



THE UNITED Summer 2025 BOWHUNTER



Official Publication of The United Bowhunters of Missouri



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Summer 2025

July

17th-19th: MOJAM, Marshall Bowhunters Club, Marshall MO

August

1st-31st: Hot and miserable with a chance of seed ticks

September

1st: Missouri dove season opens

15th: Missouri archery season opens!

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— On the Cover —

The Novotny Clan:
Grandpa Dan and Daddy Dustin
mentor young Jackson.

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



THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING our 2025 Rendezvous! We had an incredible gathering in Marshall,

Missouri on June 26-29. Thank you to the Board of Directors and the Marshall Bow Hunters for making this event happen. From camping to visiting to potlucking to a fish fry to shooting our bows, there was something for everyone. Thank you to all who attended, bought something, renewed your

membership, donated to the can raffle, etc.

It is now July. My weight and the man in the mirror does not look like the hunter I wanted at this point of the year (I still have a belly), but the 300 steps at Ha Ha Tonka State Park in the middle of a five mile hike this morning tells me I am in pretty good shape. With this said though, it is that time when we are preparing for adventures searching for antelope, bears, elk, moose, caribou, mule deer, and our beloved white-tailed deer. It is officially time to cut our sugar intake and take more walks and lift more weights. It is time to pick up our bows on a regular basis

and hit our targets. Bow season is right around the corner! It is time to get ready!

I am beyond excited about this fall personally, as I will be traveling to Colorado for elk and bear, and Iowa for whitetails. Wherever you are headed in a few months, start the preparation process. Sharpen those broadheads. Do the daily stretches. This is an exciting time.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming Festival in Springfield, Missouri, February 6-8, 2026. I cannot wait to tell my stories and hear about your adventures! See you then!❁

William R. Brown

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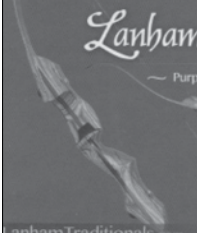


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LISTENING TO FOLKS DESCRIBING

the Tennessee Classic as being 100% traditional (recurves, longbows & selfbows), sparked our interest. I haven't been to a major shoot for some time and another stump shooter, James Barker, hadn't experienced a large rendezvous that attracted archery manufactures and vendors. With coaching from UBM member, Dan Novotny, we registered at the same hotel that he and Tom Dickerson were in.

To avoid the St. Louis rush hour and arrive at Clarksville, Tennessee by midday, we left on Friday at five in the morning with hopes to shoot that afternoon. We stopped by the hotel to ensure a late check-in before heading to the range.

At the entrance of the range, we were greeted by three UBM members; Chris Rackley, Al Stever and Scott Langston, who were walking towards the range with bows in hand. Members of the Twin Oaks archery club were directing traffic and parking. Wow! The valley was filled with people, campers, vehicles,

vendors, as well as permanent structures. As always, I was easily distracted

by all the activities, making it take longer to locate registration. When registering, you are asked if you are competing or shooting for fun. That was easy. Fun is what I am best at.

While touring the area and visiting with vendors, we noticed another familiar face, UBM's Jim Pyles. His archery supply company, JP Enterprises, was open for business and had a large display. The selfbow and flint knapping work areas were interesting. Everyone willingly explained what they were doing and where they were at in the process. Many of the more experienced folks were teaching and overseeing the beginners. My kind of people! Archery minded, friendly, and willing to share their knowledge.



James and I teamed up with Dan and Tom to shoot the B Range, which had 20 targets. It was a bit muddy after the rain. We had a group ahead of us and a group behind, allowing time for teasing and stories. There were several 3D animals or groups of animals at every target location. You chose your target to shoot at. The additional targets simulate a hunting scene more than a single target. We shot the last two targets in the rain. From that point on, it rained off and on throughout the weekend.

Dan, Tom, James, and I enjoyed breakfast at the hotel and went to dinner both nights. Sharing stories and reliving events, in a quiet and “dry” location was appreciated.

The second day, James and I spent the morning while it was raining, visiting vendors and displays. Dan and Tom tackled the A Range in the rain. Later in the day, the rain stopped and the sun appeared. That’s when that inner voice I often hear from was telling me, “Go shoot A Range.” I could tell you it was a plan, but we were unbelievably lucky. The crowd was lining up for the potluck dinner and there wasn’t anyone on A Range. We were registered as fun and, boy, did we have it! This range had more full-size 3D targets than B Range. One group of four full-size elk and another with three full-size elk. One target or station had five different deer. The full-size moose was over six feet tall! We will long remember this range and settings, as well as our unlimited time.

Shooting two impressive ranges, visiting with manufacturers, vendors and display areas, plus sharing time with friends and meeting other bowhunters, is my idea of a great weekend. It was everything I had hoped



for. The shot distances were reasonable at 20-30 yards. The large, full-size Rinehart targets seemed close until your arrow fell short. The multitude of activities and archery merchandise attracted 824 registered shooters. Despite the weather, everyone seemed happy to be there and calmly enjoyed themselves.

We are now planning to attend our UBM Rendezvous. The camper will be in place waiting for the Gang to arrive. I’m looking forward to relaxing and visiting with the other annual early arrivals. Since I missed the Festival, I am anxious to see everyone. ❁



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FIRST BECAME
LACQUAINTED WITH
RYK VISSCHER'S
HUNTING ADVENTURES
back in 2015 when Dan Novotny and I moose hunted with Ryk's outfit northeast of Edmonton, Alberta. My guide on that hunt, Eric Jensen, was a great guy, knew the hunting area well, and was very knowledgeable about bowhunting moose. With his help, I arrowed a young meat bull on the third day of the hunt. His brother, Amos, who Ryk referred to as "the Moose Whisperer", guided at one of Ryk's other camps and when I went back in 2023 to moose hunt, I had Amos as my guide. We covered a lot of miles together and while he did whisper sweet nothings to several big bulls, none of them would come into longbow range and I went home emptyhanded after eight days of hard hunting.

During our time together, though, Amos would often tell me about the spring bear hunts he ran for Ryk and he made it sound like so much fun that I knew I would have to come back to play again. His clients consistently killed a good percentage of P&Y bears, and they killed several color-phase ones too. I hadn't bear hunted since 2012, so I figured I was about due for another bruin adventure.

So in mid-May of this year, I found myself playing airport ping pong with longbows and hunting gear, trying to get to Edmonton to attend bear camp. The year had been good to me so far. I retired the first week of January, skewered a nice javelina in March, and



Me and my bear. What a great hunt!

tagged out with my flintlock during Missouri's spring turkey season. Adding a bear to the list would be nice, but I was more looking forward to seeing my Canadian friends again.

We arrived at bear camp on Monday afternoon, the 12th, after a three-hour drive north from Edmonton. It was situated in an open area near an abandoned pulp mill. The land and roads are maintained by one of the many oil and gas companies in the area and there was a large shed at the site where the camp stored equipment and used as a place to skin bears. The rest of camp was a collection of wall tents. There were six hunters, and I bunked with two guys that had driven up from northeastern Colorado. One of the other men was from Wisconsin and the last two were from Paris, France! All were repeat customers, except for me and one of the French fellers. Of course, I was the only stickbow shooter. After getting our gear stowed away, and a bite to eat, we

all got ready for our first evening of bear hunting. There were a couple of 3D targets there to practice on and, as luck would have it, that first afternoon I was on fire! I guess I was channeling my inner Howard Hill because everyone in camp remarked at how lethal I was with just a stick and a string. Talk about putting pressure on a guy!

Amos and his crew were currently maintaining 26 different bait sites, so we had plenty of places to choose from. My first sit was at a stand about an hour from camp. There had been a dandy boar visiting it regularly and Amos thought I had a good chance of seeing him. After a lengthy UTV ride through sand and muck, I arrived at the ladder stand that would be my home for the next six hours. Darrel, my wrangler for the evening, nailed a fresh beaver carcass to the tree that the bait barrel was chained to and then left me to fend for myself. I saw seven different bears that day, including a sow and three cubs that practically lived there, but nothing

worthy of burning a tag on. When I got back to camp around 11:30 pm, I learned that two of the hunters had scored already. Not bad for the first day!

After a couple of days of hunting, everyone in camp settled into a routine of sorts. Most of the hunting was done in the afternoon and evening so you could sleep in if you wanted to. I could not. I would hear the generator start up about 6:30 and that was my signal to get up and get some coffee. We had the good fortune of having Kelly Semple cooking for us and I knew everything would be delicious since she had cooked at my last moose camp. An example was the fact that we had appetizers at breakfast. I would go into the mess tent to get coffee, and Kelly would come in around seven with cinnamon rolls and/or muffins, just to hold you over until the proper breakfast was served around eight. After breakfast, the seven guides would go off to their assigned baits to replenish the goodies and retrieve the SD cards from the cameras at each site. They would get back around lunchtime, meet up in the guide tent, and go over the intelligence they had gathered. From that, they would make plans for where each hunter would go for their next sit. All the stands were located less than 20 yards from



This sow and cubs practically lived at that barrel.

the baits, so none were a challenge for my mediocre shooting. However, a few were old hang-on affairs that were accessed via metal pegs that the tree had grown around. I think they must have been initially installed by an NBA player during the offseason because they were way too far apart for this person's legs to reach safely. There were also no safety lines at those stands and after one evening of precariously ascending and descending the tree, I told Amos that I would not be doing that again. A safety harness only works if it is attached to something.

By the fourth day, I was the only person who had not loosed an arrow at a bear. Most of the hunters were working on their second bear or had tagged out completely. I had seen plenty of bears, and had multiple shot opportunities, but I just hadn't seen anything yet that I wanted to put a tag on. Jesse Bruce, one of the guides, had been seeing a nice boar on one of his baits and he asked me if I wanted to sit that one that evening. The only catch was that it was an hour-long ride on a quad back to the site. I told him I was up for just about anything once so let's do it. What unfolded was quite a night.



Bears can be very entertaining!

The quad ride to the bait was just as advertised. I hung on for dear life as Jesse drove through multiple swamps and quagmires. It was a good thing my bow was a takedown! We packed it back up in the pool noodles it traveled in and strapped it and my quiver to the back of the quad to get them to the destination safely. The bait was down in a holler with the stand up on the ridge about 18 yards away. When Jesse went to refresh the site with a new rotten beaver, he told me to hold back because there was a bear already there and another one up in the woods. Normally, the bears will run off when you holler at them to leave but this sow just wouldn't take the hint. He finally got her to leave long enough to do his job and help me get up in the tree stand. However, she immediately came back and after a thorough examination, we learned why. Her two football-size cubs were about 75 feet up the tree the bait barrel was chained to. This was not a good situation. Jesse decided that he should spend the evening with me, and I wholeheartedly agreed with that decision. Fortunately, there were two hang-on stands at this location, so he had a place to sit off the ground. We patiently waited for about an hour before Momma called her babies down and they went off in the woods about 50 yards away. As soon as they left, a little boar came in and entertained us with his shenanigans for another three hours. It really got interesting when Mom and the kids decided to come back and she chased Booboo up a tree about 10 feet from us. He finally slunk away

but tried to come back a couple of times before he figured out that he wasn't wanted and left for good. Mom sat down to eat some beaver while the young'uns climbed back up the tree we had initially spied them in. This was the scenario for the rest of the evening. When it came time for us to climb down, Jesse calmly informed the sow of our intentions and we were able to extricate ourselves from the scene without any altercations. We both decided then that our wives didn't



More fun than a barrel of beavers?

need to know about our evening so if you're reading this, Leah, I made it all up. And the video posted on my YouTube channel of the whole deal was generated with AI.

On the second-to-last day of the hunt, Jeremy Gautreau, another guide I had befriended from my last moose expedition, asked me if I wanted to hunt one of his baits that morning. I was the only person by then who hadn't killed a bear, so everyone there was trying to fix that. I told him, "Sure, why not?" and we loaded up in his truck and headed to the site. After we arrived,

I could tell right away that I was gonna like it. Unlike everywhere else I had been, the woods were open and there was quite a bit of room around the bait. Jeremy got me all tucked in and told me he'd be back around noon. I bet he hadn't been gone 15 minutes before the bear I would end up shooting arrived on the scene. The young boar came in behind me and initially thought he needed to come up my tree to get a closer look before I persuaded him with a stern look that I didn't

require his company. He then wandered over to the Beaver Buffet and started chowing down. He wasn't a record book bruin by any stretch, but I liked his blonde muzzle and beautiful coat so I decided I would shoot him if given the chance. Besides, I was tired of being just a bear watcher.

About 20 minutes into me watching this bear, another one showed up around the same size and depending on the light, their pose, etc., I couldn't decide which one I wanted to sling an arrow at. The second bear looked heavier, but wasn't as long, so I figured it was a sow.

At around the 45-minute mark, the first bear rolled the bait barrel to about the 15-yard line and extended his front leg to dig into it. That was what I had been waiting for! I drew, picked my spot, and put an arrow right where I had aimed. The bear whirled around and then quickly walked over to a deadfall 20 yards away. I couldn't see my arrow so I wasn't sure what had taken place. I couldn't see the bear very well either. The second bear continued eating like nothing had happened, so everything was a mystery at that point. Then the

sow rolled the barrel to a different position and I could see my arrow on the ground. Had the arrow bounced out? Did I get a pass-through? Inquiring minds were really needing to know! I settled on the pass-through answer a few minutes later when I finally saw my bear lie down in the deadfall and heard the Death Moan a few minutes after that. Then cautious optimism turned to full elation when I watched the second bear go sniff around on the one I had just shot. Woohoo!

The way Ryk works his bear camp is that you can hunt for a second bear, but if you get it, you pay a \$1000 trophy fee. This makes the hunter really think about whether or not that second bear is worth the money. Everyone but me and one of the French guys had tagged out and I wasn't going to turn loose of that kind of cash unless a real trophy gave me the chance. I hunted the last night at a place where there was a really cool blonde/cinnamon/chocolate bear using the bait. I had seen its photos and I really hoped it would show up. I settled into the stand around 3 pm and got



Now this is a kitchen tent!

to watch a sow and two big cubs and then another Booboo for a long time, but my "trophy" didn't make an appearance until I had only 15 minutes of legal shooting light left. For almost the entire time it was there, it snacked on a beaver carcass nailed to a tree and kept the tree between me and it. With just a couple minutes left, it finally got down on all fours,

turned quartering away, and gave me a shot at 18 yards. I drew my longbow, picked a spot, and then reluctantly let back down. While I was 90% sure I could make the shot, a part of me worried that it was just too dark and I didn't want to take a chance on wounding such a beautiful animal.

After that encounter, Amos decided to give me extended play the next morning and I hunted that spot again while all the other hunters were taken to a hotel in Edmonton for their flights back. It was all for naught, however, but I also got extended play with the camp crew and that made it all worthwhile to me. I flew back home the next day, satisfied with how everything had turned out and happy to reconnect with some old friends from north of the border. If you ever get a hankering for a quality archery hunt in Canada, consider Ryk Visscher and his outfitting business. He takes a fair amount of trad shooters, and all his guides are bowhunters. You won't be disappointed! ❁



Home sweet home for the next week.

THE TOPIC OF SURVIVAL AND WILDERNESS SKILLS

has piqued the interest of the public for decades, and for good reasons. These skills are as old as time and truly could save one's life in certain situations. There have been countless books written and TV shows filmed covering the subject to the extent that most people have some perception of survival skills, but what is lacking is guidance on what ones are practical. I have practiced wilderness skills and bushcraft for nearly fifteen years and of all knowledge I have both acquired and utilized over that time, there is only a handful of skills that I have found to shine above the rest for the average outdoorsperson. Although there are lots of exciting disciplines that could be discussed from friction fires to debris shelters, the utility of those skills for the average Joe pales in comparison to basics, and it is the basics that will save your life.

CLOTHING

Why is this number one on my list? The odds of one starving to death or dying from dehydration in a survival scenario is very unlikely in the lower 48, as most cases where one is either lost or injured, requiring rescue, the individual is going to found in a day or two. The average human can last three days without water and over thirty days with no food, placing those very low on the priority list. However, what can kill a person in hours is hyper/hypothermia (too hot or too cold). Any seasoned primitive skills or survival practitioner will tell you that the best steps one can take toward staying safe while being in the woods are preventative measures, and that begins with your choice of clothing.

Any time one plans on setting foot into nature, the very first step that should be taken is looking at the weather conditions for the duration of time you will be spending out in the elements. Once one has determined the projected

weather forecast, it is time to consider the clothing and footwear. I cannot over emphasize how important the duration of your time in the woods matters. Depending on where one is in the country, temperatures can fluctuate wildly as can the weather in general, so all these factors must be considered, and most is common sense. If there is a chance of rain, pack a poncho, if the temperature is supposed to plummet, pack an extra layer or two. As a bowhunter, my biggest concern is staying dry, so I always have two 50-gallon drum liners in my bag that can be quickly turned into a poncho or a quick set of leg waders to cross creeks.

In short, your first level of protection against the weather conditions is making sure that you are dressed for the occasion. If it is cold, then dress warmly, as you can remove layers as needed. If it is hot outside, then wear clothes that allow the air to circulate while providing protection from the sun. If every person that stepped foot into nature were to make proper dress a priority, deaths from exposure would plummet nationwide.

WATER AND FOOD

The second on my list of rather inglorious survival topics is bringing along plenty of water and sustenance for the time you will be spending outdoors. I could talk ad nauseum about water purification, foraging, trapping, primitive weapons, etc. Just like exposure, the best answer is to not place yourself in the position to need those skills at all. Most hunters will only spend a few hours or a day at most in the woods so to bring enough water to keep yourself hydrated is a very simple precaution. Of course, when



Each of these items Ethan carries serve many purposes and take up little space.

talking about the back country at high altitudes where you will be hunting or camping for multiple days, packing the proper amount of water isn't an option and water purification becomes necessary.

Regardless of duration or location, hydration is very important in all weather conditions and most Americans are always dehydrated to begin with, placing you at a deficit from those three days I mentioned early on. As a rule of thumb, active adults will need anywhere from three quarts to even a gallon over a whole day to remain hydrated. Therefore, morning or evening in the tree stand calls for at least one bottle and maybe a granola bar to get you by. If you happen to find yourself in situations that may require you to purify water, always carry purification tablets with you. Use a bandana or your shirt over the mouth of your container to filter out as many loose particulates as possible, then drop the tablets in as directed for the size of your container.

TOOLS

If there is anything that I never set foot in the woods without, it is some form of a knife and a small saw. Part of my Every-Day-Carry consists of my trusted



Both a Swiss Army Knife and a Mora 511 Basic are excellent choices for the woods.

Victorinox Swiss Army Knife as it possesses both items on the same tool. The survival community will suggest that the best knife for the woods is a very large, heavy, full tang knife that could probably fell an oak tree. This is simply nonsense. What is the purpose of a knife? To cut. In certain cases, a blade that can handle chopping or use to baton through wood can prove useful, but understanding proper knife handling will solve most of those cases.

The average hunter should carry a fixed-blade knife that has a blade length no less than 3" as that length can easily handle the majority of woods task, including game processing. Even more important than the design of your knife is that it is very sharp. A dull knife is dangerous in that it requires more force to cut which could result in self-harm. Of course, what remedies that risk is that one never cuts toward themselves in any way.

I include a small saw in this topic of tools because they are so useful for any outdoorsperson and take up little room. I cannot begin to mention all the uses I have found for a little saw in the deer woods as new uses regularly arise. From trimming shooting lanes to making drag handles that I couple with paracord to pull deer out of the woods, the uses never end.

CORDAGE AND KNOTS

I never go to the woods without a hank of 550 Paracord. Just like a small saw, it takes up no room and the uses are endless. Which leads me to a brief point I would like to make before moving on with this topic. All these items that have been mentioned are important, but they share one quality; they have many uses. Due to the commercialization of hunting, most hunters are weighed down with heavy bags full of things they don't need to go spend a few hours outdoors. If something is going to go into my pockets



The very versatile Bowline knot.

or into my bag it needs to serve at least two or three functions. Knives, saws, and cordage are the kings of this standard. Now, back on track with cordage.

I have used my hank of 550 Paracord for pulling my gear up into my tree stand, making drag handles, tying a deer's hind leg out of the way when field dressing, quick shelters, the list goes on. If you are going to go buy Paracord, be sure you are buying the real thing. True Paracord has 7 "gut" strands that are also very useful for small tasks.

As for knots, the most important one all should know is a "bowline". This knot alone I have found to be more useful than others in that it allows you to make a quick loop at the tag end of any rope that is also easy to get back out. To learn this knot I would suggest doing a YouTube search to find a detailed tutorial.

NAVIGATION

I struggled over this fifth and final point as there are many survival topics that are still practical for the average outdoorsman, but I ultimately landed on navigation as it is very overlooked in society today. Navigation begins with knowing the area you are going to be operating in through study of

aerial photos and topographical maps. Both these tools will help you in developing a good sense of the terrain and landmarks that could be used to guide you back to the truck if you get turned around.

Technology has really changed the game when it comes to land navigation. Most cell phones have mapping and/or GPS capability, not to mention hunting apps like onX that are popular today, almost eliminating the risk of getting lost. Especially in rural areas. However, my military background instilled a great appreciation for the good old map and compass, which I still use on occasion, and I believe every hunter should carry a compass and know how to use it. Often the pursuit of wild game takes us to places with no cell service and using a compass to determine directions of travel is an easy precaution against getting turned around in the backwoods.

Even more important than a compass or GPS is learning how to be aware of your surroundings and develop your sense of direction. When scouting new areas to hunt, I constantly find myself scanning around the woods, taking a mental note of certain trees or ditches that provide me with stationary landmarks that can be used to

guide me back the same way I came in. This may seem very common sense, but many people that end up lost or turned around could avoid such by simply paying better attention to their surroundings.

CONCLUSION

There are so many things I would have loved to include in this piece as I am very passionate about the practice of woodsmanship and primitive skills, but it cannot all fit into one article. However, in closing I will leave you with a couple of bonus thoughts. First, carry a Bic lighter every time you go into the woods. They have tremendous utilitarian value and take up no space. The second one has even more utility than any item you can carry, your mind. Common sense will save your life; there are no two ways around that. A short trip into the woods can quickly turn deadly if you are not respecting nature and being careful. I love everything about being in the backwoods and I want to be out there till I am old, but I have loved ones that depend on me, as does every person reading this article. Make wise decisions when in nature, don't take unnecessary risks, and get home safe. ❁

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ONCE AGAIN I FOUND MYSELF STANDING ON the mountainside in Texas surrounded by rocks and cactus. I was watching my companions, Darren and Russell hustle down the rocky trail to try to catch up with the two javelina I spotted that were now headed out into the flat bottom. It was the first morning of a five-day hunt on the C.E. Miller ranch in the mountains of west Texas. I was glad to be back in this rugged, unforgiving terrain. This was my third trip to this ranch and I was introducing my friends to new and unique country. I had Darren Haverstick with me and also Russell Hines, a friend from Kentucky who had never done this before.

We arrived at the ranch on Sunday, March 2nd, through some terrific winds and awful dust storms. The last part of our drive was interesting while also nerve racking. My truck was covered in dust to the point I could not see out of my driver's window! After getting set up in camp we explored just a bit to get used to the country.

Monday morning started off uneventful for the first few hours so we decided to hike up a 4-wheeler trail leading up the side of the mountain. We hadn't gone very far when I spotted a javelina trotting across the bottom below us. Watching him with binoculars for a couple minutes we soon saw a second one following. I told my companions I would stay there and watch if they wanted to go chase them, so they agreed and started to hustle back down the way we came. The two javelina headed way out into the flat bottom to a water tank that spilled water over and several half barrels filled with cotton seeds for the horses. Eventually Darren and Russell started closing



First blood!

in but without any cover around them. Stalking in on them, Russell managed to get close enough for a shot but he missed just high, shooting through a fence. Darren pursued the second one which took off moving south along the fence but it soon outdistanced him.

However, I felt it was a good first morning as sometimes it can take several days to locate animals. Having killed a few javelina, my main purpose was to act as a guide to try to get Darren and Russell shots. I felt I was halfway there with Russell having a chance. I think we all know how hunting these little critters can be frustrating and rewarding both. On the way back

to camp we spotted three or four javelina alongside the road and Darren got out to try to stalk them. They moved off up the hill and as he followed them, he ended up seeing there were about a dozen but he was unable to close for a shot.

The next morning we went back south to the same area as the day before but a little farther south. Russell split off from Darren and me and went several hundred yards south. Darren and I started easing up the mountain along the side of a large ravine. Taking our time to navigate the rocky ground we moved slowly uphill and then we heard them. The first snarls and squabble between animals. They

were slightly below us somewhere but close. Then we spotted them moving up the opposite steep bank of the ravine spreading out to feed. Darren went into stalk mode moving down to follow them across the ravine and up the steep opposite side. I watched for a bit from there to try to keep track of the animals. As he slowly eased up the hill (there's no such thing as moving fast in the stuff) I started moving back downhill as I could keep track of them easier. I started moving across and slowly uphill trying to stay parallel with Darren while still closing ground on the group. I could tell Darren was not able to keep tabs on the different animals as well, but he was still in the midst of several animals. As I moved slowly angling uphill watching Darren, I spotted a javelina feeding on a prickly pear ahead of me. The wind was pretty brisk at the time and it helped cover any noise we made. While keeping track of Darren's progress, I crept forward until I was maybe eight-nine yards from the javelina which kept taking bites from the prickly pear. I stood there and watched while Darren got in position for a shot above me. I wasn't going to shoot



Russel with his first javelina.

this one and risk spooking the whole group before he got a shot. He had one below him on the hillside and I watched as he drew down on it. I couldn't tell from

my position, but the shot was a bit longer and at a very steep downhill angle. Darren took the shot, but it went low and several javelina bolted but the one in front of me didn't pay attention. I signaled to Darren I was going to shoot and then took a shot while he watched to make sure we could keep track of it. I shot the javelina and the most surprising thing happened. There was literally no reaction other than it taking a step backwards. I decided to shoot again but missed at that close range deflecting off a cactus. Then the javie fell over and flopped



The dust made for some beautiful sunrises.

around a bit sliding several yards downhill but was unable to get up. I administered a final shot but simply couldn't believe it hadn't run or anything. Amazing. We then got together and dragged the javie downhill several hundred yards to the road so I could bring the truck to it. Russell met up with us having had no luck.

That afternoon we headed up the trail leading up the mountain the way we started the day before. It was a good steep hike so after getting up high on a more level area we were ready for a rest. Russell sat down to rest and watch while Darren and I went over a little ways to look out over the big ravine we had been in that morning. Having barely gotten over there, Russell calls to say he has spotted a good one just across from him. I said "Go after it". Darren and I then hustled back that way just in time to see Russell shoot that one and then put a good finishing shot on it. We couldn't believe all that happened so fast. Russell's first javelina! It was a good drag back down the mountain, about a mile to the truck.

Wednesday morning we once again headed to the same area. It dawned a nice clear day in contrast to the couple previous days of the sun being obscured by dust clouds. We walked down the road and then moved uphill toward the same ravine as yesterday hoping to move in and catch them just getting started moving around early in the



We piled them up that morning!

morning. We didn't go far at all when we spotted several up in front of us. I held my position as Darren moved toward them. We had one large one doing a stare down toward us for a while but never spooked.

Darren kept easing up slowly and had a couple come out close to him but then the wind changed and they bolted back into the ravine they came from. I caught a glimpse of one climbing up the opposite bank so we moved back downhill and circled south for a ways and started stalking up hill hoping to spot them. After a couple hundred yards we were moving slowly still hunting in terrain that was not nearly as steep as the day before. Darren was to my left 25 yards or so when I spotted one up in front of me. I signaled to him I could see one then was able to tell he had spotted some also. I held my spot then watched as I saw a javelina just past him and then watched as he shot. I could hear it running and I was ready to shoot as it was circling toward me. But then

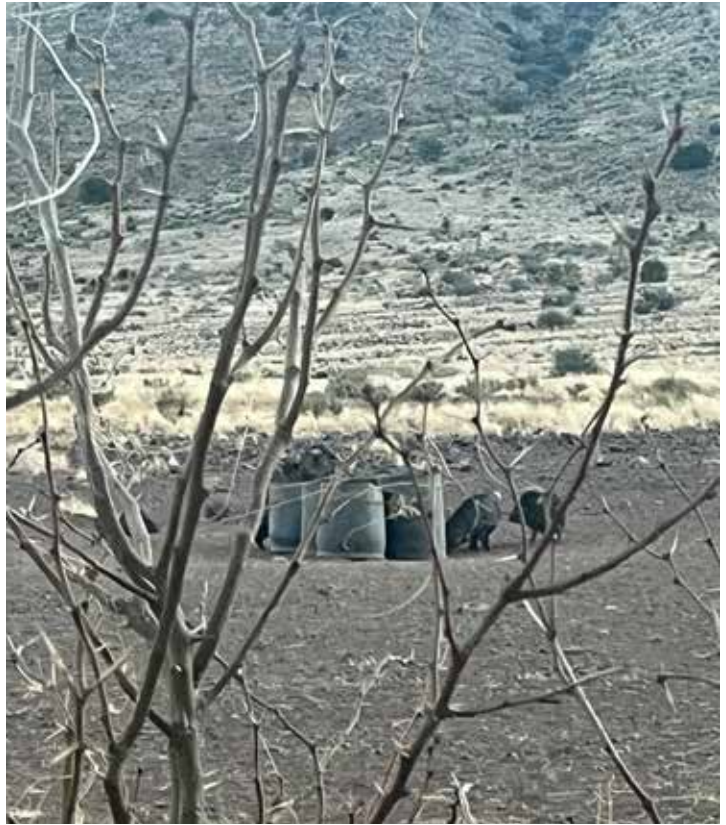


Some rough and steep county.

it collapsed in the midst of several cactus. It was down but not out. We moved in on it and it was still alive but not getting up. Darren put another shot in it, but the brush and cactus prevented a good angle. At the shot it bolted but only about eight yards and then Darren put the perfect kill shot in it resulting in it flopping about and breaking all of his arrows.

As we dragged it out of the bushes and were getting a couple pictures, Russell came back to join us having heard the commotion. We told him they had been right above us and might still be there, so he took off that way. I swear he wasn't gone five minutes when he called to say, "I got one". We couldn't believe it! It was a great morning.

That evening I decided to sit by the water tank which turned out to be a fun evening. I got set up there and first I had six big ones come in behind me from a direction least expected. Of course, they were directly in my wind so they spooked off. Then I had 12 more come trotting in to feed at the cotton seed barrels. It's a blast watching them as some actually jump in the barrels to feed. None of these ever came near the water where I expected, as we had seen several previously all use the water. Then I had two trot in behind me and I ended up missing one cleanly. Still a fun evening.



They love that cotton seed!

Russell had his limit so he would just wander around looking at the country. I wasn't sure where Darren hunted that night, but he was up in the of the ravines.

The next morning was uneventful except for the fact that Darren and I hunted up opposite sides of another ravine to the point where I was far enough up I didn't want to come back down due to it being so steep and rocky. I ended up finally topping out and then walking a couple miles to come back down the road we came up two days before. Darren ended up about the same but being further north he came back down the steep hillsides. That evening we hunted back at the water tank so we could rest our bodies. We had a close encounter with a lone javelina but no shots resulted.

The next day most of the rest of the group pulled out to head for home. We took a drive to the north area where they had been hunting and seeing a lot of game, but we didn't see anything of interest and then came back and headed for home with more dust storms developing in the bottoms. I considered it a great trip with all three of us taking animals and experiencing some new and unique country. ❁



My arrow went through the critter and stuck in a cactus.



Potluck dinner Saturday night.



Brian Peterson's head-shot tom. He called it ahead of time.



Heading to the 3D course.



Lining up at the fish fry.



Bill Brown frying us some delicious fish!



The UBM is all about families.



Shooters on the line at the 3-Person Skirmish.



3-Person Skirmish winning team: Mike Harms, Steve Young, and Butch Ball.



Larry's Gang proudly wearing this year's colors!



We had a good crowd for the event.

I WAS ASKED A FEW MONTHS ago by a fellow UBM member about how they should answer a person who is thinking of joining the club when they ask, "What's in it for me?" At first, I thought the question would be a simple one to answer, but when I really thought about it, I realized that I couldn't think of a reply that was quick and easy. In our world of instant everything, there is no immediate gratification for someone buying a membership – no secret decoder ring, no fancy handshake, or silly password. Oh, they might get a decal or patch in the mail from Brenda in a bit, but I could think of no "hook" that would quickly persuade a person to fork over their hard-earned cash in exchange for a membership.

This really troubled me for a while because we desperately need to recruit new, young members to traditional bowhunting in general, and the United Bowhunters of Missouri in particular. But then I realized that not having a "quick fix" is really what the club is all about anyway. Traditional bowhunting is about patience, studying your quarry, and understanding its environment. There are no easy answers or solutions. So how do we sell

prospective members on joining? One way is by letting them know about the vast networking opportunities that become available when they sign up. I use the term, "networking", because that is the buzzword that all young people seem to understand. Us older folks just call it "making new friends".

This all came to me in early April when UBM Vice President, Joel Davis, invited me up to his cabin on Truman Lake for a weekend of mushroom hunting, eating, and visiting. There were going to be several other UBM members in attendance, plus some Davis family friends, so it sounded like a good time was in the making. I got a kitchen pass from the wife for that Saturday and called Joel back to confirm my reservation. Any person who shares their mushroom spots with others is eligible for



Cole Davis and Jason White getting ready to fry fish.

sainthood in my book, so I was certainly looking forward to the encounter.

I arrived early Saturday, and despite having already eaten, Joel had breakfast waiting. I decided it would be rude to decline so I had a delicious breakfast burrito while Joel introduced me to his childhood friend, Jeff Barnard, and Jeff's son, Andrew. Cole Davis was also there, and he introduced me to his friend, Brad Ellington. Past UBM President, Dennis Harper, showed up a little while later and we all geared up for a morning of mushroom hunting.



Some of the morels found.



It's hard to beat fresh blackberry cobbler!

We spent the next few hours traipsing around the woods, finding fungi, and generally enjoying the outdoors and each other's company. We didn't need a wheelbarrow to haul our mushrooms home, but we did find enough to enjoy with supper that evening. Once back at the cabin, we were treated to a fine lunch by our hosts and then the hunting lies started in earnest. UBM Board member, Arthur Kanneman, had shown up by then and the atmosphere was downright party-like. I noticed the young man, Andrew, who had little experience with hunting, seemed to enjoy the tales he was hearing and he would occasionally ask questions to clarify something or the other. "This is good", I thought to myself. Maybe we are planting the seed.

Later on in the afternoon, a bunch of us went to look at an eagle's nest near the cabin and found some more shrooms along the way. The terrain was magical, with this huge limestone rock outcropping and a giant nest in the top of a huge sycamore tree. We were treated to several eagles flying close but, alas, none lit in their home of sticks and twigs. Nevertheless, it was a relaxing way to spend some time and it gave us a chance to digest our big lunch to make way for the gastronomic finale.

On the menu for supper was fried fish, zucchini fries, fried morels, slaw, and more stuff than I can even remember. My contribution to the feast was a blackberry cobbler and vanilla ice cream. I found it heartwarming that everyone who had participated in one of these cookouts before knew of all the prep work that needed to be done, and the group worked like a well-oiled machine to accomplish the tasks. Fish



Arthur and Dennis lying to one another.

were cut up, vegetables chopped, mushrooms cleaned, and the fish cookers were lit. Another friend of Joel's, Jason White, had brought his son, Easton, up for youth turkey season and Jason oversaw the general Frying of Things. And quicker than you can say, "Mother, I'm hungry!", we were up to our elbows in Ozarks delicacies.

As I sat next to Andrew while working through my second plate of goodies (again, I didn't want anyone's feelings hurt), I could tell that his first experience with this kind of gathering was a good one. Besides the smile on his face, and slobber on his chin, he commented to me that he had some friends who would really enjoy attending such a soiree. That comment made me think back to the question I mentioned at the beginning of this story, and I knew then that I had a good answer for it, just not a quick one. Because of the UBM, I have met some amazing people and some of them have become my closest friends. We've broken bread together, laughed and cried together, and maybe even slung arrows at critters together. And over the years, a bond has been formed that goes way beyond what "networking" means. I have gained a new family, and I'll tell you right now, that membership fee was the best money I ever spent!❀



The eagle's nest we watched.

UBM Membership Application



Send to: Brenda Hudson/UBM Executive Secretary
24933 Helium Road
Newtown, MO 64667

Name: _____ Phone: () _____

Address: _____ County: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Email Address: _____

Age: _____ Years Bowhunted: _____ Hunting Bow Weight: _____ # @ _____ ”

of Family Members who bowhunt _____ Names: _____

Species Hunted in MO: _____

Other States: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a game law/code violation in any state? Yes: _____ No: _____
If yes, please explain on a separate sheet.

Date: _____ Applicants Signature: _____

Choose Membership

Individual: Benefits include: One vote per paid member, bi-monthly newsletter, seminars, annual banquet and rendezvous, big and small game awards, and voice in bowhunting. All memberships include family participation and eligibility for recognition.

_____ One year \$30.00 Decal

_____ Three year \$75.00 Patch, Decal

_____ Lifetime \$300.00 Patch, Hat, Decal

Business Benefits include: Same as above plus business card ad in each newsletter issue and one free table at Festival.

_____ One year \$50.00 Decal

UBM Logo Items Available

_____ Patch @ \$3.00 each; _____ Decal (\$1.50) each; _____ Lapel Pin @ \$5.00 each

Total Enclosed \$ _____ (Check or Money Order)

Membership: Accepted _____ Denied _____ Date: _____

Note: Application must be filled out completely. Please allow 2 weeks for processing

07/05/25

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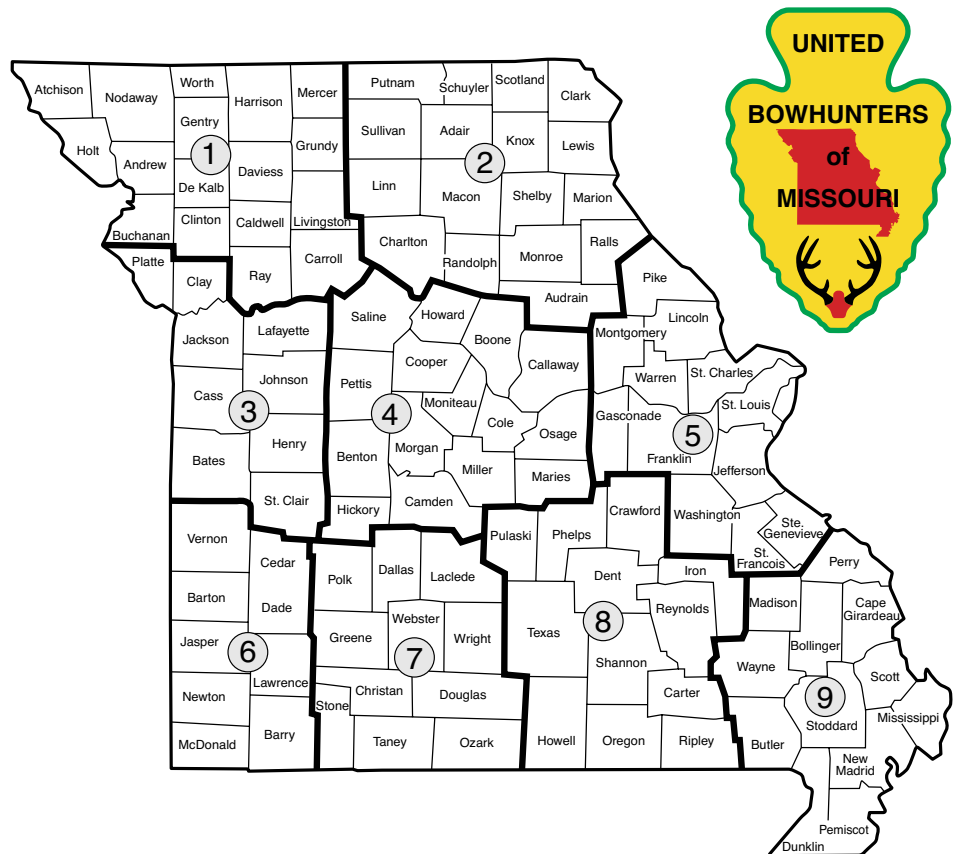
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