



# THE UNITED Summer 2024 BOWHUNTER



Official Publication of The United Bowhunters of Missouri





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Summer 2024

## Calendar of Events

### July

18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>: MOJam selfbow jamboree, Marshall Bowhunters Club, Marshall MO

### August

1<sup>st</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>: Hot and sticky most everywhere, seedticks out in full force.

### September

15<sup>th</sup>: Missouri archery season opens - YAY!

15<sup>th</sup>: Missouri gigging season opens too.

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or you can email: [Dchaverstick@gmail.com](mailto:Dchaverstick@gmail.com) Cell phone: (417) 693-5304

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It is the purpose of The United Bowhunters of Missouri to support and upgrade the sport of bowhunting and foster a spirit of sportsmanship.

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

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

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

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— On the Cover —

Harry Mauchenheimer with  
his famous bottle launcher.

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



## THE UBM RENDEZVOUS WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

I am grateful to the Marshall Bowhunters for hosting our annual event. I am also grateful for the UBM board of directors who made this event happen. We have a great board of

directors!

The best part of the Rendezvous was getting to see all of you. The food was great, the stories were wild, and the bows were impressive. Thank you for being a part of the Rendezvous and UBM!

As I write this report, I am a grateful man. I am grateful for the opportunity to hunt. I am grateful for the opportunity to get with each of you and hear your stories from your "back-forty" to the wilds of Alaska. The hunting process is truly amazing to be a part of. I am a few weeks removed from my first bear hunt. It was an amazing trip to Ontario. I was thrilled to get a bear on the ground, but there were many other highlights. I had close encounters with multiple bears including a huge bear and a sow with cubs. I enjoyed being in a place with moose, wolves, lynx, mountain lions, and bears existed. I was honored and thrilled

to be with other hunters who loved the experience, cheered each other on, and ALL got bears. What a trip! What great people we have as part of the United Bowhunters of Missouri!!!

Have a great start to the hunting season this Fall and see you in February for the Festival! ■

William R. Brown


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**G**ROWING UP IN THE MIDWEST, NOVEMBER IS ALWAYS A SPECIAL TIME OF YEAR.

The landscaping changes daily from its spring and summer green to the mixes of red, yellow, and oranges making even the most unimpressed people stop and take in its beauty. The ducks are starting their long journey south, squirrels are forging for every nut they can find, and the once nocturnal deer are letting down the safety of the night for a chance to find that first chance to breed. It's by far my favorite time of year and has been since I was a little kid. I was always ate up with the outdoors and growing up in a small town without a lot of money the outdoors was always something that didn't cost much and was always full of adventure. I remember the night before my first deer season

like it was yesterday. I was lying on an old army cot in my great-grandparent's dining room uable to fall asleep just staring into the darkness wondering, "What would the morning bring?" It was just me and that old grandfather clock that night, ticking away time as it went tick tock tick tock. I was forever getting closer to becoming a deer hunter with every second chiming away. I think about that night a lot these days and as I've grown up and been on several hunts I'm still excited for opening day, but I have managed to find ways to fall asleep a little earlier these days. It's always been a huge part of my life and I couldn't imagine what my life would have been like without friends and family donating their tme to me and sharing this lifestyle. I tell my wife every year that deer season almost has a smell for me. Certain smells always bring me back to a kid riding in dad's old truck heading to the hunting property. I would say it is a mix of the way an 80's model Chevy heater smelled, Hoppes gun oil on a Winchester 94, and the hint of wintergreen from his can of a Skoal will always make me think of those days.

Like always, my deer season had started months before I could actually hunt. I usually start scouting my new areas online in the winter to beat the side effects of cabin fever which usually results in a hundred new



pins on my Onx app. One of the problems I was going to have to solve this summer was purchasing a bigger boat so I could access more areas of the lake I hunt. The little 14-foot Jon boat with a 9.9 Evinrude is fine for hunting the rivers and small parts of the lake, but was deemed unsafe by my wife to have out on the big water. (Apparently, the life insurance wasn't up to the amount she was ready to cash in yet.) After looking all spring, I came upon a deal of a lifetime--or so I thought at the time. A 2004 16-foot boat, with a 50 hp Johnson, and very low hours was a big change and improvement on the 8 mph of the 9.9 Evinrude but it wouldn't come without some problems. An elderly couple owned the boat, and it was hardly used, but as any good mechanic will tell you, the hardest thing on a piece of equipment is to not use it. Shortly after getting the boat home, we went through it roughly and started getting everything back up to par. A little electrical work, power trim overhaul, some new plugs, wires, and fresh fuel was ready. We wore it out this summer taking it to the lake for scouting and fishing trips with the family. One thing is for certain if it was going to break down. I wanted it to happen in the summer when there are plenty of boaters around to give me a tow. We had a few quirks to work out here but for the most part it was small things and (knock of wood) still to this day hasn't left me stranded. We made several scouting trips, or as my kids like to call



them "adventures", to the lake and walked miles of new ground and gathered as much knowledge as I could of the different areas. My wife, being such a good sport, was always willing to give up date nights at a restaurant for a PB&J sandwich from the comfort of a boat seat while we glassed for bucks eating along the shorelines. Several glassing and fishing trips had produced not only knowledge of the land and the access, but a few very nice bucks had been seen making the days towards opening morning tick by even slower from there on.

On the morning of November 9th, I pulled up to the small concrete boat ramp and made the familiar loop to start my descent into the lake water. I stepped out to ready all my gear as I had to wait for the gentleman in front of me to launch his boat. While loading the boat up, the gentleman hollered out "Would you mind backing my boat in for me?" I gladly agreed if he would do the same for me. I backed his boat in and pulled his truck up to the parking lot and then backed mine down next. The gentleman came up and hopped in my truck and backed my boat in for me. He came back down from the parking lot where we exchanged keys, a handshake, a couple of good luck comments, and we were both ready to start our early mornings on the lake. Right before he walked away, he pulled out a can of Skoal and filled that November air with the smell of wintergreen. As I drove my boat out around the cove the irony of that chance encounter had me smiling from ear-to-ear and a million good memories were alive again, almost as if I were riding to the hunting property with my dad again.

The water was rough that morning and what should have been a 10-minute boat ride had turned into a 25-minute boat ride. With the bad weather and making new friends at the boat ramp I had made myself late for the hunt. I came into the spot right at the gray light. I all but ran from the boat still swinging my gear over my shoulders and tying things down just hoping I didn't forget something. I hate being late to a morning stand, especially in the first couple of weeks in November. I arrived at the tree I planned to hunt in, an old familiar tree, as I shot a doe out of it earlier in the season and had hoped the deer would still

be using the area. In less than 5 minutes I was up 12 feet and ready to go. I sat there smiling thinking of how long it was taking me to get set up earlier in the season and how loud and unproficient I was. I guess all the 2-a-day sits since October had finally paid off in a way of tree stand hanging practice. I did the usual; draw the bow, check yardages and text my wife to let her know I was in safely. The area I was hunting was a cedar thicket with a few oaks in it making it super thick and tough to see through. During early season the deer were using it to feed in before they worked their way out to an open hardwoods area at night to feed. I hadn't been in this spot in over a month and didn't know if there would even be a deer for miles but it's the only place I had that would work for a NE wind. My plans were to hunt a few hours then move midday when the wind was supposed to switch directions. Months earlier I had glassed some bucks at the back of this cove and a few of them were pretty nice. This season had been tough so far and I hadn't had any encounters with the kind of buck I was looking for and with rifle season a few days away I knew I had to find one quickly. Well, like most things in life when you think it's about hopeless, and it isn't going to happen, you hear a stick break. That one stick you know, not the one you thought you heard all year because it was a squirrel or an armadillo just playing with your emotions. No, this was the real one and of course it was behind me. As I turned around the tree it was so thick I couldn't see the horns but I could tell it was a buck for sure. I stood up, grabbed my bow and there he was, 19 yards, perfectly broadside, and walking through



my only shooting lane on that side. I came to full draw and with less of a second the whole season was riding on an arrow sailing through the cool air of that Missouri cedar thicket. The buck jumped and ran fast over the next draw. I quickly hung up my bow and started trying to glass through the thick cedar canopy hoping to see him fall with no avail. I pulled out my compass and got my bearings, then pulled out my phone to take notes. I typed: "Shot was high and back. Deer ran 50 yards until I lost sight of him. Didn't hear crashing. Straight east of the stand is the last direction I saw the deer." With my notes made, I sent out the mass text to everyone and waited my usual 30 minutes to get down. I wasn't pleased with the shot, thinking it was high liver I knew I would have to give him some time. I climbed down and walked to the arrow to see how it looked and to my surprise it was covered in bright red blood and no shortage of bubbles. I'm not going to lie, I wanted to go look then but I pulled out my notes and reread them. Reconfirming that I shot high while reading my notes and keeping myself off the trail, I ventured back to the boat with plans of consuming an early lunch and to send pictures of the arrow to some friends for advice.

After about another hour at the boat and several friends confirming he was probably dead, I made my way back in and started the trail. Taking my time and moving slowly I went about 40 yards and saw a deer up and running away. If you have hunted very long you know the emptiness you feel when you think you have bumped a bedded buck and now he is running away. I picked up my binoculars with a sick feeling in my gut only to see it was a doe and trailing behind her a small buck begging her for a chance to be the one. I watched the show for a few seconds and as they crested the next hill I decided to carry on the trail. With every step I took the blood trail was getting easier and easier to see, making me feel way more confident I would find the buck. As I crept up the edge of the little valley I last saw the deer go into, I glanced up and less than 20 yards from me lay my buck. A beautiful Missouri public land 8-point lay there, and the once worried bow hunter finally could feel a sense of excitement. Now I feel like I work hard and put in a lot of time every year, and some years they come easier than others but as I sat down next to him I couldn't help but reflect not only on the morning encounters, but the



whole season. All the hours in the stand, all the miles walked, and all the summer scouting had led to this moment and I almost couldn't believe it. I probably sat there for 20 minutes soaking it all in before snapping a few pictures and getting him field dressed. It was a short 200 yard drag to the lake and all downhill, which as any hunter knows is a dream situation when you are hunting alone. A few heave hoes and a lot of I need to get back to the gym. He was loaded in the boat ready to take his first boat ride.

As I turned the boat away from the shore to head back towards the boat ramp, my buck lying on the bow, I looked back at all the autumn colors basking in the sun and I took time to thank God for another amazing day in the field. I made the drive across the now calm waters of the lake as slow as that old Johnson would idle so I could soak up all that had happened, feeling blessed and accomplished of the morning that I had received. At that moment I couldn't help but think about that kid lying on that old army cot listening to an old grandfather clock work away in the night and I wonder, is that old clock still counting the seconds to next deer season, too? Tick tock tick tock. ■



## AS YOU READ THIS SUMMER ISSUE OF THE UNITED

### BOWHUNTER,

it is blistering hot outside and the cool of autumn feels like a lifetime from now. The reality of the situation is that hunting seasons begin to open across the nation as early as August. With that in mind, if you haven't begun to prepare, you may be behind the curve as 4-8 weeks is not much time to reinforce good habits and/or fix bad ones. In this article I hope to encourage you in making sure you have all the loose ends buttoned up and you are feeling confident for the approaching season opener.

#### Mindset

As a young medic in the Army, pre-mission planning was a routine part of my life. For any movement or operation to be successful, the entire unit must be on the same page and all questions answered. This is to prevent chaos and to ensure that each person knows exactly what their job is, and equally important, why they are doing it. I still use that same approach in my life today, post-military service, and especially in bowhunting. Most of us enter each season with no real goal in mind other than to "punch a tag." Although there is nothing entirely wrong with that approach, you are missing out on the personal growth aspect.

For instance, last season I missed a lot. There is no real excuse for such lackluster performance other than being impatient and rushing shots. I vowed at the end of last season that I am going to take steps to avoid those same mistakes this fall. Let animals get close, pass animals that are on edge and pick my spot every single time. Maybe



Necessary items for the bowhunter.

you are the individual that has overcomplicated this simplistic sport to the point you enjoy it less. Either of these examples has to do with your mindset. My personal mindset for each season is to be the most effective hunter I can be and for me that means being very disciplined in shooting practice, staying in shape, studying the animals and making ethical harvest at all costs. All this to say, be intentional about your goals as a hunter and take steps to be better any chance you get.

#### Gear

Due to the issue of over commercialization, gear can be a very trivial and confusing topic. From boots to broadheads, we simply have far too many options available to us. Every bowhunter has certain items in their kit that they swear by because it has aided in their past success, while that same product was a train wreck for someone else. How does one

possibly navigate all the choices in hunting equipment? I can offer only my opinion, so here goes.

The issue I most often run into with hunters today is they own all the best gear, and they can't get within bow range of an animal to save their life. Simply put, you can't buy your way to success. So, when it comes to hunting equipment, I live by the age old KISS acronym (Keep It Simple, Stupid). For bows, find one that fits your needs, learn good form and how to set it up correctly. Once you have shot it enough and the bow feels like an extension of your own body, there is nary a more lethal duo in the deer woods. Whatever you do, make sure you are not overbowed. For arrows, I cannot over emphasize the importance of a well-tuned arrow. In order to capitalize on the capabilities of your bow, the arrow needs to be flying as straight as possible down range. Proper nock height, arrow spine



Summer evenings glassing for deer.

and point weight are good starting points regardless of shaft material. There are many great tools available to determine the spine of arrow you need. Order them stock length and begin the process of cutting them down no more than  $\frac{1}{2}$ " at a time or adding/subtracting point weight until bare shafts fly like a bullet down range.

Beyond the weapon, I firmly believe that hunters should invest in a good pair of binoculars and a decent pack to carry all other accoutrements to the woods. Both items will last you for many years of service and they are very useful tools for scouting and even the practice range. Hunting clothes can be bought at Walmart or Goodwill as I don't believe camo to be important. Paying attention to wind and being quiet surpasses the importance of any camouflage. Brief research on deer vision will be a great asset to any hunter on this topic.

### Scouting

You have the mindset of being diligent in practice

and good ethics, your bow is shooting right where you are looking, and your important gear choices are made. Now you must fill your tag. I once heard someone say, "you let the arrow go in the fall, but you kill the deer in the spring and summer." No truer words were ever spoken. I am constantly learning the deer movement on the farm I hunt. While we still have a couple months, I would encourage you to get out to the areas you hunt and start looking for sign. Figure out where the does and bucks bed, what time they are hitting the fields, are there any feed tree in the area, is there more morning movement or evening movement, what wind do you need to hunt your newly discovered hot spot? Any one of these observations can change the way you approach your hunting area. If there is anything I am becoming more aware of with experience, is that any time spent scouting and learning animal behavior is time very well spent. I would even argue that those two things rate above almost everything else from gear to being a chip shot.

If you don't know what the animals do, why they do it and when, nothing else will matter because you will be completely out of the game.

### Shot Placement

The last thing I will cover is something I have become very passionate about and that is the importance of sharp broadheads and proper shot placement. As I believe these two are the biggest cause of people not recovering animals after a hard-earned shot opportunity. For years we have been led to believe that proper shot placement on a whitetail deer is behind the "shoulder." This same school of thought is reinforced through the placement of vitals and score rings on today's 3-D targets. The true anatomy of most four-legged animals completely contradicts such indoctrination. The vital area is much further forward than most would believe it to be, with the heart located directly behind the front leg and the lungs not extending much more than 10" behind the crease of the leg. The scapula (shoulder) is located



above the kill zone, towards the back. The humorous extends forward and connects into the base of the scapula, leaving a large opening of ribcage with nothing to stop an arrow from passing completely through. This is known to many as the “golden triangle” and is my ideal aim point. Straight above the front leg, just below center. Located in this vital area are the largest air passages of the lungs, multiple arteries and a large cluster of blood vessels. A sharp broadhead through this location will leave better blood trails and most importantly, shorter ones.

### Conclusion

I firmly believe that the individual that is making a real and conscious effort to prepare through the summer months will find more overall success. Let’s be honest, taking a traditional bow into the woods or up the mountain after big game is no small endeavor and it demands being taken seriously. Although I am sure we have all been guilty of not shooting our bow enough and waiting till the week before season to knock the dust from gear, we must police ourselves in this area as responsible hunters. We



True anatomy of the Whitetail deer.

owe it to the animals to be the best we can be when it comes time to let that arrow fly. No matter how close we are to the season, there is always time to make changes that may just give you the edge in tagging the big one. It is up to you to follow through and make those changes. The best time to start is today. ■



## DO YOU LIKE PODCASTS? DO YOU LIKE BOWHUNTING? (OBVIOUSLY, YOU'RE READING THIS NEWSLETTER!) **DID YOU KNOW THE UBM HAS A PODCAST?**



Listen to your friends and fellow hunters on this fine podcast everywhere podcasts can be found (Spotify, Stitcher, Itunes, etc) and learn more about the sport and hear some fun stories from peers and pals along the way.

*We are always looking for new material so please contact us if you have some ideas!*

Ethan Grotheer (stickbow17@yahoo.com)



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IT WASN'T THAT MANY YEARS AGO THAT HUNTING anything other than local whitetails on public land close to home seemed like a dream, something I always wanted to do but just couldn't see how I could make it happen. I'm sure that many of us have been there, there's the financial burdens, schedule, and family commitments, and many other "reasons" why we or at least I just couldn't make it happen. But it's funny how life's seasons change and with it our priorities, our individual situations, and our motivations. This was the case for me anyway.

My biggest motivation for a change in my life wasn't because of some big promotion or the fact that my kids were grown (though I still have a 13-year-old at home who is still very much dependent on me) or any real situational change, but rather a change in perspective or maybe just priorities. I have always been a bowhunter and have always enjoyed the outdoors, but



My Bear

admittedly, as I was living my adult life, the outdoors began to take a back seat to other things, my career, my family, and so forth. Obviously, these things are, were, and should have been my priority, but there was always something missing, something that made me who I am, part of my identity, and that was hunting, my love for the outdoors, and being in nature. Then in 2017 our family suffered a tragic loss when my nephew lost his battle with cancer. It was probably one of the most difficult times in my life, but out of that trauma and that loss came a new perspective and a new realization that nothing is promised and to Just Do It. Just get back to what shaped and formed me into the man I am today and continue to introduce my kids and my grandkids to the thing we

all love - the outdoors and chasing these critters around in it with, many times, nothing more than a stick and a string.

Well, I didn't really come here to talk about perspective, priorities, life and loss, I really came here to tell a story about fellowship, memories, adventure, and an absolutely amazing time hunting bears with great friends from the UBM in northwest Ontario! This all started with a dream I have always had about hunting bears. I didn't really care where, I just wanted to hunt a bear, just one time. So over the course of the last few years as I have become more involved in the UBM, made new friends, started helping out with our podcast, I started thinking that this could be something I could make happen, that I could just do. I started talking to Ethan Grotheer about such a hunt as I know that he loves to bear hunt more than anything else. Ethan told me all I needed to hear "let's do it". A few phone calls, text messages, and



A glimpse inside of Bear Creek Outfitters bear camp



emails later, I had a group of four hunters and an outfitter lined up to make this dream of mine a reality. The four of us would be traveling up to northwest Ontario the last week of May 2024 for a spring black bear hunt with Bear Creek Outfitters, an outfitter that not only did I hear only great things about, but also is very used to having traditional bowhunters in camp.

It's amazing how fast time flies when it seems also to move so slow, but before we knew it, our deposits had been made and our trip was upon us. I had offered to host our hunting group at my house the night before we left for Ontario for good food, fellowship, and hopefully a decent night's rest before the 15-hour drive to our destination. As planned, everyone made it in with only one minor issue – Ethan's vehicle, our planned second of two vehicles, had picked up something in the tire. Luckily, the tire shop was open and they were able to get him in without much delay and had him back road-ready in no time. We had an amazing dinner and spent some time talking about logistics, packing, and telling stories. The morning finally came, and we were off!

We made the decision to split the trip up into two days, so we could



William, Ethan, John, and I checking out the area.



My Primary bait site. Notice how dense the forest is around the cribbing, this was pretty much as far as I could see.

get a little rest before showing up in bear camp, but mostly so we could drive through Ontario in the daylight to see the beautiful scenery that Canada had to offer. So the first day, we set our sights on a restaurant and campground on the north shore of Lake Superior. The trip was uneventful and a lot of fun. You can learn a lot about folks when you spend hours upon hours in the truck with them, but that is a story for another time. There is something to be said about the burgers in that area of the country, they were fabulous. We had our dinner and arrived at our campground in the evening of the first day. Lake Superior did not disappoint. It was breathtaking and beautiful, especially for someone like me who had not been there before. I set up my tent and two cots - enough room for John White and me. William Brown had a single tent while Ethan decided to get some rest in his vehicle.

We were quickly on our way into Canada early the next morning. We all made it through the border with no issues and continued to head north. A quick stop in Thunder Bay for some breakfast and groceries, and then we watched the city melt away into a remoteness that I don't think that I have really experienced in the states. Traffic was minimal along the roadway and as we traveled further north, traffic became even more sparse. As we neared our camp, we were all fortunate to spot a nice moose (my first one ever) and at least one bear, and then we arrived at Bear Creek Outfitters. We were greeted promptly by Dusty, the outfitter, with whom I had been working with. We also met the other hunter in camp, Scott, who also happened to be a traditional bowhunter who just so happened to have won his hunt in an auction at Compton's ([comptomtraditionalbowhunters.com](http://comptomtraditionalbowhunters.com)). Dusty showed us around his operation, the fabulous bunk

houses, the full kitchen and living area, two full bathrooms complete with a washer and dryer. I didn't really know what to expect, but this exceeded it. We all sat around filling out our paperwork, getting tags for those of us that needed them, and then we settled in for the night.

The day had finally come! It's time to learn where our bait sites would be, hang our stands, learn the baiting routine, bait our sites, and HUNT! I couldn't have been more excited, not only to finally be on this hunt, but share it with the folks in bear camp. Dusty took each of us around, showed us each how to refill the baits buckets with his special blend of grain, oil, and maybe a few sweet treats, and spray the area down with an attractant. The whole process took just a few minutes at each bait site. We hung our primary and back up stands, and headed back to camp for lunch before we headed back to hunt our first evening.

At this point, I could tell you about everyone's stories, but I think that is for them to tell, so I will focus mostly on just mine. My first few days were mostly uneventful on stand. My bait sites were getting hit every single time I went to rebait them but were never being hit when I was in the stand. I never saw a single bear from my stand for the first four days. I saw bears on the side of the road eating the fresh spring grass while we were driving to our stand sites, but never at my stand location. There were always fresh signs of wildlife: wolf tracks cutting my tracks, fresh moose tracks right alongside the truck not more than 50 yards from where I was hunting, and a beautiful red fox, but no bear sightings from the stand. It is worth describing my primary hunting location. It was

thick, so thick that really all I could see was my bait site approximately 15 yards from my stand, and because of that, I could have had bears all around me and never known it since they were not coming all the way into the bait. By Day 4, I started to get a little worried, so I made the decision to do a morning hunt at my primary stand location, and then move to my back-up site for the evening sit. We had been instructed to try and give our initial bait site at least three days before moving. Day 4 came and went, but still no bear. Even though I hadn't seen a bear halfway through the hunt, the trip had still been amazing just being there, hearing the other guy's stories, etc. But I was ready to see a bear, a bear that would come into my bait.

Day 5: I had contemplated hunting all day on Day 5, however, I really needed to go into town and fuel up and get a few more supplies, so instead of an all-day sit, I opted to go into town and then get on stand in the early afternoon for a long day sit. I arrived at my bait location around 1:00 pm, which was still getting hit daily, climbed into my tree saddle and started to prepare myself for a long sit as it was getting dark until nearly 10:00 pm. I had just pulled up a book on my phone and was just a couple of chapters in when I looked up and saw a black ball moving silently through the timber. A bear! I could see him come in from about 60 yards out, as my secondary site was not as thick as my primary. He was moving silently, deliberately, and



John and our batch of Northern Pike - our license only allowed us to keep 2 each.

steadily along a trail that would take him right to the bait site about 12 yards in front of me. He would stop every few yards to smell the air and check his surroundings. Moving slowly, almost as if he was tiptoeing, he covered probably about 30 yards when he stopped and turned away from the trail and moved out of sight. At this point, my excitement was uncontrollable, I was shaking and could barely catch my breath. I remember thinking to myself, "There is no way I can shoot this bear like this" and I did plan on shooting that bear. From the moment I first saw him, I felt like he was a decent bear, plus he had a nice white chevron on his chest. When he dipped into some cover and out of sight, I didn't think he was gone, and I should have been able to see him move off it he did so. I think he just sat down and assessed the situation before reappearing about 15 minutes later. By this time, I was able to calm myself enough to focus



on the task at hand, going through the shot process, picking a spot - just slightly forward of middle of the middle as I had been told, and making a good clean shot. The bear moved in without hesitation and just as he stepped with that front leg forward to sniff the bait bucket, my arrow hit its mark! A clean pass through! The bear spun around and headed back the way it came and my arrow, now crimson in color, rested there on the cribbing as if it had been placed there. I did it, I made a perfect shot on a nice bear...or did I? In the moment immediately following the shot, I believed with all my heart that I had made a perfect shot, but as I sat there listening for the "death moan" and then hearing nothing, a little bit of doubt set in. Did I really hit where I was aiming? Did I really make a great shot?

I used my inReach to message Dusty to let him know I shot a bear, and he responded that he would be there in an hour and a half. Let me just say, that hour and a half felt like an eternity. My secondary bait location was next to a lake and I had a pole with me. I thought I could kill some time by fishing - no such luck because all I could concentrate on, all I could think about was that bear, that shot, and the unknown. I went back to the truck to wait. A little while later, I heard the rumbling of a truck approaching, but it couldn't have been Dusty because it was coming from the wrong direction. When the truck pulled up, it was Scott (the traditional bowhunter from Michigan) and John White, who having already tagged their bears had been out mushroom hunting and fishing. I will never forget the look they both gave me as to say why in the world are you sitting in your truck when you should



Momma bear and cubs enjoying some fresh spring grass

be hunting. I hopped out and told them my story, Dusty pulled up just as I finished. I relived the story with Dusty and off we went with his custom bear body bag in hand. It was about 4:00 pm when we got back to my stand location. Originally, when I climbed down, I quickly looked at my arrow which was covered in good blood, and then backed out. The four of us began to look for the blood trail on the trail I thought the bear used to make his exit. Nothing! How could this be? Did I not make a good shot? Did I not kill this bear? Other than the blood covered arrow, there was not a single sign that a bear had been shot there.

John made the recommendation that I climb back into the tree stand and guide him in the direction that I thought I had seen the bear travel before I lost sight of him. Just as I was stepping onto the platform, I heard the best phrase in the world, "found it", come from Dusty. I shouted back "found blood or found bear?", and Dusty's response - "found your bear!". I couldn't have been more excited. I climbed down out of the tree, took up the trail, and there the dead bear lay in a mossy indentation about 70 yards

from my stand site! I had just did it, just completed this hunt that just a few years ago seemed only like a dream, and now here I am in northwest Ontario, with great people, with my hand on my bear! The feeling was and still is amazing. Over the last 5 years now, I have been on several hunts that felt like they were just a dream, an out-of-reach possibility. Yet, I am making these opportunities happen and each hunt is equally amazing if I am successful or not. The "Just Do It" mentality made these hunts happen.

Spoiler Alert! There were five hunters in camp and all five of us were successful during this trip.

I spent the last couple of days boning out and packaging my bear and fishing for Northern Pike on one of the many lakes with John before loading up and heading home. It was an amazing time with amazing people. ■

Equipment:

Bow: Wild Horse Creek - Kestrel - 60" - 55lbs @ 28"

Black Eagle Arrow

250 grain single bevel Razor  
broached.

**E**ARLY IN THE TURN OF THE NEW CENTURY, I got the bug to start building self-bows. Up until then, my self-bow building experience was very minimal. Less than minimal. Also being a little new to the computer and the world wide web, info led to more info. Nonstop freakin info! Reading has never been my thing. I believe I could read for ten years about brain surgery and not be able to perform brain surgery. I believe if I could help a guy do brain surgery just 2-3 times, I could then do brain surgery. And probably with a putty knife. It became apparent to me that I needed to get my hands on a self-bow build. I took what I considered the only reasonable course of action for me and drove to a MOJAM event. It's held in Marshall, Missouri every July on the hottest weekend of the year.

Early into the first day, without even touching a piece of wood, I was hooked. I loved everything I saw, and all the people were just as screwy as I was and blending into the self-bow building environment was a breeze. I soaked up everything I could that weekend. Luckily or unluckily, it's the kind of place where everyone wants to give you what knowledge they have on building self-bows whether their info is right or wrong. They believe it and that's good enough for them. And if you are willing to stand there and listen, then they are willing to stand there and tell you what they think they know.

Right before lunch on that first day of MOJAM, the class scheduled was on building Bamboo Backed Osage Bows. (BBO's) I don't remember the guy's name, but it was obvious to me this dude knew his craft. He had different bows in

different stages for us to see and he went through each process of building BBO's and the further into it he got, the more I knew this was going to be my bow. After the class, I quizzed the guy on how to get started and where to get my supplies and since we lived about 50 miles apart, I convinced him to teach me how to build his BBO's.

Over the next few months and a few phone conversations, it became obvious that he didn't have time to teach me to build a BBO. He did, however, know a guy who also lived in our general area that was wanting to teach BBO building. I made the call and this guy seemed to have a good story and since he came well recommended, I set it up. Then he tells me that he needed 4 guys to do a class and some cash. That wasn't really what I was looking for but I sure wanted to build one of these bows so I went to work.

I had remembered a conversation that I had a few months earlier with Jodi Morgan about a bow he built and it seemed he also had the same interest in building self-bows. I made the call to Jodi to see what he thought. He was in almost instantly and he was sure his dad, Doug, would also want some of the action. He thought we could probably use his brother, Dax, as a fourth guy. Plus, if you don't invite Dax, he just gets pissy. So, the date was made, and the time was set, and I was excited.

A few weeks had passed and the morning finally came when the four of us were all in a truck heading to North St Louis of all places to build Bamboo Backed Osage Bows. We pulled up into a little strip mall type of thing and met our bowyer/instructor. I do remember his name but I'm not

going to use it. You will understand. I'll just call him D.

Within a few minutes, all introductions, hand shaking, and money transactions took place. D had pointed to an old station wagon in the parking lot and told us that that's where our bows were. He was to already have the bamboo lamination glued to the Osage so we could get right to shaping our bows. Years into building my own BBO bows, I'm going to say that thinning and glueing the bamboo to the wood is a critical step and needs to be learned along with the other steps of building these bows. The conversation kind of went to the old station wagon. D explained that the car was his "hot box" and he used the sun to cure the glue that bonded the bamboo to the Osage. OoooooK. By this point I had read quite a bit about building these bows and I had yet to hear of anyone using a car to sunbake bow staves to cure the glue. Like I said, bowyers are a screwy bunch and I just figured D was a little screwier in this facet of the build.

Soon, with tools in hand, we were working wood. Rasp and files were leaving the floor covered with bamboo and Osage dust. The smell of shaping a bow is one of the greatest odors that I know of. The goal was to get these bows bending before lunch. We only had this one day. D did say we probably would not get our bows totally completed in our one-day class, but we would get them far enough for us to be able to take them home with us to finish. That's not what I heard in our phone conversation. I, for one, didn't know how to start a bow much less finish one and from what I had read, finishing was most important. That didn't sit great with me but here we were, making dust.



Another thing that wasn't sitting well with me was the lack of tools. Even though D was conducting a class for four, he had tools for a class of two. Bow building requires certain tools for certain stages and sharing tools clogged the pipeline of production. As one of my platoon sergeants would say, "We were pissing on the wheels of progress"

Before we knew it, lunch had come. We had lunch in the same little strip mall and lunch was fun. You don't do anything with the Morgan boys without having fun. It just comes your way. At this point we had bows bending and things really were starting to feel good. Exciting. I kind of forgot about the "station wagon hot box" thing and was starting to have hope in leaving with a bow at the end of the day.

The afternoon session had come, and we were back to carving wood. I couldn't shake the thought that I wasn't learning to build a bow. The tool sharing and downtime while waiting on tool sharing was eating the clock. D would go from guy to guy and just tell us to take some off here or take some off there. I didn't know why. I couldn't see it and we weren't really being taught. The afternoon felt like we were rushing, and from what I'd read in my research, we were supposed to be going slow. Rushing was bad! We carved in our string knocks and started the tillering process. I wasn't really sure when shaping had turned to tillering, and the exercising of bow limbs was having to be done one at a time which was worse than sharing the tools. What was a fun day with the Morgan boys had turned somewhat into a frustrating race against the clock. Now, after 15- 20 years of building bows, nowhere have I found that racing the clock is good when you

are trying to build a bow. But there we were. The fun kind of stopped. It was now work. There were less jokes. Less laughs. Not quite the fun we were having, but the excitement of the thought that I would have a self-bow in my hands on this day kept the optimism alive in my bones.

Then it happened. Something I'll never forget as long as I live. At least I hope that I don't. We were at the stage of final scraping and exercising the limbs to finish our bows. This is also the time when you need to make sure the limbs are bending evenly. In the bowyer's world, the apparatus that is used is not really complex, but they cover all the bases needed to finish up a bow, or at a minimum, get your bow up to the finishing line. I call mine a bow tree. I haven't seen a hundred of these in my life, but I've seen enough. Of course, every screwy bowyer has their own set up, but most that I've seen have been very similar. For example, mine is just three 2x6's screwed together as a pedestal about eye level which for me may be about 5 feet high or a little more. I have a small platform/shelf built on the top for my bow to rest on. Up through the 2x6 stand is a rope and pulley system that has a hook on it to fit the bow string and enough rope that I can stand back six or seven feet and really eye my limbs while I flex the bow hoping to spot a hinge or flat spot, and making sure the limbs are arcing the same. Behind my bow flexing tree is a 4x8 foot piece of corrugated plastic sheeting that I have all kinds of measurements and graph looking lines drawn on so I can compare the two limbs when they bend. I have the graph looking lines because I suck at seeing flat spots and nice arcing limbs with just my eyes. A real

deal bowyer does not need the graphing. I HAVE to have the graphing. Exercising the limbs is a little tedious but totally necessary and also a decent workout for your shoulders and arms. I think if I had a bigger pulley, I could do it with one hand. I think with an even bigger pulley, I could have my wife exercise the limbs with one hand and maybe use the other to stir a pot of chili or scramble me some eggs. Just a thought. Anyway, D's bow tree was different.

I can't remember the details very well anymore. It's been 20 years and it was all so new to me that I didn't really pay attention to it. What I do remember was D's tree was short, and to really exercise your bow limbs on D's bow tree, you had to get on your knees. The string was attached up on the high end on his and you pushed down on the bow with your hands. Behind it was a yard stick so you could somewhat regulate how far you were stressing your limbs. Never over stressing your bow limbs is important. While using D's tree, there was no way in hell a man could see his limbs. It would be hard to see one of them and impossible to see them both. Same here, D would point to a spot and say, "take some off here". I didn't one time ever see or know why we were taking more off when we did. Using D's tree was terribly uncomfortable. You were basically positioned on the floor like you were on all fours, but instead of your hands being on the floor with your knees, your arms would have to be stretched almost straight out grasping your bow handle with your hands and pushing it towards the floor, but still being far enough away from the bow to see the yard stick to make sure you didn't stress your limbs too far. I hope you can visualize that. Read it again. I was

in my early 40's then, damn good physical shape and working a strenuous job. I felt I was in decent shape. D's bow tree found spots on my body that were not in decent shape. This thing was more like some kind of made-up torture system that one of my Marine Corp DI's would've dreamed up.

Doug was not in his 40's, he wasn't working a physical job, and he may have been a little rounder than the rest of us. And I don't think he had stretched properly before this exercise. When Doug would exercise his limbs, there would be some strange noises, hydration and recovery time. It was tough. The day was getting late. I was tired and I knew Doug had to really be tired. But there he was, on his knees, thrusting down his bow's riser towards the floor, trying to get it another inch farther back. We were building bows. This kind of stuff cements friendships.

D and I were standing over Doug looking at his limbs arc. I still could not pick out proper arcs, flat spots or hinges. Maybe hinges. What I could see, the tougher this bow tree was on Doug, the tougher Doug got. Doug was working the limbs and working them hard. Every inch Doug needed more pressure to push the bow towards the floor. Then it happened. Doug's bow blew up. To this day I've never had a BBO blow up. I've had plenty crack and fail but none have blown up. Doug's bow blew up. It blew the hell up. It was like nothing I've ever seen before or since. I'll never be able to fully describe it to you.

The only part of Doug's body weight that was not being pushed down into that bow handle was the area from Doug's knees to his toes. The rest of him was all in, pushing down on that bow. The sound of that bow exploding was like a rifle

shot that was instantly followed up by Doug's body hitting the floor. Doug's body didn't really just hit the floor, it was slammed into the floor. I don't think another man could have picked Doug up over his head and thrown him onto the concrete floor any harder. I'm not going to try to describe the sound his body made hitting the concrete or the vocal sound he made at the end of it all. I've got to think it has to be close to the sound of a man in a head-on collision. I never freeze at a situation, but I froze. I couldn't put together in my mind what just happened. All I knew was Doug hit that floor like a ton of bricks and had to be hurt. He had to be. No noise like that could come without injury.

D and I helped Doug up. We fixed his glasses back onto his head, earpieces back on his ears, and lenses back over his eyes and we looked him over. Doug seemed to be ok. Other than the look on his face. I'd known Doug Morgan for some time already and I'd never seen the face of Doug like this. I'm sure those two dumbass boys had seen it, but I hadn't. His first words were not what I was expecting. He looked up into my eyes and made this statement. "Dennis, I think we need to go out for a smoke!" I have a bad habit of being a wiseass in times like this. It's gotten me into some terrible situations. I replied to Doug, with I'm sure a smile, "But Doug, I don't smoke!" The next statement was what I was waiting for out of Doug. "You F\*#\$%^! do today, Dennis!"

Doug and I made our way out of a side door to go have a smoke. Jodi and Dax went back to bow carving. On the way out, it was forefront in my mind that this whole day, the money, the explosion, all of it, was on me. I had sought this D

character out and set the whole thing up. That bothered me. Doug didn't say a word on the way out. He reached for a pack of his favorite smokes, lit one up, sucked in every ounce of what he seemed to be very satisfying and said to me with his classic Doug Morgan smile and chuckle, "Dennis, I don't think this D guy knows s#^% about building bows". It caused me to bust out laughing and Doug too. Man, it was sure good to hear Doug's laugh. Typical Doug Morgan. Looking for the lighter side and enjoying the moment. Those few minutes were the best nonsmoking cigarette of my life.

Soon after, our bow building day was complete. To try to shorten this up a little, not one of our bows made it to the finishing line. Doug was given the material to build another bow in replacement of the one that broke. To build on his own. I think building one on his own would've had a better chance of survival than under the watchful eye of D and his station wagon hot box and midget bow tree. A few phone conversations later with the Morgans, the news of Dax and Jodi's bows also failed and as I tried to finish mine, a terrible hinge had moved in and taken over my bottom limb. I knew very little about bow building at the time, but I knew this bow was firewood at best. Just to keep the whole event from being a total failure, I decided to string this bow up, took a few practice shots to see where it hit, and took it out for a hunt. I wanted one hunt with this bow. The next weekend me and that bow went out and stalked a thicket that I knew held rabbits on my wife's family farm and was lucky enough to send a cedar shaft through the one and only animal that bow would ever see.



As satisfying as that rabbit was from my first "almost a bow" self-bow, it was second to the day of building that bow with Doug and the boys. One of the best of my life. Guys should get together for events like that as often as possible. I miss

things like that terribly these days. Nothing can replace those great memories.

Doug is gone now, but not really. Not for me. Doug's laugh is etched into my brain. His smile in my mind. We talked about that day and

his bow explosion so many times. When a man builds a bow with another man, and the man leaves, he's never really gone. He's just not there. God Bless ya, Doug Morgan and all those Morgans you left here with us. I miss ya, bud. ■

## ➤➤➤ Manitoba Bear Hunt

Brad Harriman ➤

**M**Y GOOD FRIENDS, TIM, MIKE, AND I LOADED UP and headed north to western Manitoba for an archery black bear hunt, the first week of June!

We drove about 12 1/2 hours the first day, from my house at Pilot Grove, Mo., to Pembina, North Dakota. Mike and Tim had stayed in Pembina on previous bear hunts, so they already were familiar with the hotel and restaurant for supper!

The next morning, we headed north across the border into Canada. Another 7 1/2 hours, angling north and west, to a small town named Birch River, and the Stickflingers Manitoba Bear Hunts Camp. We weren't in camp long enough to hardly get things situated before it was time to head to our first hunt!!!

Ryan teamed us up with our guide, David. Our first stop was at Tim's spot. Before David could leave that bait, Tim had a bear in range. Next stop was Mike's stand, then I was next. All three of us had a bear basically at the bait before we could climb into our stands.

The small boar I had at my stand was there feeding for about an hour. I did have a small bear

circle way out during that time, but it wouldn't come in. Sometime after that, I had a pair of small, 100-125 pound bears come in and stay for another hour or so. Then, they both perked up and charged out of sight, and I could hear them scramble up a tree! I stood up, to get ready, and saw a medium-sized bear that had quite a bit of rubbed fur, making him not too pretty. He circled to the bottom of my tree, stood up and put his front paws on my tree and gave me the Ole Stink Eye. Then he ambled on over to the bait, laid down, and started crunching corn.





After an hour or so, this bear did the same thing as the last two, skinning out of there like he was on fire, and up a tree out of sight!!! I looked to my right, where all the other bears had come from, and there was the best bear of the hunt, coming to the bait!

This bear had a beautiful coat of pitch-black fur and looked good enough for me. So, as he angled in towards the bait, from right to left, I picked a spot, came to full draw, followed him a step or two and released for a 12-yard shot. I watched my fletching disappear!



He ran straight away into the bush, and I heard him crash on the dry leaves. Immediately, I heard a death moan!!!

In all my adrenaline pumped shakiness, I texted David and the guys, and my wife and kids that I had just shot. David got to my stand about 20-30 minutes later. He walked me through what had happened, and I told him that my bear ran towards a black trunked fir tree. David started tracking and it didn't take long to find my bear, maybe 30 yards from the bait.

We got my bear loaded into a trailer behind David's ATV then we went back to the truck. We picked up Mike next. Mike saw several bears but chose not to shoot. As a matter of fact, Mike hunted five days, at five different stands, and saw 43 different bears before he shot a great bear, just under Pope and Young.

Tim also shot a bear on his first hunt, a giant cinnamon color phase bear that squared seven feet, with a green score on his skull of over 20 inches! Tim saw 14 different bears that evening! When we pulled up to the trail that went into Tim's stand, there was Tim. I rolled down my window and Tim looked at me and said, "You'd better get out!!!" We knew then that he had shot one, but he didn't tell us it was a giant.

Even though Tim's bear was shot through the heart, it still went about 80 yards or so. When we finally got to it, we were all about speechless. It was an amazing animal!

We are booked again at Stickflingers for 2027. Not sure I'll be able to sleep between now and then!!! ■





**P**EOPLE OFTEN ASK IF I TURKEY HUNT. MY ANSWER: YES, I HAVE, NO, I DON'T.

In years past, I have called birds in, but found it somewhere between difficult and impossible to draw on them. That "Putt Alarm" prior to the all-out blast off, is frustrating. They run like they have their hands in their pockets. Did you know they can run 25 miles per hour and fly 55 miles per hour? According to Google, their eyesight is three times sharper than ours, they can see eight times farther than we can and their color vision is far more enhanced than ours. I am assured blinds are effective, but they seem cumbersome; requiring stability and patience, which is not my strong suit. I haven't tried a gun. Since the turkey season is usually at the same time as spring crappie season, I spend more time on the water.

Being a bowhunter who enjoys processing wild turkey fletching, I find it easier and more productive to hunt turkey hunters. Those who have been hunting turkeys for a number of years, are usually willing to give up the wings. Many are fascinated, maybe that's being kind,

that folks actually still use the wing feathers.

This year, my favorite turkey hunter brought eleven sets of wings he gathered from friends and family. His youngest grandson took his first turkey with a gun and I mounted the wing feathers on a bamboo arrow shaft to be displayed with a tail feather fan. His two older grandsons took spring birds with a crossbow while in a blind with their grandpa. The bolts (shafts) were re-fletched with their turkey feathers, plus I included archery related trinkets. Grandpa and the boys were excited to preserve the memory. I made the oldest grandson arrows a few years ago and he hasn't shot them because he thinks they are too pretty. They are kept on the wall in his room. He does shoot the flu-flu.

Now it's time for separating,



Audrey (left) Eva (right) dying feathers

cutting, and splitting quills, in preparation for feather grinding. I use the primary feathers and prefer right wing. Previously gave all left wings to brother Jerry. I have experienced that as long as all the feathers on an arrow are the same wing, there is little difference in flight.

My second youngest granddaughter, Eva, has asked to be taught how to build arrows. This was perfect timing for her to spend a day with me while processing feathers. As luck would have it, my youngest granddaughter, Audrey, would join us. I had split the feathers prior to grinding and Eva wanted to get started. We set up the table, drill press and vacuum in the garage and started lessons. Clamping in the jig was fairly easy. Feeding the jig into the sanding disk and turning from bottom to sides took a bit more understanding. Eva quickly took over and started teaching Audrey. They did an excellent job on two dozen feathers.

It's time consuming, but dying feathers adds another personal



Audrey (left) Eva (right) Eva teaching Audrey



Eva taking charge of the grinder

touch to the process. I have had good luck with Rit-fabric dye and Kool Aid. Add dye to a quart of steaming water plus 1/4 cup of white vinegar. The vinegar acts as a wetting agent so the feathers will absorb the dye. Both granddaughters jumped at the chance to dye the two dozen feathers along with one dozen white feathers to match as cock feathers. After they submerged them in a dish pan and becoming the color they picked, they spread them out on cardboard to drain and dry.

With the feathers drying, it was time to prepare wooden shafts. I had a dozen that was ready for stain and Eva quickly took ownership. I use leather dye on wood arrows and she chose a dark green for the crown and light oak for the shaft. With a line on the shafts, they knew where to start the crown color. They, again, took over.

The feathers and shafts have been set aside to continue the



Feathers gathered from friends & family

process when they return. The building process will move into slow gear, sealing and crestring the shafts, adding nocks and points before fletching. I'm looking forward to continuing the arrow build. It would please me to pass on my tools and equipment to the grandkids.



Trinkets attached to bolts/shafts

I enjoy the entire arrow building process. Taking on the wild turkey fletching process has been fun as well as a savings when building arrows for kids, grandkids, nieces, nephews, friends and family. I love continuing to pass on the tradition. ■

## >>> Treats to Beat the Summertime Heat

Darren Haverstick

**H**ere are a couple of favorites around the Haverstick House to help cool you down during these Months of Misery. They are easy to make, delicious to eat, and add few, if any, calories to your daily intake. Okay, so that last one was a big lie, but, hey, two out of three ain't bad!

### Ice Cream Without the Fuss

I came across a chocolate version of this recipe a few weeks ago and made it for Leah and me. I couldn't believe how easy it was to make and neither of us could remember eating a more smooth and creamy ice cream. Since the basic ingredients are so simple, creating a flavor of your choice only requires imagination and a little experimentation. So far, I have made chocolate, peanut butter, and orange. Strawberry and lime are on deck.

#### Ingredients

- 1 pint of heavy whipping cream
- 1 14 oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- [chocolate] ½ cup cocoa powder, ½ cup powdered sugar
- [peanut butter] 1 cup peanut butter
- [orange] 1 cup orange juice concentrate

#### Directions

- In a large bowl, whip the heavy cream until stiff peaks are formed.
- Add the condensed milk and flavoring ingredients and whip until everything is mixed well.
- Pour the contents into a standard bread loaf pan and then place in the freezer for several hours.
- The whole process takes about 15 minutes of your time and it is time definitely well spent!



(Top and clockwise) Peanut butter, orange, and chocolate ice cream



# Thin Mint Brownie Cheesecake

My wife, Leah, loves anything minty, and any kind of cheesecake, so when I came across this recipe, I knew I had a winner. I modified it a bit to suit me and this is the finished product.

## Ingredients

- 1 brownie mix of your choice (I make my own)
- 1 8 oz. cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 2 tsp mint extract, divided
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 8 oz. container of whipped topping, thawed
- Green food coloring
- 20 Thin Mint cookies
- 1 bag of chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup half-n-half or heavy cream



You almost have to put on a coat looking at this!


## Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Line 9" springform pan with parchment paper and spray the sides of the pan with cooking spray.
- Mix the brownie mix according to directions. I add a teaspoon of mint extract to the mix just for good measure but it's up to you.
- Pour batter into the greased springform pan and bake for around 30 minutes.
- Remove from oven and cool completely.
- After the brownie has cooled, unlatch the pan and remove the bottom.
- Turn the brownie over and remove the parchment paper.
- Reassemble the pan and put the brownie back into it.
- Crumble the thin mint cookies in a food processor and set aside.
- Take out about ½ cup to sprinkle on the cake after it's finished.
- In a large mixing bowl, mix the softened cream cheese and powdered sugar together with a hand mixer until creamy.
- Add the mint and vanilla extract and mix again.
- Now mix in all the whipped topping. You can add the green food coloring now to mix in if you want.
- Gently stir in the crumbled cookies, minus the ½ cup, and scoop the mixture into the springform pan. Spread around evenly.
- Place the chocolate chips and heavy cream in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat at 30-second increments, stirring each time until the chocolate is melted and everything is mixed well.
- Let cool for a few minutes before spreading the mixture on top of the cheesecake.
- Place the remaining cookie crumbs on top of the chocolate.
- Put the cheesecake in the refrigerator and let it cool for a couple hours before serving. ■



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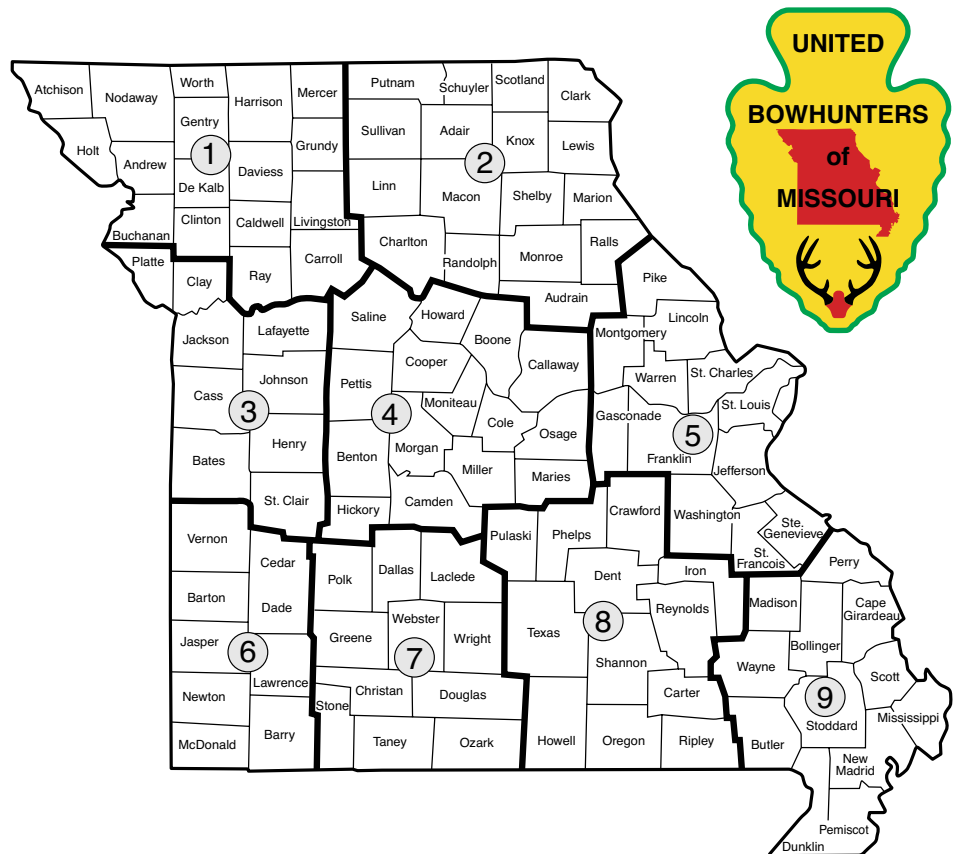
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