



# THE UNITED Fall 2023 BOWHUNTER



Official Publication of The United Bowhunters of Missouri





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Fall 2023

## Calendar of Events

### October

1<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>: Missouri fall turkey season  
6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>: Missouri early firearms antlerless deer season  
28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>: Missouri youth firearms deer season

### November

11<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>: Missouri firearms deer season  
22<sup>nd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>: Missouri CWD firearms deer season  
24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>: Missouri youth firearms deer season

### December

22<sup>nd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>: Missouri late firearms antlerless deer season  
23<sup>rd</sup>: Opening of Missouri alternative methods deer season

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Newsletter submissions must be done using a word processing program like Microsoft Word and must be submitted in an electronic format. Typed and handwritten hard copies will no longer be accepted. All effort will be made to use any submission sent but preference will be given to submissions that have photos accompanying them.

Submit all photos and stories to: Darren Haverstick, Editor  
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It is the purpose of The United Bowhunters of Missouri to support and upgrade the sport of bowhunting and foster a spirit of sportsmanship.

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

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

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— On the Cover —

Past UBM President, Dennis Harper, with a beautiful Alaska black bear.

deadlines for submitting copy and pictures to The United Bowhunter  
**Mar. 10th, June 10th, Sept. 10th, Dec. 10th**



**ABOUT 5 YEARS AGO,** I decided I wanted to start going out west in early September to extend my hunting

season, and to hunt something other than white-tailed deer. For multiple years now, I have gone to western Nebraska to hunt mule deer, and now I am going to Colorado for my first elk hunt! I am actually leaving today to drive over 850 miles to a place I have never been. I am very excited to be in the mountains with elk, moose, mountain lions, and black bears.

As I have shared my upcoming elk traditional bowhunting trip with others, I am surprised with the reactions I receive. People tell me to "be careful" (safety is obviously important, but I could argue that I am safer in the mountains than

where I live and drive). People wonder if a traditional bow can kill an elk. People tell me to watch out for bears. It saddens and maddens me that our society has gotten away from respect, adventure, curiosity, and challenge. From my perspective, the United Bowhunters of Missouri encourages each of us to be respectful to God's creation, to go on adventures, to be curious about the natural world, and to be challenged in ways that our domesticated lives do not challenge us.

Thank you for being a part of UBM. Keep encouraging others to get outside and experience new things. Conversations over breakfast at your favorite restaurant, and documentaries about nature are not enough.

We need to get outside and feel the cold breeze, get blisters on our feet, and learn a new tree species. We need to respect the earth and the living beings in it, get lost in a prairie or forest, wonder about the life cycle of a flower, and not always be surrounded by plush living conditions. Get outside and enjoy the autumn experiences this year!

William R. Brown

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**T**HE MEETING WAS HELD at Joel Davis' cabin. Those in attendance were William Brown, Joel Davis, Ryan Plummer, Darren Haverstick, Arthur Kanneman, Kevin Pinckney, and Cole Davis.

**A. Welcome/Motion to begin meeting - 1035 called to order by William Brown**

**B. Reading of last year's minutes - Ryan Plummer**

- Motion to accept last years made by Kevin seconded by Darren - all members accepted

**C. After a long period of accepting names for open board positions, Cole Davis, Arthur Davis, and William Brown were the only members interested. Common sense, plus the opportunity to save money and time, William Brown makes a motion that these 3 individuals are our next board members for a 3-year term lasting through 2026.**

- Motion to approve by William Brown, seconded by Darren - all members approved.

**D. If item C is passed, here are our UBM Board of Directors:**

- President: William R. Brown (Camdenton) - 2026
- Vice-President: Joel Davis (Grain Valley) - 2024
- Secretary: Ryan Plummer (Higginsville) - 2024
- Treasurer: Darren Haverstick (Fair Grove) - 2025
- Director: Kevin Pinckney (Pittsburgh) - 2025
- Director: Wes McCain (Neosho) - 2024
- Director: Bob Burns (Lone Jack) - 2025
- Director: Arthur Kanneman (Warrensburg) - 2026
- Director: Cole Davis (Grain Valley) - 2026

Do we approve these officers for the next year: William/Joel/Ryan/Darren? Motion to approve by Kevin and seconded by Arthur - all members approved.

**E. Financial Report - Darren Haverstick**

- Total: \$20,052.11 (US Bank: \$19795.57, \$256.54)
- PayPal: \$216.04
  - Down about \$3,000 - related to bringing less in from banquet
  - Consider how we evaluate rooms to comp - speakers should have rooms comp'd
  - Keynote speaker: full expenses paid. Other speakers TBD.
  - Comp Mike Clark - auctioneer

- Comp Black Widow Bows (bow donation)
- Motion to accept financial report by Joel, Second by Kevin, all members approved.

**F. Insurance: Darren - we pay for annual coverage (covers our 2 events plus trailer ~\$2500) Covers through the end of the Banquet then we will start a new year.**

**G. The United Bowhunter Publication (newsletter)**

- Submission dates include March 10, June 10, Sept 10, Dec 10
- Question: William Brown - the Rendezvous is the end of June, could be push the June 10th into July to capture updates from the Rendezvous?
  - Darren: doesn't see the benefit for moving the deadline
  - More of a focus on Digital media for those pictures (instagram, FB, etc).
  - Joel: would be beneficial to move to July to reach outsiders.
  - Dedicated follow up post after Rendezvous on social media - share on other groups.
  - YouTube video was posted via Instagram.
  - Cost of publication ~ \$1500.
- Advertisement - we don't actively look for advertisement to offset cost - doesn't make much money - but business memberships cost extra (\$50 per year) which gives them a spot in the publication.
- Awareness seems to be an issue - there is a lot of good information being posted to social media. Also being posted throughout various forums
- Need to encourage board members as well as general members to be more active on local and national forums.
- Trad Gang, Leatherwall or Missouri Whitetails are good examples.
- Darren to write article up regarding forums.

**H. Cost of Membership:**

- Motion to increase cost of membership to \$30 annually by Joel Davis, Second by Cole Davis - all members approved
- Will work out the math for 3 year and lifetime members
  - \$30/year
  - \$75/ 3 year
- Begin Jan. 1st, 2024

## **I. Festival at Oasis Hotel and Convention Center in Springfield MO February 8-11, 2024**

- Friday Night
  - Technology Review - Darren and Cole (have large printed boards with social media presence)
- Saturday Seminars and Workshops (more time for presenters and time between) -
  - Darren has a call into Missouri Trappers association
  - Ryan to contact Missouri Blood Trackers association
  - MDC - topic? - Joel to reach out. Whitetail vs MDC offerings.
  - Darren to contact Bryce Olsen RE: Speakers
  - Joel has contacts related to photography and videography
  - Potential String making seminar
  - Joel to reach out: The thinking Woodsman
  - How can we update the cadence to allow for better flow and more time for speakers.
- Saturday evening speaker: Brian Burkhardt (Michigan)
- Saturday Banquet: Menu, dietary restrictions, etc
- Vendors: need new vendors!!! (Vendors donate something or pay \$100)
  - MDC to set up booth
  - Try to increase vendors
- Marketing (Instagram)
  - Reserve the Instagram marketing strategy for the UBM Festival - Organize more emails being sent out through the year requesting content - photos, etc. (Cole)
  - Discuss ways to increase followers and engagement on Instagram
  - Need to start putting marketing together for Festival and Rendezvous
- Award Nominations:
  - Bowhunter of the year: Picked by last 3 winners
  - Member of the Year: (Beau, Brenda, Larry, Tom) - Brenda wins this year.
  - Agent of the Year: Bob Burns to take care
  - Award winner gifts: All get a plaque
  - Photo and Arrow contest winner: receive \$50 vendor gift card.
  - Keynote Speaker gift: Knife?
  - Silent Auction: Barb Hilgedick, Joel Davis
  - Live Auction: Barb Hilgedick, Joel Davis, Mike Clark
  - Photo/Arrow Contest: Ryan Plummer
  - Registration: Brenda Hudson, Christine Banderman

- Board Member Roles - board members need to be present to assist with set up and tear down. Let us know when your going to be there.
- Relocation team to research new location/venue
- Speaker contact/coordination will be Darren.

## **J. Rendezvous: Marshall Mo, June 28 - 30, 2024 - Does this work? Yes.**

- Friday: Fish Fry - Bill Brown to provide
- Saturday:
  - AM: Bottle Launcher
  - 3:00pm: Three Person Skirmish
  - 4:30pm: Can drawing/Club Meeting
  - 5:00pm: Catered Meal (70 people X \$10) by Robin Baker, plus our potluck items (\$20/person for the weekend).

## **K. Podcast (Ethan Grotheer & Ryan Plummer)**

- 13 episodes so far. Haven't been as consistent as we had hoped. Our plan is to be able to bulk record episodes. Need guests.
- Jeremy from fit to hunt.
- Reach out surrounding states - for bowhunting groups.

## **L. Instagram Marketing Post Update & Linking Instagram to UBM Facebook Page**

- Share the latest updates on Instagram Marketing Efforts - need video reels.
- Discuss the importance of linking Instagram page to the UBM Facebook Page - this is done.
- Encourage Board members to promote the UBM on their Personal pages as well as other forums.

## **M. UBM Managed Hunt: Kevin Pinckney - Will try and put something together for next year.**

## **N. Trailer Update: Kevin Pinckney - cut boards down so the will fit in the trailer. Need to update license plate lights (hit with lawnmower).**

## **O. Ideas for UBM: Cole Davis**

- Give opportunity to present his ideas for the UBM
  - Rabbit hunt in Feb
  - Bow fishing - right a story, etc.
  - Deer hunt at Joels.
  - Get together more
  - Submit range results to Compton
- Discuss the feasibility and potential benefits of these ideas



## P. Exploring New MO Shoots to Promote the UBM - Joel Davis

- Discuss the possibility of exploring new shooting ranges and events in Missouri
- Explore ways to promote the UBM through these new opportunities
- MoJam - set up table as vendor.

## Q. Additional UBM Spring or Fall Gathering - Joel Davis

- Propose the idea of organizing an additional UBM gathering during favorable weather conditions

- Discuss the benefits and logistics of such an event
- Bow fishing event - need someone to coordinate.
- Summer time easier to get people to.

## R. Any other questions or comments or ideas?

S. Adjourn - Motion to adjourn by Ryan Plummer @1:00pm Second by Cole.

Thank you! You are appreciated!■

## ➤➤➤ The Beginning 1987

Brenda Hudson➤

**I WAS RECENTLY ASKED TO DO A PODCAST FOR UNITED BOWHUNTERS OF MISSOURI,** which got the wheels turning on the history of UBM. I believe that most of the membership is unaware of how UBM actually began as a state organization, so allow me to enlighten you.

Larry and I moved to Harrisonville, Missouri in 1976 and joined a local archery club called Grand River Archers. Their archery range was in the city park and had, oh, in the ball park of 30 members, it has been a couple years ago. Larry started out with a recurve bow and when we married set me up with one also, but times changed and when we moved to Harrisonville we decided to try out the compound bows. They were fun and we shot them at the local club but were harassed by the local club members who were shooting recurves and longbows. Now that harassment was in good nature and many friends were made over the next years. Larry and I only shot the compounds for maybe a year and progressed back to the recurves.

So now we will move onto 1986, when we became disenchanted with the state organization, Missouri Bow Hunters, who seemed to be a target-oriented organization with no real concerns over the ever-

changing Missouri Department of Conservation regulations running wild, specifically those pertaining to hunting. Our main fight at the time was against crossbows and the lighted sight pin. MDC was at odds with these two archery items also and were willing to listen to outside opinions. Several of the Grand River Archery members got into heavy discussions on these regulations being considered and we voiced our concerns to our state organization, MBH, with no results. So we decided that Missouri could use an organization that actually wanted to be involved with conservation and hunting regulations. We would meet at Hardee's in Harrisonville for breakfast and start working out details on what we could do and how to go about actually starting a new organization. Our meeting consisted of Wayne Allen, Marv Cochran, Larry and Brenda Hudson, Dave and Sherry Alkire, Dale Dortch, Robert Dyer, Bill Westpfahl and Gene Eakins. We were all very passionate about our hunting and where it might be headed and all our views were spot on with where we wanted to go with a new organization.

Meetings started at the Hudson household every week, sometimes a couple times a week and after

we worked through all the legalities, money was needed to start the process. Each of us contributed \$100 giving us \$1000 to get the paperwork started. Our first newsletter was printed in September of 1987 and was six pages long (or 3 flat sheets printed on both sides). We picked up the newsletter from the printer in flat sheets that had to be folded and stacked using stick tabs to close newsletter shut (no staples at this time). We had 150 members to mail out to, so again at the Hudson home we gathered and started folding and labeling (which was handwritten, no computers at time) the newsletters. At that time the zip codes had to be organized by numbers and stacked accordingly then delivered to the post office for delivery through bulk mail. The second issue was twice as big and we began the stapling procedure using a high dollar hand stapler. Now most of that work was done by myself, as I wasn't working out of the home, but held the title of housewife/hog farmer/cattle farmer. It seemed no emergency on the farm would ever occur during Larry's off time from work, go figure. For several years this was the norm, board members would help when possible to put the pages together as the newsletter would

grow in size; it was quite a manual process.

Our first Rendezvous was held at the Dave and Sherry Alkire farm in rural Adrian, Missouri the summer of 1987. Our first banquet was in April of 1988 in Blue Springs, Missouri with G. Fred Asbell as our featured speaker. Our second (1989) Banquet was in Columbia With Barry Wensel as our featured speaker and our Conservation program partnered with Professional Bowhunters Society to donate a Suzuki Quad Runner ATV for a MDC Deer Research Project. I might also add the fact that Black Widow supported us at every banquet with a bow for the raffle.

Another bowyer who supported us until his untimely death was Jerry Pierce from Illinois. Other bowyers have supported us throughout the years and all are most appreciated.

In 1990 the UBM had several bow hunter education instructors in the field teaching courses for those who wanted to do out-of-state archery hunting and had to have bowhunter education at the time. Missouri didn't require this at the time but several other states did. UBM actually certified MDC personnel to become bow ed instructors. In later years, MDC took over the teaching of bowhunter education, including it with firearm safety and renaming it hunter education. Our

second Rendezvous took place at Thibaut Point Park at Truman Lake. Over the years we had speakers such as G. Fred Asbell and M.R. James. It was a huge success and several more were held there with bow fishing included. As the years fell away, the only continued supporters from the UBM's original board are Larry, Brenda, and Bill Westpfahl. Gene Eakins was a full supporter until his untimely death. I believe Larry, myself and Bill will be involved until our deaths as well. I hope this wasn't too boring and a bit insightful. Future newsletters will be printing old stories from past newsletters I hope you will enjoy them. ■

## ➤➤➤ **Better Make the First One Good (Mid-season practice tips to stay sharp)** Ethan Page ➤

**I**F YOU ARE READING THIS, then fall is officially upon us, and deer season is in full swing here in Missouri. It's truly bittersweet for any bowhunter when autumn arrives. I don't think it's hyperbole to say that it is comparable to a bunch of children waiting for Christmas! Unfortunately, an issue that I see with some folks is after a long year of practicing and honing their skills, practice gets shelved when season arrives. In this piece I want to share a couple of my favorite methods for practicing throughout the season to stay sharp for the moment of truth.

First, let me start by saying that I believe off-season practice and mid-season practice to be two different creatures. From the never ending cold of winter through the boiling days of summer, I am primarily focusing on two goals, form and consistency. Now I may still shoot occasionally from a tree stand or from the knees, but the focus is still the same and types of targets vary. As mid-to-late summer arrives, the transition to serious hunting practice does also and there is likely to be very little deviation until my season has ended. What this does for me is help maintain a fundamental baseline of accuracy and consistency but with an even higher emphasis on confidence. It has served me well and I will share what that looks like.

*Continued on next page*





## FOCUS ON THE FIRST ARROW

If one thing is true in bowhunting, you must make the first shot count. Yes, you may get a follow-up shot. But from my experience it's not something to bet your paycheck on. Not only are you striving for a quick and ethical harvest of the animal, if you miss, that critter is not likely to stick around, and your opportunity is gone. Knowing this, I place a very high importance on my cold shot each day, usually in the morning. I find it best to shoot at something that resembles your quarry and cardboard cutouts are an old favorite. But spots are honestly fine as you are still "picking a spot." I also like to shoot from a range that pushes my comfort zone a little. For instance, if most of your hunting shots happen at 10-12 yards then shoot from 15 or more. Once you have spent enough time at that farther range your hunting shots will feel like you can't miss. Practicing like this will really keep your confidence high throughout the season and it can be done at home or in camp. If that first shot is a bad one, stop and think about what happened. Make your correction and shoot again. Also, don't make your cold shot of the day on a live animal. If you must, put a head lamp on to shoot before you leave the house in the morning, or shoot at a leaf or stick from the stand.

## SHOOT FEWER ARROWS

Now that we've gone over the importance of the cold shot, the next focus for me is not over shooting. This is for similar reasons as the prior topic, but more importantly you are trying to be consistent and re-enforce good habits and practice from the

off season... not shoot the best five arrow group of your life. Long practice sessions, in my opinion, have no place during the hunting season if hunting is your focus. This is for a couple reasons. One; it gives the false sense of security that if you make a bad shot you can just shoot another, and another, and another. This takes the critical focus away from making that first arrow count. Two; it will open the door to bad habits that come from over shooting and breakdown of form and concentration. Not a great confidence booster when you are going to hit the stand in the morning. The focus at this time of year isn't about groups but shooting good arrows. For me, it is never more than 5 or 6 shots. Shoot one arrow, walk down to retrieve it, come back, and shoot again. I find this style of practice to keep me more present to what I am doing and taking accountability for each arrow. If a bad habit does start to raise its ugly head, it is much easier to squash it before it takes over your shooting, as you are more in tune shooting at a slower pace.

In conclusion, practicing the



way you hunt can be taken very literal by shooting from blinds, tree stands and so on. But at the end of the day, I find the exact circumstance plays second fiddle to being confident and focusing on the opportunity that's in front of you. Is some form of practice better than not practicing at all during season? Absolutely. Traditional bowhunting is about confidence, in our equipment and especially in ourselves. If you are willing to take these couple practice tips into consideration, I truly believe you will see improvement. My hope for all is that next time you hit the woods, making the shot will be far from your mind, and a good backstrap recipe will be the new priority. ■





# DO YOU LIKE PODCASTS? DO YOU LIKE BOWHUNTING? (OBVIOUSLY, YOU'RE READING THIS NEWSLETTER!)



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Ethan Grotheer (stickbow17@yahoo.com)



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*Editor's Note: In the last newsletter, there was a story about Steve North's spring turkey hunt. His granddaughter, Avery, was very impressed to see her "Grump" in a magazine and she asked Steve if she could put a story in it too. Avery, who was seven at the time, killed her first turkey last spring and she wanted to share her story with you. Steve told her that she could tell the story to him, and he would write it down. Then he would send it to me, and they would wait to see what happened. Of course, I am going to print it! If this publication can inspire a 7-year-old to contribute then all I can say is, "Keep 'em coming, Avery!" Yes, I know that she did the deed with a firearm but I'm certainly not going to discourage this youngster's writing career. If you have a problem with the content, please direct your ire towards me, not her. Otherwise, enjoy what Avery has to say.*

**M**Y DAD ASKED ME LAST CHRISTMAS IF I WAS READY to try and turkey hunt next spring. I said, "Yes!" He told me he would get me a special little shotgun (410) and I would have to practice a lot. I said, "Okay." Come February, he took me out behind the house. He and my grump (my Grandpa Steve) got me set up to shoot. I was pretty scared to pull the trigger, so my dad shot it to show me how things worked. Now it was my turn. I finally pulled the trigger. Wow! Kinda scary, but then after a few

more times, I was fine. We did this every weekend. Always at a cardboard target.

Then my dad made me a turkey target out of wood and he would have me move the gun from one place to another and say, "Put the sight on his neck." When I was ready, he would cock the gun and I would shoot. I was having fun. Grump would always be there videoing us.

The week before my time to hunt, Dad set up a blind and we all got in there. Dad had a turkey target set

up. We practiced on what I should do. After few shots, they both said, "You're ready!"

The first morning of when I was supposed to go hunting, it was really raining. So, we all waited. Then later in the day, we headed out for my hunt. I was pretty excited. We crossed a fence and walked pretty far through a big field. My dad was in the lead with me and Grump behind. My dad was using his binoculars to look ahead. He told us to stop. He saw one and he said, "We're going to





have to crawl.” We all crawled a long way through weeds. We got really close to a blind that they had put up for me. Grump and I got in. My dad crawled out and put up a decoy. Then he crawled back and got in the blind with us. I was in the middle. My dad helped me get my gun ready and we put our gloves and face masks on.

Dad could see turkeys and he called for a bit, but they would not come to me. We were there a long time when Grump saw a big turkey. My dad called. He was getting close then walked away. We sat there three hours and I was getting tired.

I had my eyes shut when my dad said, “Avery, get ready. Here comes one.” He said, “He’s not a big one (Jake). It’s your decision. Do you want him?” I whispered, “Yes.”

I found my sight was already on his head. Dad asked, “Are you ready?” I said, “Yes.” Dad cocked my gun. He was videoing the turkey and my grump was videoing me. I shot and he fell right down. I was shocked and excited! Then I got kind of emotional. My dad said, “You smoked him!” My grump asked me, “Are those happy tears?” I said, “Yes. I love it.”

We all went out to see my turkey. He was flopping some and dad said, “Put your foot on his neck.” I said, “No way!” but I finally did. We were all so excited. My grump said he was with his dad, my dad, and my grannie when they all got their first turkey, and now me. He said it doesn’t get any better.

After I shot my turkey, I FaceTimed my mom and family. They were all so excited and proud of me. I was so happy. I can’t wait till next year. Now maybe a deer for me soon. I want to thank my dad and my grump for taking me out. ■

## ➤➤➤ **UBM Javelina Hunting Grounds**

David Miller ➤

**F**OR A HUNT I WAS ORIGINALLY NOT 100% INTO, the annual javelina hunt has become a favorite of mine. Now that I live in New Mexico, the chance of hunting anything larger than a quail is limited by the luck of the draw. So far, I have put in for something for three years and have drawn nothing. So the javelina hunt is my only chance to go after anything other than my bag target. Believe it or not, you have to get drawn for javelina in New Mexico! But just across the border in Texas, you just buy a 5-day non-resident tag and pay a trespassing fee.

In 2016 and 2017, Ken Webb and I hunted on the 26,000-acre Love Ranch near Sierra Blanca, TX where the owner baited javelina to several stations. This is the ranch where I shot my largest javelina, weighing in at 63 pounds. A previous article by Ken said the scale didn’t go past 50 pounds but he is getting older and his memory is slipping a bit. In 2017, the ranch owner informed us that he was selling the place, so we

had to look for somewhere new. On the way home from Sierra Blanca, Ken and I decided to swing down south to a spot in the road called Valentine, TX. Its claim to fame is the Marfa Prada Store. They say it’s art and it does attract several folks to stop and have their picture taken in front of it.

The reason for our detour was a possible ranch to hunt javelina on again. As a child, I was always told of relatives that owned a ranch just outside of Valentine with an old fort on it. This was the ranch I was finally going to see after hearing stories about it for 50+ years.

Just past the Marfa Prada store, we turned on a dirt road heading west. Off in the distance we could see the

mesa the ranch set up against. Around us, though, was dry flat grassy land. My first thought was that this would not be a great place to spend time, but as we drove the nine miles from the pavement to the C.E. Miller ranch, the scenery began to change. However, we were only seeing the tip of the iceberg.

I finally met my



third cousin, Bill, who gave us a short tour around the ranch HQ but not much else. After a short visit, we got back to our long drive home, not sure if this new place would be a replacement for the Love ranch.

In 2018, Ken and I started missing the javelina hunt, so I contacted my cousin again and we set a date to hunt in 2019.

After arriving and meeting Bill, he took us to the old fort that we would make our home for the next week. Along with Ken were several UBM members that I had either hunted with on the Love Ranch or mentioned that they wanted to go.

The fort was built in 1918 by German POW's housed in Marfa, TX during WWI. It was called Fort Holland and used to supply troops along the Texas-Mexico border. Supplies were trucked from Marfa, TX to Ft Holland then loaded on mules and packed to the border about 10 miles away. The three main barrack buildings, and several of the officers' quarters, still stand, but only one building is suitable to stay in. The Millers bought the ranch in 1925 after the US government abandoned the

fort. This would be our home. There was no running water or electricity, and a Johnny-on-the-Spot was our latrine.

The ranch is 33,000 acres running about 10 miles long and 5 miles wide. The mesa ridge runs the full length north/south and cuts the ranch almost in half. Along the mesa's edge are several large, beautiful canyons and ravines all hiding groups of javelinas. The ground is very difficult to walk on as it is littered with bowling ball size rocks.

Even with 33,000 acres, the ranch is limited in hunting space. Most



years Bill does not want us going on top of the mesa due to hunters going after aoudad on his ranch.

All the javelina that we have found seem to follow what Bill told us from Day One. These little guys lay up in the ravines and canyons during the day and filter down into the flats at night to eat. As morning comes, they start filtering from the flats back into the canyons and ravines. Over the years that we have hunted the C.E. Miller ranch, several javelina have been harvested weighing over 50 pounds.

With the ranch being 10 miles from the Rio Grande River, it is common for us to stumble on discarded





clothing, water bottles, and general trash from the many illegals that cross the ranch. Border Patrol agents frequent the ranch and have sensors and cameras throughout. One year some of our hunters actually had illegals pass them by, which is a little unnerving since some of these illegals are carrying more than water. During the 2021 hunt, I was hunting about the center of the ranch when I noticed black smoke rising from the north end. I contacted Bill who informed me an illegal who was tired, hungry, and wanted to get caught, set Bill's childhood home on fire. The house was abandoned but still had memories for Bill. The house was burned to the ground.

Illegals aside, the fort is rather limited in size as well. We have had as few as seven hunters and as many as nine. With nine hunters, the fort starts to get a little crowded, as well as the hunting space.

Javelina here are not baited in, it is a true spot and stalk hunt, except for one year. Cattle in Texas love cotton seed and I assume it is the cotton seed oil they are after, but regardless, one year Bill had cotton seed at different spots all over the ranch. Well, javelina love cotton seed too so that year most javelina were found around cotton seed barrels.

With a recent drought that west Texas has been experiencing, Bill had to get rid of all his cattle a couple of years ago. Last year they had a decent amount of moisture which caused the plant life to explode. With no cattle to graze, the 2023 hunt was a difficult hunt. Tall grass kept many javelina hidden from our view and the prickly pear and yucca plants along the mesa's edge gave them a food source without going into the flats.

I understand several members of the UBM would like to attend one of these hunts but the ranch and living quarters are limited to nine hunters. For anyone, or group, that would like to hunt the C.E. Miller Ranch, the ranch has a web site (<https://www.cemillerranch.com>) with contact information. Bill's phone number, as well as his brothers, are listed. He offers hunts for javelina, mule deer, aoudad, and quail, as well as a long-range



you stay at the fort you must bring everything you will need from cots, bedding, water, food, etc. The closest town to resupply is Van Horn about 40 miles north. It is highly advised you fill your tank with gas in Van Horn before heading to the ranch.

There are two buildings at the ranch HQ that Bill rents. Each building will sleep more than one hunter and has electricity, running water, a real bathroom, and a bed.

The best time to hunt this part of west Texas is late February or early March. Each year the weather can be a bit tricky. This past hunt, the days were rather warm and the rattlesnakes were out. But the last day it snowed, making traveling the ranch roads muddy and the pavement snow packed.

If you go on this hunt, bring lots and lots of arrows. If you miss a javelina, your arrow will be trashed or lost. Javelina are also very tough creatures, and many have been lost along with the arrow in it. ■





**WHAT A BUSY YEAR WE ARE HAVING!**  
 I am in a hurry just trying to keep up. Time is flying and I can't get out of low gear. Maybe it's time to stop making plans as if I were twenty-five.

Wow! Another great Rendezvous! The executive committee makes things look so natural when you know they work their tails off to ensure everything is in place for a full weekend of archery and togetherness. Thank you to all those that make this happen.

It's great that the camping area and range is available on Thursday. I noticed I am not the only "Senior" taking advantage of being able to arrive early, set up, relax, and visit. Time to catch up on stories and happenings. The Gang arrived Thursday through Friday introducing their custom made 2023 T-Shirts. The Rendezvous is a special event that they look forward to and often remember, or relive, throughout the year.

The fish fry on Friday night was a great addition. Bill Brown's fish, and his special breeding, were a hit with our crew. He shared his recipe with Paul who carefully took notes. We are sure to try making it the same way. With a full table of dishes to share, I think the Friday night dinner was comparable to the normal Saturday night potluck dinner. Oh, and did you notice that Bill not only knows how to fish and fry fish, but he also dominated the 3-Person Skirmish?



Robin's smoked meat and green beans accompanied by the unbelievable amount of food brought by the members for the Saturday night potluck dinner was outstanding. Trying a bit of everything would take several plates and you might hurt yourself. I was so stuffed, I had to sit for a while and there still wasn't room for dessert.



I didn't have to cook all weekend, other than a pot of coffee. Marshall Bowhunters' breakfast and lunch menu took care of things. A big "Thank You" for their work, before, during, and after making the weekend a success.

The static range, 3D range, bottle launcher, and 3-Person Skirmish provides all the shooting most can handle. My shooting set a new record this year. I didn't hit a bottle at Harry's launcher, nor a clay bird in the skirmish. I didn't hit every target on the range but found all my arrows and that is a success. Looking forward to receiving my "annual" Most



Improved Archer of the Year award.

The Gang was invited to the Laborer's Union (MKLDC) 3D archery shoot. What a wonderful training facility they have! We started early to beat the heat. Thirty-Two Rinehart Targets. Some of the targets had tape recorders playing elk bugling, turkeys gobbling and monsters groaning. It was challenging, but realistic, and most of all, fun. Their range is up and down hills, approximately a mile long. The shoot was followed with an exceptional lunch.

I met Chris Rackley at a 3D shoot hosted by a couple of local construction businesses out of New Melle, MO. Our arrival time matched the rain's arrival. We stood under canopies for most of the morning before joining the host in their pole barn for brats and drinks. The barn has vintage signs, tools, antiques, photos, refrigerator, heat, air conditioning and a large screen



Harry's Bottle Launcher



The Gang at the Laborers Shoot

TV. It was the most comfortable rainout I've been to!

For the 5th year, we didn't draw the MDC managed deer hunt in Whetstone. I know the odds are slim (6% - 7%), but we continually hope for preference points to pay off. Ok, I'll quit moaning.

I recently got my archery and landowner tags and settled on my hunting arrows for this season. Tapered cedar shafts with four parabolic natural/authentic turkey feathers dyed green and original Bear Broadheads. I'm getting acquainted with a new

longbow. The tree stands are in place based on lessons learned from last year. When setting a stand in timbered hills, it's difficult to have a consistent wind. Like most, we position several stands to provide choices for different wind directions.

That normal vision of success continues to dance in my head while knowing I do more watching than shooting. This might be the year to become more aggressive. The family wants deer sausage and Darren wants to see blood on his arm guard. Either way, I will be out there!

Good luck to everyone this season. Have fun, pick a spot and be safe. ■



Rendezvous Story Telling Time



## 2023 UBM Rendezvous



*Two teams battling it out!*



*This year's winning team of the 3-Person Skirmish.*



*Dan bearing down on a long distance target.*



*Photographic evidence that Darren can sometimes hit something.*



*Getting ready for the competition.*





*Harry's bottle launching contraption.*



*Everybody wants to hit a bottle!*



*Picture perfect weather for the weekend.*



*You can't beat the price for all the fun you'll have!*



*The Friday night fish fry was a big hit.*

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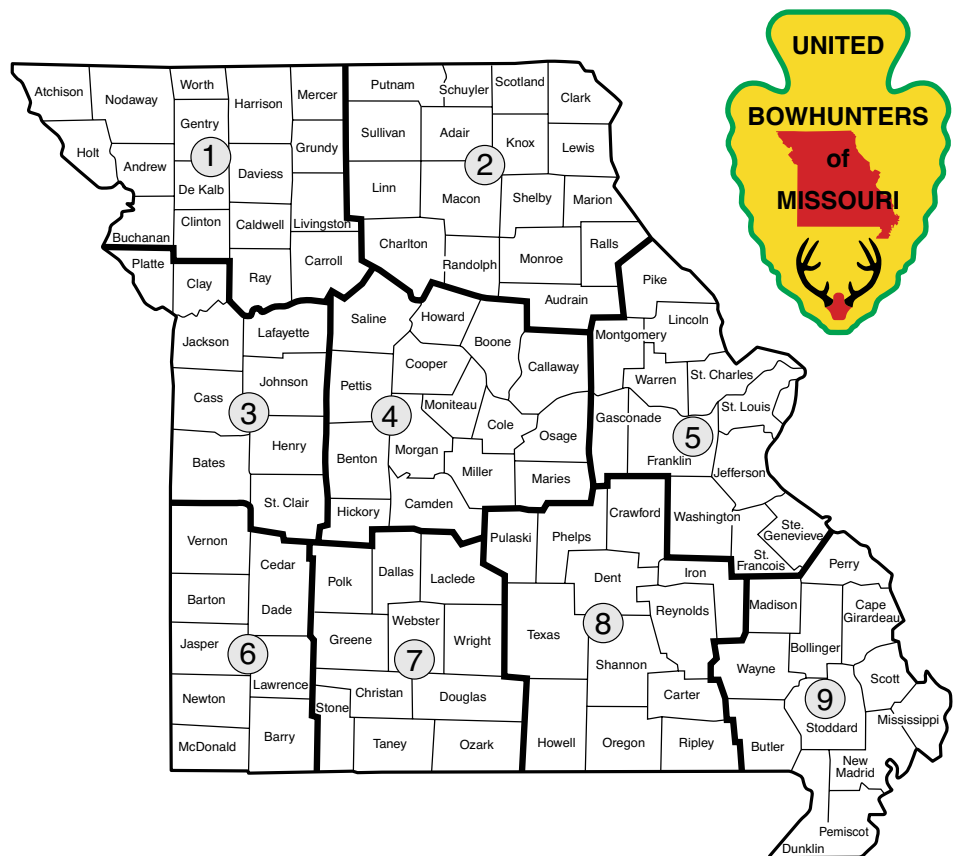
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