 grain

500	"	45%	"
600	"	66%	"
700	"	82%	"
800	"	100%	"

In order that the reader may more completely understand the startling results revealed by these experiments, the chart will show the findings for each different combination.
(Note: I have left this chart out for brevity since results are compiled below).

A study of this will reveal that the striking force of a 500 grain arrow shot from a 61 pound bow to be less than 1% greater than a 600 grain arrow shot from a 45 pound bow. Also, with a 68 pound bow with 500 grain arrow strikes less than 3% harder than a 52 pound bow with a 600 grain arrow.

The reason for this difference, of course is because the light arrow does not absorb nearly as much of the energy of the bow as does the heavy one.

To the casual observer it may seem that any recommendations as to bow weight should not be made as arrow weight has a greater bearing on killing power. This would be true perhaps, if it were not necessary, from an accuracy standpoint, to establish a definite relationship between bow weight and arrow weight. A good rule to follow in this respect is to select arrows that are not heavier in grains than your bow weight with a cipher (0) added to it, and not lighter than 10% less. As an example, in choosing hunting arrows for a 60# bow you may simply add a cipher to the 60 which allows a maximum arrow weight of 600 grains and a minimum of 540 grains.

Arrows that are heavier than this ratio will most likely have too high a trajectory and for this reason will be difficult to shoot accurately except at close range. If much lighter than the above recommendations they may lack sufficient killing power for large game, and under hunting conditions, be less accurate".

NOTE: This article goes on to address broadhead sharpness and arrow spine but we will stop here for the sake of brevity. I would say, pretty fine analysis by Fred Bear in 1943 !!!

Results with today's improved limb shapes will probably be more efficient. However, the information is essentially valid guidance, even today.

Let's see what we can come up with for the next issue. Comments? straytarrow@comcast.net



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WE'VE FALLEN AND WE CAN'T GET OUT!

This happened to us. It can happen to you. I'm lucky enough to hunt Colorado or New Mexico each year. I love to archery hunt for Elk. On many numerous occasions, I've been turned around and was lost for a little while. I believe I'm never lost, because we are on this earth, our home.



Elk season 2008 found me hunting in Gunnison, Colorado with Don Manchure, Terry & Cody Gaudlip and Stacey Mudd. On the third day of our hunt, Don Manchure suggested that we all cover as much territory as possible to find elk and report back..

Don suggested that he, Terry and Cody go up to an area on top of a place called Black Mesa that they would check out. They would be staying overnight since the hike up was more than two hours followed by two hours down. To save energy it's better camping overnight.

Don suggested Stacey and I cover this area a mile and half up from camp. We were supposed to head back to camp on a southwestern direction. A very easy hunt...A three hour tour, a three hour tour...just like in "Gilligan's Island". I told Stacey I didn't like hunting with the wind to our backs. So we opted to travel in a more easterly direction.

We took our time moving and were cow-calling. We were turning more easterly when we came to a dirt road. The road was on our map but we had gone more to our left and higher up. I made a few cow calls that

were answered by a bull elk. I told Stacey to stay on one side of the road and I went on the upper, east side of the road. I called again and the bull sounded like he was coming closer. The bull bulged a total of four times from start to finish. Then he quit. We never saw him. The wind was in our favor all the time. Don't know why he shut up. He sounded hot. Maybe the road scared him. Who knows!

At noon, Stacey and I found a large blown down tree to sit on and have our lunch and some gray jays arrived. I later found out the locals call them "Robber Jays". I was feeding them out of my hand. Stacey and I got a real kick out of it.

At 2:00 pm, we both decided to head west back to camp. We had come so far down, the mountains to our left and right were very high. We could hear a vehicle over the top. I suggested we go farther to see if we could find another way to get around the steep mountains, but it didn't get easier. Just steeper and steeper. It's my fault. I didn't take a better look at the map.

At 3:00 pm, Stacey suggested that maybe we should follow the stream out. I took out my map, and I knew



that we had walked a long way east and down but did not realize how far. I showed Stacey where I thought we were. The mountains to our east, were these monsters on the map. I said *"We should try to get over the mountain to our west. I think we should go back to where we heard the vehicle and try to go over there. That was about a quarter mile back."*

Stacy said *"No, I think we should make camp. It's getting late."* I replied *"It's too early. We have a lot of day light left. We should try to climb up. When we hit the top we would have about a half mile, to the road, back to camp."* Stacey said *"No, we should follow the stream."* I showed Stacey the map again. *"Look", I said, "If we go all the way down are map runs out."* We didn't have an adjoining map. We didn't know how far it would take us to get out. Maybe it was three miles, maybe 10 miles. We headed down to the stream for a look see. I wanted to go back and over the top. Stacey, still wanted to follow the stream.

At 4:00 pm Stacey said *"Let's spend the night and make camp"*. I didn't want to argue anymore so I gave in and didn't say anything. So we gathered some wood for a fire. I emptied my pack to see what we could use. I had my space blanket, lighter, tea candles, poncho, a extra heavy pair of gloves, an

extra camo shirt and a heavy wool full-face mask.. I was only wearing a tee shirt and a fleece camo pull-over and cotton pants. Stacey, had more clothes than me and was more comfortably dressed.

That night we didn't talk much. We weren't hungry. We had crackers, beef jerky, and a box of raisins. I just kept thinking about the best way to get out. I still say it's to go back up and over. That night we took turns watching the fire and putting each other out when a spark flew from the fire. Stacey slept more than me. I wasn't too worried about staying over as long as the weather held out. That night the temperature dropped into the high 30s to low 40s. A little cold, but manageable as long as we could keep the fire going and it didn't rain. I was also thinking about the boys back at camp. I was hoping that they were bivying so they wouldn't know we were missing. I didn't want to worry them.

A note to all Scentlok users – carbon fleece isn't the best thing next to fire, it's carbon. I was burning holes in my clothes all night long. The crackling of the fire was the only sound at night except for an owl. It was real quiet.

Next morning Stacey was still asleep. The morning came with an elk bugle to the southwest. I woke Stacey and told him I just heard a bugle. We gathered our things and put out the fire. I was hoping Stacey would say *"Let's climb to the top."* Stacey said *"Well, I think we should follow the stream."* I just shook my head in disbelief. Stacey, I said *"You know, it might take a few days to get out of here."* He said *"Maybe, but I think it's the best way we should go. Every book I have read says if you're lost, you should follow a stream down."* I said *"I'm not lost,"* I pointed to the west. *"That's the way out."* I said *"OK, you lead the way you want to go."*

The journey down the stream was some adventure. As we descended down, we had mountains to the east and the west that were virtually straight up. A half a day passed with 20 or so snags to climb over and the stream winding back and forth that we had to jump across. Stacey wanted to go over each snag in the stream. I wanted to go a little higher and get on some game trails that might be a little easier to walk. Stacey was afraid of losing the stream. I told him *"Look around you. There are mountains on both sides. We have to travel down. We're not going to lose the stream."*

After jumping over many snags Stacey wanted to change plans and head back. I told him it was too late to turn back now. I couldn't go through what we'd been through coming down this far. A few hours passed when I was crossing a very large snag and I came across what I thought might be a human bone. I told Stacey *"I hope we are not going to have our bones with this one. I hope we didn't make the mistake of our lives."*

A short while later I fell from one of the snags and I grabbed a branch as I fell backwards and dislocated my shoulder. When I stood up I immediately grabbed my elbow and push my arm against a tree to snap it



back in place. What pain! I saw stars. I didn't know if I could grab or hold onto anything. I lost a lot of strength in my right arm. I only had enough strength to hold my longbow. I did fall again, a total of five times. One time, I pushed a broadhead point through my back quiver. Stacey pushed it back in. If I would've fallen any harder on that point, I wouldn't have written this article. It properly would've severed my spinal cord.

When we came to this big meadow we thought everything would get better only to find out beavers had now taken over the gorge. Now we had to deal with beaver ponds and try to get around them. We must have crossed 15 ponds. Each time it looked good only to look bad 50 yards farther down.

Stacey, now feeling this is not good, wanted to make a single fire. I said *"It's not the right area to start a fire. We needed a controlled, flat area maybe on a beaver wash with a lot of stones and a more cleared area."* Stacey wanted to start a fire in the bottom of

a draw that we were in, a "BIG FIRE". With a lot of dried trees and brush around. I said *"If you started a fire here, we both be dead"* because we would not be able to outrun the fire if it got out of control. I was a little upset at his suggestion. When he brought it up again I told him *"If you want to light a fire in an uncontrolled area give me an hour head start."* At that time the wind was blowing 20 miles per hour and more. Yes, someone would see the fire and yes they would come to investigate and yes they might find two dead bodies also.

I kept saying *"Let's keep moving, we will find a better place. Let's keep moving."*

At 4:45 pm Stacey wanted to make camp. I said *"We should go further down, until we could find a more*

suitable camp site", one that had a little more firewood and cover. At 5:00 pm the weather started getting bad. Stacey said *"Let's make camp."* I started to get in a panic mode. The wind picked up and the sky was starting to get real dark. It was starting to rain. I was running and saying *"Bad place, not much cover or wood, need to make shelter."* I kept pushing to find the right set-up. We found a large pine tree big enough to get under clear branches. We started cutting branches under this pine tree so we could get under it and get rocks in for a fire pit. Stacey was looking for wood which was hard to find because we were on a beaver flat. The rain stopped but it was hard making a fire and we were down to our last four matches. Finally on the fourth try we had a fire going. Everything was now OK.



I tried to sleep for an hour while Stacey tended to the fire. It was dark now and Stacey's turn to sleep. Stacey was sleeping like a baby again in just a few minutes. My mind wondered what tomorrow would bring us. Maybe we would start that fire Stacey wanted. I kept saying to myself *"We must be getting closer to getting out maybe another mile,*

maybe two." Tomorrow we may have to start hunting for beaver or squirrel and maybe shoot or catch some trout. I had run out of water the first day and had to resort to drinking stream water through the second day and the farther we got down stream, the water was getting more cloudy from beaver. I told Stacey *"We have to drink more water or our kidneys would shut down, and our muscles won't work, and we won't be able to walk."*

At 9:00 pm I was starting to doze off when I heard a voice about 100 yards across the beaver pond. I turned, not knowing what I'd heard. I adjusted my eyes and saw two lights. I heard *"Mike, Stacey is that*

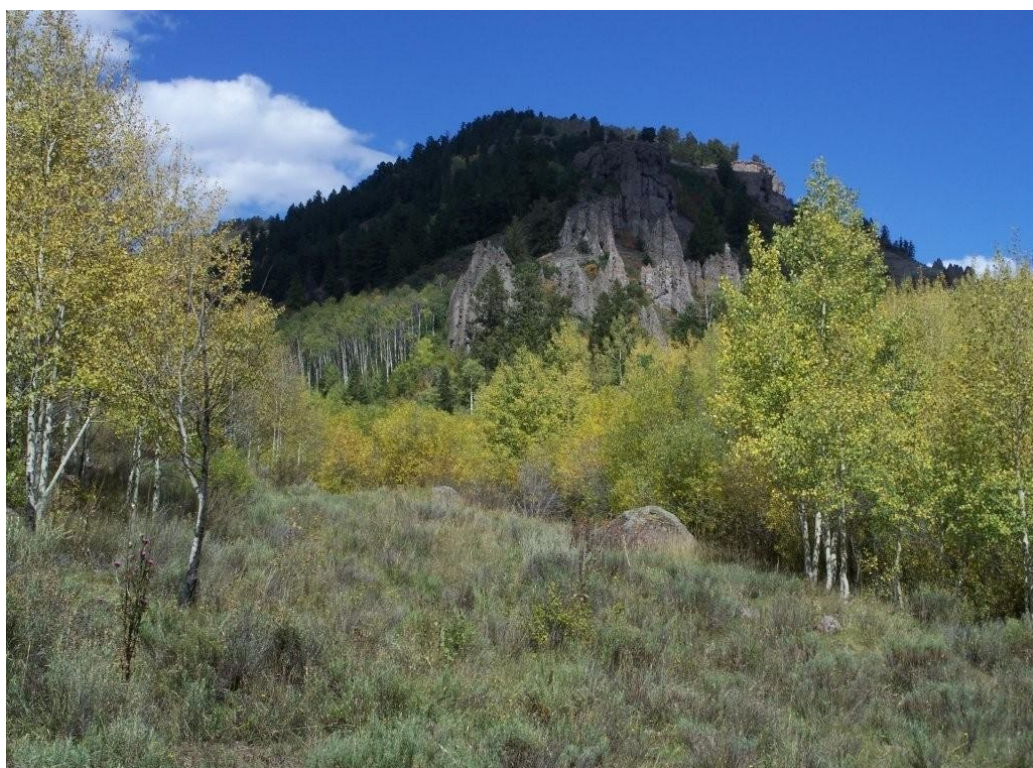


you?” I said “*Stacey wake up, look!*” Stacey jumped up and said “*Thank God! We’re saved.*” I thought the voices I heard sounded like Terry and Don. But no, it was a Colorado search and rescue team. They had 17 people looking for us since that morning. They are a college search and rescue class that are trained in all fields of search and rescue.

They yelled out to us to see if we were alright and wanted to know if we needed any medical help. They yelled “*Do you need any water?*” I said “*No I’ve got my beaver water...and it taste great*” and I told them that we were fine. One rescuer yelled back “*Boy are you going to be in trouble in a few days.*” You see, drinking beaver water you can get “beaver fever” otherwise known as *Giardia*.

Our rescue team radioed in to headquarters that they had a visual on us. Our boys at camp were happy and relieved that we were both OK. Our rescuers packed our things out. One of them helped put out the campfire and another walked us to a trail across the beaver pond back to where their trucks were parked. Stacey and I only had to go less than another 1/4 mile and we would have reached a dirt road. But we still had to go two more miles to the main road back to camp. I figured they would be waiting for us some where down the road. I wasn’t worried about being found. What I was worried about was if the weather turned bad. This could’ve ended well, I don’t want to say more. In the area we were in, radios and GPS were not very useable. If they had not found us that evening they would have had 35 more rescuers, a plane, a helicopter and two dogs out to search for us. Looking back on our map I determined that Stacey and I were in a place called “Poison Gorge.” Boy that hurts! I’m glad Stacey and myself are both back safe from our ordeal.

One of our rescuers said “*It’s usually gun hunters that*



get lost and we have to go find, not bowhunters. Bowhunters are usually better woodsmen.” I replied “*We weren’t lost, just couldn’t get out.*”

I’d like to thank the Western Colorado Search and Rescue Team – a great bunch of young men and women who volunteer their time to help others. My prayers go out to them all. Many searches don’t turn out as well as ours did. If it wasn’t for them, we would’ve spent another night in the mountains. Or maybe we could have spent more nights, who knows!

Your best compass is your head. Keep it straight thinking. The direction you take at first may not be the right one. You will find that right direction as long as you don’t panic. Who knows, one day this might happen to you!

**Till next time go west, you can’t afford not too.
MGM/Mike Luster**

Mike Luster is an expert woodsman who has hunted elk in the western mountains for many years. I’m taking his advice!





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Membership in the United Bowhunters of New Jersey is not required, but we strongly encourage you to join.

THE PURPOSE OF TANJ is to perpetuate the true spirit of archery, to bond people with a mutual love for the traditional philosophy. In pursuit of this ideal, all TANJ functions shall be limited to the use of longbows and recurves ONLY.

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