THE SLAM ON THE CHEAP
IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO PLANNING AND A LITTLE LEGWORK

ICE OUT CHANNEL CATS
EARLY SPRING TRICKS TO CATCH FINE-TASTING CATFISH

SIMPLY RUNNING
LESS CAN BE MORE WITH ATVS IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

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A New Conservation Initiative on the Horizon

Theodore Roosevelt once said, “The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets, which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value.” His words are just as true today, even as our growing population puts more demands on the land, and funding for our public lands and wildlife is cut in this struggling economy.

One of the greatest legacies we can leave behind is the outdoor heritage that defines North America with its vast and beautiful public parks, refuges, diverse fish and wildlife, and hunting and fishing opportunities for the average citizen. The future of our natural resources depends on our actions today. Together, we can make the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance the largest community of union sportsmen and sportswomen committed to preserving our outdoor spaces for generations to come.

Through our Boots on the Ground conservation program, USA members are already helping conserve habitat critical for healthy wildlife populations, developing mentoring programs to pass on our nation’s outdoor heritage to the next generation, and volunteering their time and skills to projects that enhance affordable access to places to hunt, fish and shoot.

This year, we’re turning our attention to an even more ambitious project—renewing, rebuilding and restoring America’s state parks. There are 6,624 state parks in the U.S. that comprise more than 14 million acres of open space, 41,725 miles of trails, 207,063 campsites and 7,161 cabins and receive nearly three-quarters of a billion annual visits.

Not only do state parks contribute to our physical and emotional health and protect irreplaceable natural and cultural resources, but they generate $20 billion in economic benefits to state and local communities. Yet they are continually faced with budget cuts and looming closures and have a backlog of repair and restoration projects just waiting for capable and experienced craftsmen.

And there are no more skilled or experienced craftsmen and women than union members! We are currently laying the groundwork for a program tentatively called Adopt-A-Park through which USA members, like you, will enlist the help of their families, friends and fellow union brothers and sisters to renew, rebuild and restore America’s treasured state parks.

Whether restoring a weathered visitors center, rebuilding the park ranger station or modernizing the facilities, USA members will come together through this program to exhibit pride, craftsmanship, dedication and unity while demonstrating to all park visitors, first-hand, the best of what being union in America really means.

We’ve already met with the National Association of State Park Directors and America’s State Parks Foundation to identify some signature projects in selected parks across the country. This program can have a tremendous impact on our state parks and the billions of people who visit them. We look forward to sharing more details with you as this program develops.

Fred Myers
Executive Director/CEO
Union Sportsmen’s Alliance
Are You Protected?

USA introduces firearm insurance exclusively for union members

by Kate Cywinski

Whether your muzzleloader was passed down from your grandfather, you still carry the rifle you used to harvest your first whitetail, or you saved up for that impressive new shotgun, your firearms and accessories are very valuable.

But what if you drop your rifle from your treestand and bust your stock, your favorite duck gun ends up at the bottom of a river, or your gun case and contents are damaged or lost by an airline? Are your firearms protected if the unthinkable happens? Most firearms owners are unsure if they have appropriate coverage or are unaware that their homeowner's policy might have inadequate limits and severe restrictions.

The good news is that you don't have to be like most firearm owners. Created by union members exclusively for union members and their families, the Union Sportsmen's Firearm Insurance (USFI) program offers comprehensive coverage that gives you the peace of mind to know that your firearms and accessories are fully protected.

The USFI program offers some of the broadest coverage available for your valuable firearms collections and doesn't require serial numbers, photographs or appraisals to qualify. And the application process is quick and easy; you can apply online and have your policy downloaded in minutes.

Plus, it's a purchase you can feel good about because you're not only protecting your firearms; you're also protecting the brotherhood. A portion of every USFI policy purchased helps support the Union Sportsmen's Alliance and its efforts to unite the union community to educate future generations of sportsmen and women, conserve wildlife habitat and volunteer for projects that improve access to quality places to hunt, fish and shoot. Because the future of America's outdoor sporting heritage is just as important to you as your firearms, purchasing a USFI policy is truly a win-win.

Three Ways to Get Protected:
1. Sign up online at www.UnionGunInsurance.com
2. Call 877-674-3124 (toll-free) to speak to a live representative to take your order.
3. Complete and return the application form on the right

“As secretary of USA Shooting, a Union Sportsmen’s Alliance board member, a competitive shooter, a lifelong hunter and husband to a crack shot wife, guns are an important part of my life. Because I want to protect my guns from damage or theft, I’ve done my homework on the various firearm insurance policies available. I can say, without a doubt, USFI offers the broadest and most user-friendly coverage of any policy on the market.”

— Roofers International President and USA Board Member Kinsey Robinson
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USA’s Five-Year Celebration Generates $366,000 to Support Conservation

by Kate Cywinski

“You know how lively a conversation can get when hunting or fishing buddies are sitting in a cabin or around a campfire sharing their favorite stories from the woods or water. So you can imagine what happens when you get a couple hundred sportsmen in a room together!

You could actually feel the energy on February 12 as more than 250 union partners, sponsors and friends filled the lobby of the AFL-CIO headquarters to celebrate the USA’s 5-year anniversary. Hosted by USA Board Chairman and AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, the event generated $366,000 in cash and value-in-kind to help continue to grow the USA and fund its conservation initiatives like Boots on the Ground.

“For the first time, the union sportsmen’s community has an outdoor conservation organization of its own,” said USA Executive Director Fred Myers. “Our 5-year anniversary dinner was a chance to reflect on how far the USA has come and thank those who have helped grow the USA from a concept to an organization that boasts nearly 60,000 active members, an award-winning TV show, a shooting and banquet series and, most important, a conservation program that benefits communities throughout North America.”

Guests enjoyed fin, fur and feather inspired hors d’oeuvres, bid on outdoor gear and trips, met Brotherhood Outdoors Co-Hosts Daniel Lee Martin and Julie McQueen and enjoyed the fellowship of sportsmen and women from the union world and outdoor industry. Guest Speaker Dan Ashe, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Director, and Keynote Speaker Joe Elton, President of America’s State Parks Foundation, also shared with attendees the value of America’s outdoor resources and some of the challenges they face in today’s economy.

“All night we heard compliments from guests about the great food and wine, the displays showcasing USA’s history, the auction items and the 5-year anniversary commemorative Carhartt jackets,” said USA Deputy Director Mike d’Oliveira. “We couldn’t have put on such a successful event without the help of so many of our partners, who believe in our conservation mission and have pledged their continued support.”

Many attendees left with outdoor gear, trips or firearms—donated largely from USA’s corporate partners—from the live and silent auctions and raffles, which raised a whopping $37,005 for the USA and its conservation mission.

Event guests included members of USA’s Board of Directors and many union leaders as well as representatives from some top outdoor brands including Field & Stream, Buck Knives, Remington, The Sportsman Channel and Carhartt.

“Though we only had space for a limited number of guests, we would like to have invited every one of our USA members because they are the foundation of the USA,” said Myers. “And we thank them for joining the USA, attending our shoots and dinners, sharing their stories and photos, applying for Brotherhood Outdoors, supporting Boots on the Ground and simply telling their brothers and sisters about this union-sportsmen community.”
It’s been a year since Ruger introduced its American Rifle, the company’s plunge into the booming and crowded low-cost, bolt-action rifle market. That’s more than enough time for disgruntled customers to voice their opinions on shooting and hunting forums and online comment sections. Good luck finding a bad review on this gun, however. They are hard to find.

With a MSRP of just $449 and a real-world retail price of less than $400, it’s easy to assume the Ruger American Rifle is just another poorly-built, assembly-line gun with the single purpose of duping budget-minded hunters out of their hard-earned cash. Now that gun writers and real-world consumers have had a season to carry this rifle through the woods, the American has proven it is none of those. It’s a solid, straight-shooter that lives up to the hype.

Ruger, however, charged its engineers with the task of building a rifle from scratch that included the features high-end customers demand with a price tag anyone could afford. Instead of building a watered-down version of their venerable Model 77, the company instead chose to build a rifle from the ground up with an entirely new action, trigger and style. It took just 10 months to go from the design room to the gun store.

Hardcore Ruger fans may be disappointed with the American. It’s nothing like the Model 77. Hunters and shooters looking for a quality gun at an affordable price, however, will be pleased. The trigger is smooth and clean and adjustable from 3 to 5 pounds of pull by simply turning a set screw at the front of the trigger mechanism. The sliding, two-position tang safety makes this gun suitable for left-handed shooters, although Ruger has no plans for a left-handed version yet. The bolt can be lifted and a round loaded or unloaded when the safety is in the on position.

Even better, the gun is built with an original and patented free-floating barrel system, resulting in better accuracy at long ranges. It includes two cast stainless steel V-blocks molded into the stock and two hex-head steel screws that secure the action to the stock.

The rotary box magazine holds four standard rounds and quietly clips in with a gentle push and drops out with a quick flip of the front-mounted lever. It stays put and does not rattle, a small but important feature for noise-conscious deer hunters. The bolt has dual locking lugs and a short, 70-degree throw, making follow-up shots quick and smooth. The short throw also eliminates any possible interference from a wide-diameter scope.

The synthetic stock is solid, stylish and functional and includes a contoured, grooved foregrip and a grooved pistol grip for sure handling in gloves or foul weather.

If that’s not enough to convince you, consider this: “American” isn’t just a name the marketing team came up with to appeal to the patriotic shooters among us. The rifle and all of its components are made right here in America. The only problem, at least from Ruger’s perspective, is that they may have turned the American into the company’s standard-bearer.
Spring is in the air. As the snow melts, the weather warms and days get longer, union volunteers are lacing up their boots for conservation projects that help pass on our outdoor heritage, preserve wildlife habitat and improve outdoor access for communities across the country. Below is a snapshot of projects in the works.

**New Jersey** – Members of Electrical Workers Local 351 are building pheasant boxes for the New Jersey Fish and Game Department.

**Houston, Texas** – Members of Electrical Workers Local 66 are working with the Texas Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to build mobile blinds to be used for handicap hunts.

**Dallas, Texas** – Cedar Hills State Park has a number of bridges that are warped and dangerous for hikers. Volunteers from Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 100, Beard Integrated Systems, Brandt Engineering and possibly IUEC, IUPAT, SMWIA, IBEW and additional UA locals will reconstruct and secure the bridges to provide safe hiking opportunities for the public.

**Central Illinois** – Members of Laborers’ Local 231 will be working with the Illinois DNR to build hacking towers, which will be used at Anderson Lake in the western side of the state to release osprey—an endangered species in Illinois—gradually and naturally back into the wild.

**Northern Illinois** – In 2012, members of the Painters District Council 30 teamed up with the Illinois Conservation Foundation to paint the new Torstenson Youth Conservation Education Center in Pecatonica, Illinois. This year, members of Electrical Workers Local 196 will trim trees and clear debris at the campsites on the Torstenson Family Farm.

**Baton Rouge, Louisiana** – After the success of the USA’s three Take Kids Fishing events in Ohio, Illinois and Wisconsin last year, members of Electrical Workers Local 995 are putting together another kids fishing day way down south in Louisiana.

**Western Wisconsin** – Last year, the Western WI AFL-CIO and Western WI Building Trades locals hosted more than 100 youth and their parents and guardians for a day of fishing at Pettibone Beach Lagoon in LaCrosse, WI. This year, they are teaming up again to host the 2nd Annual Take Kids Fishing Day on June 9.

**Twin Cities, Minnesota** – Members of Operative Plasterers and Cement Masons Local 633 will lay the foundation for the trap houses at a local shooting facility that holds high school trap leagues.

**Vancouver/Washington** – Dustin Hysmith, a member of Sheet Metal Workers Local 16 and the lead committee member for this project, is working with the local community to hold the Annual Klineline Kids Fishing Day on Saturday, April 13 for youth in the Vancouver/Washington area. More than 2,000 children, ages 5-14, and their parents are expected to attend and will have the opportunity to experience and learn about the sport of fishing. Friday, April 12 will be a dedicated Special Needs Kids Fishing Day.
Can Energy, Fish, Wildlife and Sportsmen Coexist?

**USA partner, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, proposes a balance.**

By Whit Fosburgh, TRCP President and CEO

We know that citizens of our nation need energy. But what about fish, wildlife and wild places? These are just as important, and sportsmen certainly know this to be true. Yet as energy development such as oil, gas, solar, wind and geothermal continues to increase, the threats to fish, wildlife and public-lands hunting and fishing opportunities often are overlooked or outright ignored.

Developing energy resources on our public lands is important to our economy and future energy independence, but such development must be done in a way that balances commodity production with conservation of fish and wildlife habitat and upholds opportunities to hunt and fish.

Balance – let’s think about that concept for a moment. America’s economic crisis showed how important it is to maintain a balance of jobs and economic input from a variety of sources to help weather the hard times. A recent study by Sportsmen for Responsible Energy Development (www.sfred.org) demonstrates the economic importance of hunting and fishing in seven Western states. The study found that counties with a higher percentage of public lands managed for conservation and recreation reported higher levels of jobs, employment rates, per capita income and population growth compared to those with higher percentages of lands managed for commodity production.

Would you want your entire retirement portfolio in one company’s stock or even one mutual fund? Most people seek a balanced portfolio to weather economic storms and cycles, and that is exactly what balancing energy and wildlife can provide our nation’s economy.

Sportsmen and outdoor recreation fuel an estimated $646 billion annual economy that provides jobs and economic stability especially in rural communities. We cannot allow that to be threatened by imbalanced energy development that diminishes fish and wildlife habitat and our sporting opportunities.

Upsetting that balance can have dramatic results. For example, following a decade of extensive oil and gas development in the Pinedale Anticline region in Wyoming, mule deer numbers plummeted more than 60 percent. Sage grouse and pronghorn populations also have decreased in this region, and those losses can only lead to fewer opportunities for sportsmen in the future.

The TRCP and our partners are working hard to uphold our sporting traditions and ensure that energy development is balanced with the needs of fish and wildlife. The TRCP’s FACTS for Fish and Wildlife is a set of principles for balanced development. The key to balance is proper planning and defining resource values for different areas. This allows problems to be addressed in advance and impacts avoided or minimized in the early stages of development. City planners know this all too well – you can’t design the septic system for a subdivision after the houses are built!

Western communities need the jobs provided by logging, mining and energy development. Residents and visitors also want the quality of life and economic benefits provided by the region’s fish, wildlife, scenic landscapes and outdoor recreation. We can, and should, demand both.
The Slam on the Cheap

It all boils down to planning and little legwork.

By Steve Felgenhauer

The grand slam of turkey hunting—four species and many miles—can get downright expensive, but there are ways to keep costs down so even us working stiffs can enjoy it.

Plan your hunt
No matter if you’re traveling across the state or halfway across the country—proper preparation is the first step. Though a well-planned DIY slam is no cakewalk, it is very doable. First, determine season dates and a location; when money is no object, an outfitter provides this but a savvy hunter has to find it on his own—500 miles or more away. The Internet is essential to locate a place or even other hunters who hunt a particular area. Once a hunter is found, tactfully grill him or her about areas to hunt and places to stay. Look at sites like www.floridafishandhunt.com and www.oldgobbler.com.

Splitting costs
Loners need not apply, especially if you want a slam on the cheap. The sheer cost of transportation will run several hundred, if not thousands of dollars. The burden can be distributed if you have a hunting partner or several. Not only does it relieve some of the financial bite, but it also means you can share the chore of driving.

Base camp
A place to stay can be the biggest obstacle when venturing out of your home territory. Sharing a motel room is definitely an
option, but the budget minded who would rather spend more time in the field than on the road should look for areas where camping is an option. Let’s face it, an hour spent driving to your hunting destination will also mean sacrificing sleep and, after a hard day in the field, the last thing you want to do is get behind the wheel of a car for an hour or more.

I have experienced snow, hail, several tornado watches and a monsoon (I was not aware Nebraska had a monsoon season) during turkey season, but despite the weather, a decent tent complete with a cot and a good quality sleeping bag kept me warm and dry.

If you can manage a few extra days knocking on doors of farmers or ranchers to assure them you will leave the area better than you found it, you might get an opportunity to sleep with the turkeys instead of screaming kids at the campground.

A place to hunt
A slam on a budget almost always will necessitate hunting public land. In some locales, the competition is intense vying for a spot to get to a gobbler. In others states with massive expanses of public hunting areas like the Mark Twain National Forest in Missouri, you can hunt and camp for weeks without seeing or hearing another hunter. If you have a hankering for private land, several states like Nebraska offer programs known as Open Fields and Water, which opens more than 230,000 private acres for hunting and fishing. For more information, visit www.outdoornebraska.ne.gov/hunting/programs/openaccess/.

For many hunters, the Osceola will be the most demanding hunt not because they are more difficult to hunt, but because of where they live. Many hunters opt to use an outfitter and then freelance the other three species. A less expensive alternative is swap hunts. Offer a turkey hunter a little hospitality and a hunt for an Eastern in exchange for an Osceola in Florida or a Rio in Texas. Look for swap hunts on hunting forums like those mentioned earlier and even the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance Trade a Trip in the forums located at www.unionsportsmen.org/forums.

If it looks like a duck
One of the hottest spots to hunt turkey in the Midwest is Nebraska, which boasts three of the four species; however, there is a fly in the ointment. For an official NWTF slam, each turkey must be verified as a true-blooded species. Over the years, bloodlines in many areas have been diluted. If an official documented slam is important, you will need to look for true bloods. A call to the turkey biologist of a chosen state will answer any questions.

Best picks for a slam
If I were on a mission to complete a slam on the cheap, I’d head to the Southwest region of Nebraska, more specifically the Lake McConaughty State Recreation Area, which offers plenty of campsites with modern facilities for a crack at an Eastern/Hybrid.

Sleeping close to the birds.

For the Osceola, the Richloam WMA and the Upper Hillsborough WMA are surefire bets. If you have a boat or canoe, the Kissimmee River PUA or Kissimmee Chain of Lakes Area are also good. Go to www.myfwc.com to research and learn the regulations as they differ from area to area.

For the Merriam’s, South Dakota is tough to beat, especially the Black Hills region just south of Mt. Rushmore. Nestled in the hills away from the highways and tourists near Nemo is Boxelder Forks Campground—just one of the 31 campgrounds in the Black Hills National Forest. The National Forest covers more than one million acres with more than 80 percent of it open to hunting. Rest assured there are plenty of birds.

With liberal tags available and a full-30 day season, consider a stop off in the western section of the Sooner State, south of Arnett, Oklahoma for a crack at a Rio. Packsaddle Wildlife Management Area offers plenty of birds and nine primitive camp sites.

It all boils down to planning and a little legwork.

Ready. Set. Slam.
New Faith in Public Land Hunting
Scouting and patience pay off for Texas waterfowlers

By Kate Cywinski

Sure, it's nice to own a big piece of property or have access to private property that you have to yourself or share with family or a few close buddies, but that's not the case for many of us. So that leaves public land, which presents some challenges but can also produce some major rewards.

David Myers was introduced to waterfowl hunting by his dad, USA's Executive Director Fred Myers, at a very young age and was immediately hooked. Growing up in Mississippi, he had access to thousands of acres of hunting land through families and friends, but when he moved to Texas, he found himself back to square one.

“Finding a place to waterfowl hunt was extremely challenging at first because you either have to know someone who'll give you permission to hunt their land or pay a lot of money for leases on private land. I’ll be honest, I had very little experience hunting on public land,” Myers said. “There’s a negative stigma attached to public land hunting, and I was under the impression that it can be dangerous and was initially turned off by it.”

That was until he met Keith Ballard. Unlike Myers, Ballard got his start in waterfowl hunting on public land. He and his dad decided they were going to get into the sport together, so they researched gear, equipment and the public land available.

They learned that with the large number of man-made watering holes for cattle, soil conservation lakes and Army Corps lakes in Texas, there are public and private lands available within a reasonable driving distance, even from major cities.

Through trial and error, Ballard discovered that being successful on public land hunts often means studying the land and scouting for areas that are off the beaten path—places that may require a long walk if you don’t have a boat or ATV access is restricted. The availability of cell phones and GPS today makes that easier because you can walk large areas and then upload the data to topo maps or compare it to aerial photographs to find the best access points. In addition to putting some miles on your boots, success hunting public lands also means getting out there early, being patient and understanding that not every hunt will produce limits.

“I really enjoy waterfowl hunting because it's something I can do locally, and it still allows me time with family,” Ballard said. “I typically hunt Saturday mornings and sometimes Sunday before church.”

When Myers met Ballard at church, they discovered their shared interest in waterfowling. And when Myers accepted Ballard’s invitation to join him on a duck hunt, his faith in public land hunting began to change.

Last January, Ballard took Myers to a place he had scouted on Lavon Lake, managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Wylie, TX. Though the area had been experiencing a drought, Ballard continued scouting and hunting through a slow season with minimal birds.

“The main lake body had receded and created large dry areas that allowed vegetation to grow up. Recent rains created very small areas of flooded vegetation, which held a few inches of water in an area only a few hundred yards long by 40 yards wide,” Ballard explained.

Once they chose one of those spots, Ballard and Myers set up a small blind using loose vegetation from the lake bottom combined with tank cover (military style netting). According to Ballard, it's hard to make a big spread of decoys look realistic late in the season with a small area of water, so they hunted over a dozen decoys.

“It all paid off, and we finally got the right conditions and found some birds,” Ballard said. “The ultimate satisfaction is putting together a hunt that provides bird limits. On this hunt, we each got our six duck limit—a mix of gadwall, green wing teal, pintails, widgeon and mallards.”

Through scouting and hunting with Ballard, Myers gained a whole new perspective on public land hunting.

“That really is that you're competing with other hunters for prime spots, so naturally, you have to arrive early,” Myers said. “The upside is that you have access to tens of thousands of acres throughout the state. With Keith’s help and encouragement, I found that scouting public land really puts you ahead of the game. You just need a couple back-up plans in case you oversleep and your honey-hole gets taken. I guess the old saying applies, if it was easy, everyone would do it!”
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Everyday Sportsmen – Extraordinary Adventures

Highlights from Brotherhood Outdoors Season 4

Stalking Vancouver Island Black Bear
Mark Spreadborough of Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 290 joined the Brotherhood Outdoors crew in British Columbia in hopes of harvesting a black bear with his great-grandfather’s 1895 Winchester (the gun coined “Big Medicine” by Theodore Roosevelt). During the hunt, he and his guide stalked so close to a young black bear (not a shooter) that Mark nearly dropped his phone on it while taking a picture.

Saltwater Fishing in the Florida Keys
Retired Electrical Workers Local 124 member and avid bass fisherman Leroy Shull experienced a whole new challenge when he joined the Brotherhood Outdoors crew in the Florida Keys and hooked into some huge saltwater fish for the first time. He also discovered his own acrobatic skills when he was walking along the beach and nearly stepped on a 3 ft. iguana. Unfortunately, the cameras weren’t rolling to catch him jumping about 10 feet in the air.

Bowfishing Flying Fish in Illinois
Invasive Asian carp are causing major damage in the Illinois River and pose a serious threat to the Great Lakes, so Brotherhood Outdoors chose Bill Schaber of Elevator Constructors Local 14 to help combat the growing population hands on—archery style! It was Bill’s first time bowfishing, but amidst getting slapped in the face and knocked off his feet by flying fish, he discovered he’s pretty good at it.

Glassing for New Mexico’s Big Bull Elk
Dan Reyes is a proud member of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 412, and when he’s not on the job, he stays busy as a professional guide in New Mexico. In this episode, he invited Brotherhood Outdoors co-host Daniel Lee Martin on a late season, muzzleloader hunt for bull elk. The trick to this hunt was getting the bull within range of the primitive weapon and keeping up with Reyes as they climbed rocky cliffs and mountainsides and covered a lot of ground over rough terrain. Along the way, Reyes provided a bit of a history lesson about the ancient Indian tribes that inhabited the area.

Striper Fishing - New York Style
What happens when you put a bunch of New Yorkers on a fishing boat with a camera crew from Brotherhood Outdoors? Non-stop action, proud and loud excitement, and tons of striped bass! Jason Delgado from Laborers’ Local 79 invited co-hosts Daniel Lee Martin and Julie McQueen on a fishing trip off the coast of Long Island. Wind, rain, crashing waves and an oncoming hurricane may have caused the group to change course, but it didn’t stop them from having the time of their lives and catching some hefty fish.

Waterfowling in The Prairie State
For Larry Lucco and Dustin Ramage—cousins and 3rd and 4th generation members of Laborers’ Local 100—union, family and outdoor traditions run deep. Avid waterfowlers, these guys know how to call ducks, and they invited the Brotherhood Outdoors crew to check out their hunting grounds in Illinois. The hunting may have started slow, but a snow storm that brought 50 mph wind gusts also brought in the ducks, which were sometimes nearly invisible until within range. Joining the excitement was Dustin’s newly trained dog, Jake, who became a TV star when his first retrieve was captured on camera.

Watch Brotherhood Outdoors on Sportsman Channel Sundays at 11 a.m. ET
Quick Shooting for Fast-Flying Texas Quail and Hog
It's not every day you get to hunt with a professional shooter! On this trip, the Brotherhood Outdoors crew invited Diane Sorantino, a police officer with PBA Local 59, on a quest for Texas hog and quail. A member of Team Beretta and the National Sporting Clays Association Team USA, Diane has two World Championship titles to her name, so she was a quick shot when it came to quail. Big wild boars, on the other hand, were a whole new target that co-hosts Daniel Lee and Julie were happy to introduce her to. This combination hunt was full of good advice, quick shooting, and fast paced Brotherhood action!

Putting the Sneak on Arizona Mulies and Javelina
Maine resident Michael McShane, a member of Fire Fighters Local 2909, learned quickly that archery hunting in the east is very different from bow hunting out west when he joined the Brotherhood Outdoors crew for an Arizona mule deer and javelina hunt. Guided by fellow IAFF member, JP Vicente of Big Chino Outfitters, and his two sons, Michael experienced hunting he'll never forget...belly-crawling across rugged terrain, ditching his boots for a quieter stalk and nearly collapsing from the high altitude and adrenaline.

Enter for your chance to Win!

www.UnionSportsmen.org/survey

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Turn Two Cents into A Gun!

Brotherhood Outdoors is your union-dedicated show and season 4 brought lots of new elements... new hosts, time, graphics and more. We want to know what you thought of the changes. To show how much we value your two cents, we'll enter you in a drawing for a Beretta A400 shotgun when you complete a short, online survey by May 5, 2013.

Return on Investment

By Kate Cywinski

Longtime waterfowler and member of the USA and Steelworkers Local 13-2001, Dan Watkins has discovered “the best return on investment there ever was,” but that return has nothing to do with money or gear. Watkins has been hunting since his dad put him in a duck blind at five years old. He’s hunted deer, hog and turkey, but his passion is waterfowl.

A few years ago, Watkins’ hunting buddy, Kevin Meadows, received an unexpected call from a man named David Bradshaw, representing Paralyzed Veterans of America, asking if he would take some wounded veterans hunting. Meadows immediately called Watkins and another friend, Jared Langham, to see if they would help.

“Of course, we said yes,” Watkins said. Not only did they take four wounded heroes on a successful 2-day teal hunt, but they secured donations from the community for gear, bought supplies with their own money and got their wives to cook breakfast and dinner for the veterans. Watkins’ union helped out too, opening the union hall for the group to have a last hoorah with lunch and gifts.

For Watkins, Meadows and Langham, there was no going back after that first experience. They discovered an unbelievable return on investment in the smiles on the vets’ faces.

“It’s hard to put into words the reaction in some of these guys after being there just 20 minutes,” Watkins said. “They went from being young men who could run and jump at five years old. He’s hunted deer, hog and turkey, but his passion is waterfowl. It was amazing!”

Since that first hunt, Watkins, Meadows and Langham have teamed up with Lance Effird, Joey Bolton, Brad Davis (Houston Dynamo midfielder) and Tally Hall (Houston Dynamo goalie) to form Banded Brigade Outdoors (www.bandedbrigadeoutdoors.org), a non-profit organization that gives back to disabled veterans. They also connected with Roger Randal of Texas Adaptive Outdoors.

With extra funding, manpower and adaptive equipment, the group was able to provide eight veterans with a teal and big duck hunt the following year. According to Watkins, they “don’t put any restrictions in terms of disabilities.” In fact, one of the veterans on the second hunt was a quadriplegic.

“He had a gun holder mounted on a 400 lb. chair that held a Remington 11-87, and there was a little pad that came up and touched his chin,” Watkins said. “Whenever he moved the pad, that’s the direction the gun would turn. Then he had a straw, and when a bird came up, he would suck the straw to pull the trigger. He killed three ducks in the air. It was amazing!”

Each year, more people and organizations have gotten involved to make the events bigger and better. After struggling to find hunting locations with wheelchair access, Effird—part of the core group—reached out to Halls Bayou Ranch in Santa Fe, where he is both a member and a guide. With the blessing of all the members of the duck club, the ranch agreed to support the effort.

“So we went from running to Academy Sports to pick up a couple boxes of shells to corporate sponsors giving us checks to get what we needed,” Watkins said. “We went from struggling to have the hunt no matter what to being able to really pay attention to the vets because we didn’t have to handle all the support elements.”

In 2012, Banded Brigade Outdoors held two hunts hosting 22 veterans, 10 of whom were wheelchair bound. One veteran named Beau had been deployed just six months prior when he stepped on an improvised explosive device and became a double amputee. After the hunt, Bradshaw—who made the initial phone call and continues to select veterans for the events—called the group to tell them the impact of the hunting experience on Beau’s mental state was astronomical.

“On the first day of the hunt, when we do our briefings, Beau raised his hand and said, ‘does anybody have a pair of waders I can borrow?’ For those guys to be able to cut up is definitely a return on investment,” Watkins said.

After hosting five hunts and having an extraordinary impact on the lives of America’s wounded heroes, Watkins and fellow staff of Banded Brigade Outdoors have no intentions of slowing down. In fact, because family is a big part of their own hunting traditions, they are now planning to host not just wounded veterans on hunts but also their family members.

“We lose a lot of sleep. We burn a lot of fuel, but the return on investment is well worth it,” Watkins said. “We and Kevin have a pact between us that we’re not going to stop this. We may be 90 years old out there with a cane, and we’ll still be doing this, even if we can only take one person.”

Learn more at www.bandedbrigadeoutdoors.org
Union Members Respond to Hurricane Sandy

Last October, as residents of New York and New Jersey were reeling from the impact of Superstorm Sandy—the deadliest hurricane to hit the northeastern U.S. in 40 years—we asked USA members involved in rescue and clean up efforts to share their stories. We would like to thank our brothers and sisters in the stories below and the many other union members who stepped up to respond during a time of need.

The Gift of a Hot Meal
Lisa Rosenthal, Communications Director for MM&P

Two members of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots joined forces with local restaurant owners in Long Beach, N.Y., on Sunday, Nov. 3, to feed more than a thousand local residents, many of whom had not had a hot meal since Hurricane Sandy struck a week earlier.

Working out of a catering truck with a barbecue and smoker, MM&P members Ryan Leo and Conor Sullivan spent five hours preparing chicken, burgers, hot dogs and ribs. The first batch of food was donated by local restaurants including SwingBellys Beachside BBQ, the Saloon, Shine’s and J.W. Trainer’s.

“They started bringing what they had in their refrigerators and freezers, and we cooked that too,” Sullivan said. Leo and Sullivan had spent the previous day grilling and barbecuing food for hundreds of policemen, firefighters and National Guard members.

“I can no longer live in my apartment,” Sullivan said. “My brother lost his apartment. But we consider ourselves lucky and we’re going to continue doing everything we can. Some people here lost everything that they own.”

Looking Out for One Another
Philip Stenglein, Organizer of SMWIA Local 83

I just wanted to share with you that last night the Executive Board of the Sheet Metal Workers Local 83 voted to donate $5,000 dollars to our members of sister locals hardest hit by Superstorm Sandy. The money will be used to pay for immediate needs of the individual members affected by the storm. We are a small local of about 500 members.

From the Front Lines
Matthew Bierman, EMT-P and Member of IBEW Local 702

I’m a member of Electrical Workers L.U. 702 out of Southern Illinois. I have been on the East Coast since the day of the storm. My partner and I are both IBEW members through Washington County. We’re going on day nine out here and have been running evacuations to rescue missions and helping at shelters. It’s a mess with fuel shortages and riots. A big nor’easter is hitting today, so we’re hunkered down in a police academy in Suffolk County, NY. Our IBEW brothers and sisters are across the road in a huge camp. They’ve done our laundry and fed us incredible meals in the evening. We’re returning the favor and allowing them to bunk in the gym with us tonight, so they aren’t stuck in tents during this big storm.

I pray this storm doesn’t undo all the hard work they’ve already done in the area. I’m being told by friends at home that I’m missing a great deer rut for bow season. I will also miss opening day of duck season this year. I’ve been looking forward to that one but am glad to give it up just to hear that thank you after rescuing someone that needed it. There will be more opening days, but if I’m not out here, these folks might not see tomorrow. Proud to be Union and proud to call myself a member of the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance.
Early spring channel ‘cats live in a world between gluttony and lethargy. Immediately after ice-out, channel ‘cats move into the shallows, often just one to two feet of water, where they gorge themselves on winter-killed forage fish such as gizzard, hickory or threadfin shad. This migration and subsequent feeding frenzy will often coincide with several days of sunshine, an element necessary to raise water temperatures just the few degrees needed to trigger this annual event. These shallow waters soak up the sun’s rays and are the first to warm, and it often doesn’t take many days of sunshine to provide the necessary temperature boost.

Channel ‘cats feed largely by smell, and it’s here where anglers hold an advantage, thanks to any one of the many types of liquid attractants on the market today. Over the years, we’ve relied on the Catcher Company’s Smelly Jelly scents to provide that extra boost to our baits. Available in a variety of different—for lack of a better word—flavors, including shad and shrimp, Smelly Jelly and others like it create a scent cone or trail that works to turn the pinpoint rifle-like placement of a small bait in a big pond into a more effective shotgun-style coverage pattern. This is particularly true in moving water where currents can carry scent long distances. With scents, as with baits, experimentation is the key. For more information on the long line of Smelly Jelly attractants, anglers can contact the folks at Catcher Company by calling 503-648-2643.

Terminal tackle for spring ‘cats usually follows the bait’s lead. When I was growing up, the standard catfish rig consisted of nothing more than a bank sinker and a pair of No. 4 snelled hooks. The sinker, the weight of which depended upon the water current, was tied onto the tag end of the line, and the pair of No. 4s attached to droppers approximately 10 and 16 inches above the sinker. Following the cast, the rig was fished in a tight-line method, with the angler watching the rod tip for any activity. Such a rig was both simple and inexpensive, but it was also effective.

There are times, however, when such a static rig like the age-old standard above doesn’t seem to work as well. Surprising to some, channel ‘cats can become weight sensitive, and will show a hesitancy to pick up baits that offer the resistance common with the bank sinker-and-tightline practice. In such cases, a non-static rig consisting of a barrel sinker, plastic bead, snap swivel and the No. 4 snelled hook solves the resistance problem. The rig is tied by passing the tag end of the line through the barrel sinker and bead, and attaching it to the snap swivel. Here, the bead serves as a sort of shock absorber between the sinker and knot at the swivel and also allows the angler to use a smaller swivel. The swivel, on the other hand, permits deeply-hooked fish to be unclipped rather than unhooked. A new snell and a new bait, and the angler’s back in business in just a few seconds.

In certain situations, slip-bobbers can be an effective weapon for channel catfish, though the conditions under which slip-bobbers work consistently for cats are sometimes difficult to find. The greatest advantage to using slip-bobbers, in addition to the obvious visual strike clues offered by the float, is the amount of water that can be covered with a bait. The key to using slip-bobbers for ‘cats is knowing the water depth. With the water depth information in hand courtesy of electronics or, as is common, a simple oar in the water, anglers can adjust the bobber stop so the bait rides four to eight inches off the bottom—well in the strike zone for any passing cat.

**There aren’t many who would argue the fact that few things in life are more enjoyable than early spring and fine-tasting, ice-out channel ‘cats.**
Catfish Ceviche

- 1/2 c. fresh squeezed lime juice
- 1/2 c. fresh squeezed lemon juice
- 2 lbs. small (1-2 lb) catfish fillets, cubed into bite-sized pieces
- 1/2 red onion, finely diced
- 1/2 green pepper, finely diced
- 1/2 red pepper, finely diced
- 2-3 fresh jalapeno peppers, seeded finely diced
- 1 small Roma tomato, seeded and diced cilantro
- salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients but juices and cilantro in a non-reactive (Pyrex or crockery) bowl. Sprinkle with lime and lemon juice and place in fridge for one hour. Stir, making sure all the fish cubes are covered with juice. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit for 2-3 hours. Acids in juice actually “cook” the fish, turning the cubes from grey/white to translucent when done. Serve as fish tacos or on warm tortilla chips.
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**Triton Aluminum Boats**

For those in the market for a quality aluminum boat, there's a new player in town—a new player with a trusted family name. Known for quality and performance, Triton is now manufacturing two series of aluminum boats in its state of the art Arkansas facility. Triton’s decision to enter the aluminum boat market was driven by customer demand, so the new line includes three X Series and four Utility Series models designed to reach a wide variety of anglers and hunters. Built of .100 gauge 5052 marine grade aluminum, all seven models, like all Triton boats, are built 100% wood free to prevent structural failures and rot. And with their all-welded construction, these boats are rock solid, moving as a single unit to greatly reduce vibration that can result in transom failure. While all the aluminum boats are designed for fishing, the Utility models are also a good choice for a hunting boat with their spray-on liner interior and Realtree camo pattern. The X Series models are carpeted with a fiberglass console and 2-part urethane paint for a beautiful, long-lasting finish. No matter what model you choose, it comes with a limited lifetime hull warranty for the original owner.

[www.tritonboats.com](http://www.tritonboats.com)

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**Buck Clearwater Series Fillet Knife**

You know you’re getting a quality knife when it comes from a company that’s been around for more than 110 years. And now you can get the quality, craftsmanship and Forever Warranty that you’ve come to expect from Buck Knives in its U.S. made Clearwater series fillet knife, designed for freshwater and saltwater anglers. Named after the flowing Clearwater River in Buck’s very own Idaho gem state, the series of fillet knives incorporate a triple-edged blade design to maximize on fish processing. The tip edge makes it easy to pierce through tough scales, and the back side edge is ideal for cleaning fish without dulling the main edge, which is properly shaped for clean and efficient cuts. The rubberized handle is shaped for control and comfort while being held in multiple positions over long periods of time—so there won’t be a downside to catching tons of fish! Each knife comes with a rigid plastic sheath featuring built in drainage holes to minimize moisture buildup, and the knives are available in 6” or 9” lengths and in 420HC or Sandvik® steel.

[www.buckknives.com](http://www.buckknives.com)

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**Quaker Boy THUG Half Moon Pro Pack**

Richard Kirby, the founder of Quaker Boy Inc., was an innovator and pioneer in the game call industry. From the time he made his first aluminum mouth call with a pair of tin snips, aluminum siding, balloon and duct tape in 1974, his extreme passion for the outdoors inspired him to mimic the sounds of nature. Quaker Boy’s THUG Half Moon Pro Pack was Kirby’s final mouth call revolution. Featuring the THUG Half Moon V-Cut, Ghost and Nasty Old Hen, the 3-pack of top quality diaphragm calls allows you to pick just the right amount of rasp, from light to heavy, to match your situation and bring the gobblers running. Each call utilizes Quaker Boy’s proven Half Moon backer reed design to force air through the middle of the reed for easier and consistent performance and control. Like all Quaker Boy products, the THUG Half Moon Pro Pack calls are proudly made in the USA. Plus, a portion of sales are donated to the Outdoor Recreation Heritage Fund, which supports wounded and disabled American service members and their families.

[www.quakerboy.com](http://www.quakerboy.com)
Black River Tackle Company Tail Wagger

Ever struggled to find a quality fishing lure that supports American jobs? Tim Lawrence, a member of Machinists Lodge 66 out of Sheboygan, WI, found it nearly impossible to find a U.S. made wood musky and pike lure in a market inundated with imported and mass produced, plastic and rubber baits. So he founded Black River Tackle Company and specializes in handcrafted wood lures (called Ugly Log Lures), which have their own sound, look and feel that plastic lures can't match. From start to finish, the lures are handmade with select hardwood for extreme use and durability, top quality U.S. made hardware and hooks, and a painted finish that's double epoxy coated for long life. The company's signature lure, the Tail Wagger, is proven for musky and pike and can be retrieved several ways. A slow retrieve creates back and forth swimming action. Medium speed causes the tail to stand up and “wag.” And a fast retrieve will dive the lure 3-5 ft. with a whipping swim action. Since its heavy duty aluminum bill is designed to bash over logs and rocks, you don't have to worry about fishing cover either. The Tail Wagger comes in 10 colors and two sizes.

www.blackrivertacklecompany.com

Benchmaster American Bison Shooting Bags

There's nothing particularly complicated about a rifle bag, but a good bag should be easy to use, safe for your guns and tough enough to withstand a lifetime of abuse. Aptly named for the American bison renowned for its strength and endurance, Benchmaster’s American Bison shooting bags are made by American craftsmen from top-grain bison leather. The distinctive grain varies throughout the skin to give each bag a unique look that actually gets better with age. While the bags remain supple to the touch and will form to the desired shape, they are designed to resist cuts, punctures and leaks. And their anti-skid bottom ensures a steady platform on any surface. The vegetable tanning process used on American Bison shooting bags ensures there will be no corrosive effect to the gun bluing. The bags are even designed for easy storage and travel with an EZ Pour™ spout for no hassle, no mess filling or refilling. And to top it off, the bags come with a five year warranty.

Benchmaster is proud to offer USA members a 15% discount on all online purchases. Visit www.unionsportsmen.org/deals to take advantage of this offer.

www.benchmasterusa.com
USA Events

USA Seeks to Expand Shooting Tour Through Committees
Every USA member should one day have the chance to attend a USA shoot
by Kate Cywinski

In 2012, nearly 2,000 union members, partners and guests participated in the USA's 25-city shoot tour covering 19 states. Many of those participants have attended multiple years because, as those who have participated in a USA shoot know, getting together with a bunch of union brothers and sisters across the trades for a friendly shooting competition is a heck of a good time.

As successful and popular as the USA shoot tour has been since it began with just three events in 2009, it has plenty of room to grow and 31 more states to cover.

"USA shoots support the USA's mission and raise vital funds for its daily operations," said USA Director of USA Events and Fundraising Nate Whiteman. "But my vision for growing the shoot tour isn't based on a fundraising goal. I want the USA to have enough shoots around the country that every single USA member has the opportunity to attend one."

It's a worthy goal. Yet with a staff of 14 and just three individuals responsible for every aspect of putting on the shoots—from planning the events to set up and tear down to driving the truck and trailer across the country—the USA doesn't have the manpower to expand beyond 25 shoots per year on its own.

That's why we're developing a program through which union locals or members who have participated in a USA shoot in a given market can form a committee to host that shoot on behalf of the USA. Armed with an instructional manual that outlines the step-by-step process of hosting a shoot, from booking the facility to scoring teams, committees will take on-the-ground ownership of established events. That, in turn, will enable the USA to break ground in new areas to provide more USA members with the chance to experience the fun and fellowship of USA shoots. The USA currently has its sights on southern Georgia/northern Florida and the Austin/San Antonio area of Texas for new shoots in 2014.

The committee approach will also allow more flexibility in scheduling events. While USA staff members are on-site at a first-time event in Wyoming, for instance, a union committee can host a 5th annual USA shoot in Texas. So committees will have the freedom to choose dates based on what they think will work best for union members in the area. For local union leadership, it can be an opportunity to connect with their members in a more energizing and entertaining environment than the union hall.

Leading the way, Paul McKenzie (BCTC Northern Nevada Executive Secretary-Treasurer), Todd Koch (IUPAT DC 16 Regional Director), and Kres Bishop (UA Local 350 Business Manager) will host the USA's first committee-run shoot this year in Reno, NV.

The USA is also working with potential committees to host its Southern Florida, Central Florida, Houston and Dallas/Fort Worth shoots in 2014.

Anyone interested in starting or being part of a USA shoot committee should contact Nate Whiteman at natew@unionsportsmen.org or (440) 867-8229.
UPCOMING USA EVENTS

For a complete list of events and to register, visit: www.UnionSportsmen.org/events

Saturday, April 13
ULLICO So. Illinois Sporting Clays Shoot
Sparta, IL

Saturday, April 27
Baltimore Area Trap Shoot
Carney, MD

Saturday, May 4
SMART New Jersey Sporting Clays Shoot
Port Republic, NJ

Saturday, May 18
New York Sporting Clays Shoot
Yaphank, NY

Friday, May 24
AFL-CIO Capital Area Sporting Clays Shoot
Queenstown, MD

Saturday, June 22
Western Pennsylvania Sporting Clays Shoot
Wampum, PA

Possible Conservation Dinner
Locations (Dates TBD):
Nashville, TN • Sparta, IL • Terre Haute, IN
Pittsburg, PA • New York, NY • Glassboro, NJ
Los Angeles, CA • Sacramento, CA
Madison, WI • Atlanta, GA
Baltimore, MD • Minneapolis, MN
Dallas, TX • Houston, TX • Kansas City, KS

For information on sponsoring, attending or helping organize an event near you, contact:

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Walt Ingram
Conservation Dinner Manager
Phone: 740-542-0470
walti@unionsportsmen.org

Guests had a blast at USA’s Chicago Conservation Dinner getting their photos taken with Brotherhood Outdoors Co-hosts Daniel Lee Martin and Julie McQueen and choosing the background for their print.
Keeping today’s ATVs in top running condition can be a lesson in computer training and electronics. New ATVs run more efficiently, and they’re more comfortable and powerful. However, laced with computers, sensors, and digital readouts, they are also vastly more complicated.
All of these accoutrements are great when you're running down the trail. However, if you find yourself with an electrical short from a mud bath or a dead battery on a minus 10-degree morning, you could be in real trouble. I live in Alaska, and since my move to the 49th state, I see ATVs in a completely different light than my former rides in the Midwest and Western states. Today, my association with these machines has little to do with recreational riding and more to do with work and practical transportation.

One of the greatest lessons I've learned in the last few years is the more an ATV weighs and the more electronics that are used in the machine, the greater your chance for serious trouble in the backcountry. If you're comfortable not having the newest, latest, fastest and most complex bike on the market, there are choices that will be easier to maintain and will save you a ton of cash. Look for the following three features if you want to ride into the wilderness.

**Carburetor** — It's not that electronic fuel injection isn't an improvement, but if you have a problem, only a dealer is going to repair it because they have the diagnostic gear to determine what's wrong.

**Pull Start** — Don't shy away from an electric start; just make sure you have a pull rope. While starting your ATV like a lawn mower can really be unpleasant, you will be able to get it started.

**Manual Instruments** — Digital clocks, GPS' and beeping sensors are all potential power robbers when it comes to wilderness travel. A microscopic draw on your battery can be a big problem in near zero temperatures.

### Less Can Be More

A new ATV will set you back $8,000 to $12,000 for EFI and power steering. That machine will treat you with comfort and style. It will also demand higher insurance and hundreds of dollars for dealer service annually. Just keep in mind, with an average weight of more than 650 pounds, you're not moving it out of a mud hole alone.

For 4-wheel drive, the minimal options are going to cost you in the low to mid $5,000 range. However, if you can go light with a two-wheel drive, you can get into a few highly functional machines that will last decades for around $4,000. If you consider the two-wheel route, invest in an exceptional set of upgraded rear tires.

### Some 2-Wheel Values

- **The Honda FourTrax Recon**/ $3,949.00  
  www.powersports.honda.com/2013/fourtrax-recon.aspx
- **The Arctic Cat 300 Recreation**/ $4,199.00 (Made in the USA)  
  www.arcticcat.com/atv/model/300#black
- **Yamaha Grizzly 300 Auto**/ $4199.00 (Assembled in the USA)  

### Make Sure Your ATV Starts

Dave Krompacky, owner of Alaska Mountain Magic, has seen every possible problem with an ATV in the Alaskan Bush. He and his family run an ATV dealership on the Parks Highway in Talkeetna, halfway between Denali National Park and Anchorage. He is the only ATV repair facility north of mile marker 98 for more than 150 miles. Simply put, he'll tell you that the most common downfall of an operating ATV is bad gas.

It often starts with lack of use. "Sitting can just kill a machine. Depending on conditions, as little as 40 days can create irritating problems with the fuel system and battery," says Krompacky.

However, it's water inside the fuel tank that's the root cause of most repairs. "Moisture and ethanol create the most issues, and they're the number one problem we see. It comes from where you buy your gas. In wet environments, the tank can produce far more moisture than you may realize," he said.

Krompapacky recommends fuel additives like Sta-Bil or Heet, but it's the use of a portable fuel filter funnel (http://shurhold.com/fuel-filter-funnels) that will have the most impact. The cost is around $20, and it will save hundreds of dollars in repairs, not to mention safe trail passage.
Take Your Best Shot

WIN A BUCK KNIFE!

A $70 VALUE!

Share your best shots with your brothers and sisters of the USA, and you could win a Buck knife engraved with the USA logo. Visit www.UnionSportsmen.org/photos to check out additional photos and submit your own.

Gerry Aungst, a member of Painters Local 1009 from Riverdale, NJ, harvested this 16-point buck during archery season in Kingman County, KS. The whitetail had a P&Y gross score of 171.

Sam Wiza, a member of Bricklayers Local 6 from Rosholt, WI, took his grandson, 12-year-old Jimmy Knutson, on his first hunt in Nov. 2012, and Jimmy harvested his very first whitetail, an 8-point buck.

Tucker Fairburn, a member of Electrical Workers Local 89 from Lakeview, OR, went hunting for chukars with his dog, Chopper, in Valley Falls, Oregon in Dec. 2012.

Paul Graveline, a retired Business Manager of Sheet Metal Workers Local 47 from Woodlawn, Ontario, took this bull moose on day two of a hunt in Northern Ontario in Oct. 2012.

Ben Evans, a member of United Association Local 593 from London, Ontario, harvested this whitetail buck in Nov. 2012.
Chad Doerhoff, a member of Electrical Workers Local 1439 from Fulton, MO, harvested this wild turkey during the 2012 spring turkey season.

Jeffrey Poore, a member of Laborers' Local 199 from Middletown, DE, went waterfowl hunting with a good buddy and his dog in Jan. 2013. They ended the day with 5 mallards, 4 drakes, a black duck and 2 geese.

Mitchell Christian, a member of Machinists Local 751 from Marysville, WA, caught an albacore tuna while fishing in Westport, WA in Oct. 2012. It was Mitchell's first time tuna fishing.

At the end of 2012, USA Facebook fans voted on their favorite USA member photo from among the 2012 USA Photo of the Week winners. The winner received a U.S. made Summit treestand, while the runner-up and USA StaffPick received Otis gun cleaning kits. Enter your photos in the Photo of the Week contest for your chance to win a Buck knife in our weekly photo contest and a chance at a grand prize at the end of the year.

Michael F. Conry, a member of Electrical Workers Local 164 from Milford, NJ, harvested this 10-point, 202-pound whitetail after a day of hunting with his boys in Oakfield, Maine in Nov. 2005.

Runner-Up
Jennifer Barocs - Holland, OH
Fire Fighters Local 3544

Staff Pick
Jonathan Held - New Orleans, LA
Electrical Workers Local 130
First Harvest

Molly Box Shoots Her First Deer

Bill Box, Business Agent of Electrical Workers Local 8 from Ottawa Lake, MI, shared this photo of his 12-year-old daughter, Molly, after she shot her first deer at 4 p.m. in Hillside, MI near Bird Lake. She used a 50 cal muzzleloader with 75 grains of power to drop the buck at 88 yards. Proud father Bill said it was the best hunt and offered this advice: kids who hunt, trap and fish, don't mug little old ladies.

Family Traditions: Anchor’s First Deer
by Chip Frizzell of UA Local 469

My son, JD, and I are both pipefitters with UA Local 469, and in our spare time, we guide deer, elk and antelope hunts in Arizona and New Mexico. This particular hunt was special because it was my grandson, Anchor Blouir’s, first big game hunt. Anchor, along with my son-in-law Phillip (Anchor’s dad), JD, and myself were hunting in Southern Arizona, near Tucson. The area had been hunted very hard during four previous hunts that year, so just finding deer was going to be a challenge. Nonetheless, on Friday morning, we left the truck before daylight.

After an hour of glassing, JD spotted two deer, but there were no horns to be found. We continued glassing our way down the ridges we had chosen to hunt without spotting anymore game until JD picked out a couple more does around 11 a.m. About an hour and a half later, JD spotted a deer bedded down across a deep and steep canyon and ranged him at 560 yards. JD surveyed the situation and planned the stalk route to put Anchor into the best position for a shot at his first coues whitetail deer.

As they approached the end of the rock outcropping, JD strategically placed his pack for Anchor to use as a secure rest to make the shot using the same 30-06 rifle JD had used to take his first deer. After Anchor made a successful shot, JD led him across the canyon and up to his first deer. JD had already taken the first round of pictures and led Anchor through the steps of dressing his game by the time Phillip and I made our way across the canyon to the proud hunter and his quarry.

After the congratulations and second round of pictures, we made a plan to get the deer packed out of the canyon and back to the truck. Since darkness was rapidly approaching, JD and Phillip decided to pack the deer out whole rather than skinning and quartering it. Though we had chosen the best route to return to the truck, we underestimated the steepness of the path ahead. So after 3.5 hours of what can only be compared to climbing a wall, we decided to skin the deer, hang him in a tree and return in the morning to finish the retrieval. On Saturday morning, Anchor, JD and I returned to the trailhead to make the 8/10ths of a mile hike down the canyon to retrieve Anchor's first deer.

I was extremely honored to share this experience with Anchor, Phillip and JD. I thank JD for all of the hard work and dedication he put into teaching Anchor hunter safety, shooting skills and a love for the outdoors and the animals we pursue.
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