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BOOTS ON THE GROUND IN ACTION
USA TACKLES DEER TRAP WELDING PROJECT

RED HOT FALL STRIPER FISHING
GUIDE TO EAST COAST STRIPER FISHING
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September 2010
USA Conservation Efforts Bearing Fruit

One of the great things about union sportsmen and sportswomen is their willingness to step up and help the USA as it works to achieve its mission: Expanding and improving hunting and fishing access and habitat for all, now and in the future. Two efforts, one planted years ago and the other just last spring, are beginning to bear fruit.

The first effort, a piece of federal legislation called Open Fields, will provide states with funding to incentivize private landowners to voluntarily open their lands and waters to hunters and anglers. First drafted in 2002, it took six years to get the legislation passed and another two before the federal funds needed to implement Open Fields were released this past July.

Many groups and individuals played a role in getting this legislation passed. None were more important than union leaders and USA members like AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, United Association President Bill Hite and Roofers President Kinsey Robinson, who let our elected officials know that union members wanted this important access legislation passed. During the long and often frustrating process, thousands of rank and file union and USA members weighed-in, writing letters and sending emails to their congressmen and senators, voicing their support. Together…we got it done!

The second effort bearing fruit is Boots on the Ground, a USA program that calls on union sportsmen and sportswomen to volunteer their diverse skills to undertake projects that improve and enhance public access and wildlife habitats. Just like Jack's Beanstalk, this idea that was announced in the last issue of The Union Sportsmen's Journal grew overnight. The first project is already up and running in Wisconsin (see page 6), and we've had serious inquiries and requests from Alaska, Nevada, Maine, Michigan and other states.

Think of all the union members you know who hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors. Now imagine how many union members across the country do the same. If we can get thousands of union members across the country involved in small, localized conservation and access projects, the results will be enormous.

So tell your union buddies about the USA and encourage them to join this unique community of union sportsmen and women. Together, we can be an example of what can be accomplished when we unite for a cause.

Fred Myers
Executive Director, Union Sportsmen’s Alliance

Special Thanks to Our Partners

The USA extends a special thank you to Kinsey Robinson, International President of the United Union of Roofers, Waterproofers and Allied Workers; and Richard Barchiesi, AFL-CIO Special Assistant to the President; for acting as the chief liaisons during the USA’s transition from a program of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership to our own organization.

“The changes the USA has undergone recently have been both exciting and challenging, and we are very grateful to President Robinson and Mr. Barchiesi for their hard work and dedication in helping us get started on the right foot as our own organization,” said USA Executive Director Fred Myers. “With their support and that of all our union partners, the USA has a bright road ahead.”

Welcome New USA Partner:
USW Local 12075

The USA Partner Program gives Union Locals, Districts and Councils the chance to help build the USA and reward their members for attending meetings and events. Contact Nate Whiteman at natew@unionsportsmen.org or (440) 867-2732 to learn more.
Forget watching hunting or fishing shows from your couch and apply to be on *Brotherhood Outdoors*, a new outdoor TV series of the Union Sportsmen's Alliance that will feature hardworking and hard playing union members like you.

You work hard to keep this country running. You love your family and your union brothers and sisters. You volunteer your time and talents to make a difference in your community. And you’re passionate about the outdoors and passing on our hunting and fishing heritage to the next generation. That makes you a star in our book.

Hosted by Tom Ackerman, *Brotherhood Outdoors* is a “give or take” series where union members either join Tom for an outfitted hunting or fishing trip in North America, often with a union member-owned outfitting operation, or invite Tom to their neck of the woods to participate in the hunting or fishing pursuits they take pride in.

So whether you want to take a break from the do-it-yourself routine and join Tom for a guided adventure or show your union brothers and sisters and the rest of America that you’ve got the skill and experience to be the guide, get your application in today and be a star on *Brotherhood Outdoors*!

**TO APPLY:** To apply by mail, visit: www.unionsportsmen.org/brotherhoodtv or call 877-872-2211 to request an application. USA

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**USA Welcomes 20,000th Member**

Rodney Terrell, a member of Bricklayers Local 15, is an avid bass fisherman and gets to the lake at least once every weekend to drop a line. When he saw, on the back of his union journal, that the USA was giving away a Triton boat, he had to visit the USA website and check it out. Once there, he looked at the fish caught by fellow union members in the photo gallery, checked out the free MyTopo online mapping subscription available to USA members and decided that a $25 USA membership would really pay off.

And pay off it did. Terrell was the 20,000th union member to join the USA since it launched in July 2007. To celebrate this membership milestone, the USA awarded Terrell a brand new Connecticut Valley Arms Accura muzzleloader, valued at nearly $500. He plans to use it for target shooting and says it just might get him back into deer hunting, which he hasn’t done since he was a teen.

The USA thanks CVA for its generous donation and all our USA members for helping us make such tremendous strides in three short years. USA
Retired NFL Player Turns Passion for Hunting into Successful Business

By Kate Cywinski

“I f you can work at something you don’t consider a job, you can count yourself very lucky.”

When he spoke these words, retired NFL player and Union Sportsmen’s Alliance member Joe Jurevicius certainly considered himself among the lucky ones. He turned his passion for football into an 11-year career as a wide receiver for the New York Giants, Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Seattle Seahawks and Cleveland Browns. He earned a Super Bowl XXXVII ring with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and was a two-time cover boy for Sports Illustrated. Upon retiring from pro football, he channeled his love of hunting and fishing into a successful outfitting business.

Fishing for perch, steelhead and walleye became second nature to Jurevicius, growing up on the shores of Lake Erie near Cleveland, Ohio. But his passion for hunting came a bit later in life. “I wasn’t a hunter until about 13 years ago,” Jurevicius said. “I was with my good friend Kerry Collins, a quarterback for the Tennessee Titans. He invited me to go deer hunting with him and, while we were sitting in the treestand, a deer walked underneath us and I was hooked.”

Today, Jurevicius not only enjoys planning his own hunting adventures, he also loves to help fellow sportsmen have a great hunting experience, just as his teammates helped him.

While Jurevicius’ time in the NFL gave him many opportunities, perhaps none were greater than partnering with his friend and Super Bowl XXXVII teammate John Howell.

Howell grew up hunting and fishing on his family ranch in Nebraska. In 2001, he was drafted by the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and won a Super Bowl Championship with the team in 2002. During this time, Howell became heavily involved in the hunting industry through organizations such as Safari Club International and the Dallas Safari Club.

After four years in Tampa Bay, Howell joined Jurevicius as a player for the Seattle Seahawks. Howell and Jurevicius developed a strong friendship through football and hunting trips in the off-season. And it wasn’t long before they decided to create a sportsman’s paradise – Dismal River Outfitters (www.dismalriveroutfitters.com).

Located in the heart of the Sandhills, just north of North Platte, Nebraska, Dismal River Outfitters boasts more than 60,000 acres of habitat perfect for bison, elk, whitetail deer and mule deer. And with limited hunting pressure, the odds of a successful hunt run high.

“We’ve put our heart and soul into Dismal River Outfitters,” said Jurevicius. And while Jurevicius considers himself a lucky man, it’s his passion and drive that enabled him to make a living doing what he loves. Those are traits he contributes to his family.

“I grew up in a big union family,” Jurevicius said. “My father was a warehouseman and I have uncles who are still warehouseman – all of our family and friends were union members. I understand what the union does for a lot of people and I imagine the majority of hunters and fishermen are normal, blue collar people just like us.”

Because of his union background and passion for the outdoors, joining the USA was a natural fit for Jurevicius.

“I think this club makes total sense,” Jurevicius said. “We all have one thing in common; we’re big outdoorsmen, and we appreciate what the unions have done and continue to do for our families. But the thing that draws it to me is the brotherhood that comes along with it, just like in football. Everyone likes a deal or discount, but the connection you feel with your fellow union members is what brings it home for me.”

Joe Jurevicius (center), pictured with Roofer’s Union President Kinsey Robinson (left) and USA Director of Recruitment & Special Events Nate Whiteman, joined the USA at the 2010 Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade Show.
Before the vast wilderness of America’s colonies was tamed by axe and plow, elk were an abundant and beautiful feature of the landscape. Virginia may be the next state east of the Mississippi River to take part in one of America’s greatest conservation success stories if the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries get its way. The agency is floating an idea to follow the lead of neighboring Kentucky, which released seven elk in the eastern mountains in 1997. Since then, 1,500 more were transplanted from seven different states, and Kentucky’s elk herd has grown to an estimated 10,000 animals.

Elk were native to much of the eastern U.S. but were eradicated by the mid-1800s thanks largely to habitat loss and unregulated hunting. A new conservation ethic, strict regulations and the efforts of groups like Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation have helped bring elk home to where they once thrived. Now residents of at least a half-dozen states east of the Mississippi River can hear the piercing scream of a bull elk bugling in the chill mountain air and watch the majestic creatures all year without booking a plane ticket to the Rocky Mountains.

Along with the thrill of seeing and hearing elk, Kentucky hunters have reaped the benefits of the state’s booming elk population through first-rate hunting opportunities. RMEF Regional Director Bill Carman says hunters are giving the elk program high marks, not only because they are seeing lots of elk, but because they are enjoying success rates that exceed those of most western states. Hunters are also taking some monster bulls, including a non-typical 6x6 bull that scored 372 6/8, and the state-record typical bull, which was taken in 2007. It scored 371. Can things get any better?

“I have no doubts,” says Carman.

Kentucky’s booming herd is a result of several factors. First, there are few major predators; elk calves have a 92 percent survival rate. Disease rates are low, the weather is mild and above all, says Carman, the habitat is ideal. The reclaimed surface coal mines throughout Eastern Kentucky are covered with grasses and other lush growth, providing an ample food supply all year.

That’s why herds are expected to thrive in other coal mining states like Virginia and West Virginia, which also has spill-over elk from Kentucky but no management plan yet. North Carolina also has a small elk herd in and around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

It makes perfect sense for Virginia to be next. The bulk of Kentucky’s herd lies in a 16-county region, including four that border southwest Virginia’s mountainous coal fields. The habitat is similar and elk that have been crossing into Virginia over the last decade have been thriving. That is, if they weren’t shot by Virginia hunters. Fearing the spread of chronic wasting disease, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries declared open season on elk and made them legal game in regions bordering Kentucky. Fortunately, the state changed its stance. Kentucky’s elk have been disease free, which is one reason Virginia is moving toward an active management plan that will likely in-
include regulated hunts in the future.

Representatives of the RMEF are thrilled about the idea, but not everyone in Virginia wants elk. Supervisors from two of three Virginia counties targeted for reintroduction have expressed opposition to the idea. They are concerned about crop damage and competition with cattle. Carman, however, says that hasn’t been a problem in Kentucky.

“They are happy on the coal fields where they were introduced and don’t seem to wander much,” he notes.

Even if elk do create some headaches for farmers, the losses will likely be offset by the revenue generated by tourists and hunters. Elk are not only good for the soul, they are an economic windfall. Last year alone, 46,000 people paid a $10 application fee to the KDFWR for the chance to buy one of 750 cow or 250 bull tags. Kentucky hunters spend an average of $1,000 each on gear, lodging, meals and other expenses related to their hunt. Elk have also proven to be a money machine for Pennsylvania, which has 600 to 700 animals. One study suggested the elk will generate an estimated $18.6 million by 2012, mostly from tourists who visit the region to view the animals.

Four states east of the Mississippi River will offer hunting opportunities this fall. They include Pennsylvania, which awarded 59 licenses in 2009 (www.pgc.state.pa.us). Michigan will sell 235 tags this fall (www.michigan.gov/dnr) and Kentucky will offer 800 licenses (http://fw.ky.gov/). Tennessee will give out five tags this season (www.state.tn.us/twra/elkmain.html).
USA’s Boots on the Ground Marches to Action

Welders for Wildlife Lend Their Hands, Building Deer Traps in Wisconsin

By Ken Barrett

The USA’s new Boots on the Ground program brings together union members willing to volunteer their skills and time on conservation projects that improve and enhance public access, wildlife habitat and outdoor experiences for communities across America. The Boots on the Ground program will work closely with federal, state and local agencies and other conservation groups that, due to budgetary constraints and cutbacks, don’t have the manpower needed to get important projects done.

Few groups are in a better position to help remedy this situation than USA members and their union brothers and sisters, with their skills, devotion to hunting, fishing and the outdoors, and their “let’s get the job done” spirit.

When USA Regional Coordinator Jim Klatt, who is heading the Boots on the Ground program, put word out that the USA was looking for a few projects to test the concept, the phones started ringing. It wasn’t long before he realized there are hundreds, if not thousands, of projects that could use help from skilled union volunteers. Currently, Jim is talking with agencies and wildlife conservation groups in Nevada, Michigan, Alaska, Wisconsin, Maine and Washington State, while fielding inquiries from other states across the country.

The first Boots on the Ground project to gain real traction, in cooperation with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin, Whitetails Unlimited and Safari Club International, is a major white-tailed deer project.

$50 Million for More Public Hunting and Fishing

By Ken Barrett

Rome wasn’t built in a day and neither was legislation to provide funding for public access to more hunting and fishing opportunities on private lands. The latter took six years and then two more before the money was released to implement programs across the country. But thanks to the support of many groups including the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance and America’s union leaders and members, more and better access to hunting and fishing is on the way.

On July 8, 2010, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsak announced the release of $50 million in funding to encourage private landowners to open their lands to public hunting and fishing. States with existing walk-in programs like Kansas and South Dakota can apply for additional funding to expand, while states without access programs can now get the funds to initiate them.

Open Fields legislation was drafted in 2002 by biologist Terry Riley working in partnership with the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. During the next six years, while the legislation was refined, rewritten and reintroduced, it received the full backing of the AFL-CIO and many individual unions, their leaders and rank and file members.

In May 2007, 17 unions representing millions of union hunters and anglers signed a joint letter urging Congress to make conservation a priority and include the Open Fields provision in the new Farm Bill.

Like many other union leaders, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka was a strong advocate for Open Fields and had a personal stake in seeing the legislation passed as a dyed-in-the-wool hunter and...
study. Wisconsin’s DNR has the funds to purchase building materials for live-catch deer cages, which will be used to trap and radio-collar deer, but they don’t have the skilled manpower (in this case welders) or the workspace to build the cages. That’s where Boots on the Ground volunteers come in.

Jim got the ball rolling with a call to the state DNR and to Jose Bucio at the Wisconsin AFL-CIO, which has a long history of working with the Wisconsin DNR.

Before long, union sportsmen, who we hail “welders for wildlife,” stepped up to begin welding approximately 80 cages, which will be employed this winter. The four-year study will benefit deer, hunters and every Wisconsinite who enjoys the presence of America’s most popular big game species.

The USA is taking the Boots on the Ground program one step at a time to ensure the first projects are done right. But already, we see that the need for skilled union sportsmen volunteers is huge and one of the best ways the USA can help advance its mission to expand and improve public access and wildlife habitat for all of America’s citizens.

Watch future issues of The Union Sportsmen’s Journal and the USA website for updates and progress reports on the Boots on the Ground.

Wisconsin union members and DNR staff gathered in Madison, WI, in July to plan the first USA Boots on the Ground project building deer cages.

USA membership is a gift to a child. He led the charge on Open Fields to members of Congress and the union community, even penning an Op-Ed on Open Fields for the Des Moines Register in the heart of farm country.

“When Open Fields legislation was introduced, the Union Sportsmen’s Alliance, as a program of the TRCP, did its part to organize support for the bill among its trade union partners,” said USA Executive Director Fred Myers. “Now a stand-alone organization, the USA will continue to support the TRCP in its efforts to see that Open Fields is fully funded and effectively implemented to improve access to quality places to hunt and fish for all sportsmen and women.”

While $50 million may not be a great deal in the bigger scheme of things, no matter how you cut it up, it will open a whole lot of new acreage for hunters, anglers and other outdoor enthusiasts. And perhaps more importantly, it will provide a real shot in the arm to those looking for affordable and accessible places to pass on America’s great hunting and fishing heritage to the next generation.

After all, there are few better gifts a parent or grandparent can give a child than a few days afield in the fall. Such days can serve as a powerful catalyst for developing a lifetime of enjoyment, a strong commitment to family, friends and community, and a desire to protect the beautiful world we live in.

USA

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USA
“You should have been there, Beau,” said my good friend and fishing guide Captain Tommy Mattioli of Matty-J-Charter Service (www.matty-j.com). “The stripers were everywhere, breaking the surface all over the place. The water was boiling with fish strikes, the birds were diving and squawking, the bait fish were leaping out of the water, and my fish monitor turned black—a solid mass of fish right beneath the boat. It was all I could do to keep up with my clients. As soon as the fly hit the water, boom! a fish would hit. Then seconds later, boom another fish would hit, and we’d have double hookups. It was nuts!”

Tommy, who guides out of Hampton Roads, Virginia, rarely gets excited when talking about fishing since he’s such an old hand at it. Hearing him gush made me green with envy. If that weren’t enough, Tommy’s brother Joe Mattioli of On the Bite Charter Service (www.flyfishnyc.com) out of New York is also a fishing guide and does the exact same thing within sight of Coney Island. Both of these fishing guides know what most of the public doesn’t, striped fishing in the fall can be red hot even in highly populated areas like Hampton Rhodes, Va., and New York City.

Mr. Pajama Pants

Striped bass live in salt water but return to fresh water to reproduce and go by a variety of pet names. Anglers call them stripers or the more whimsical Mr. Pajama Pants because of the seven to nine black horizontal stripes that run along their flanks, squid hound because squid is one of their favorite foods and rockfish because they seem to like rocky shorelines and other structure, such as concrete bridge abutments and oyster bars. Steep drop-offs, areas with submerged
structure like coral reefs, or even manmade structures like crab traps also attract stripers. And underwater ledges are popular with stripers because they often ambush their prey.

On the East Coast, stripers range from Florida all the way up to Nova Scotia, but you’ll find the heaviest concentrations in the New England area and in and around the mid-Atlantic’s Chesapeake Bay. In the late 1800s, stripers from New Jersey’s Navesink River were transplanted to California’s San Joaquin River Delta. As a result, West Coast stripers range from the San Francisco Bay to the Oregon coastline. The main East Coast striper nursery remains the Chesapeake Bay, where some experts believe as many as two-thirds of stripers are born.

Road Trip
If you have access to a boat, put it to good use. First, look to the skies; diving birds are a good sign that stripers abound. No birds? Try blind casting to areas that have good holding structure. Oyster beds can be a great place to find small schools of stripers as well as bridge abutments and marker buoys. Some guides are aware of locations where old boats have met their fate, and their sunken hulls make a great hangout for these fish.

If you don’t have a boat, don’t give up hope. Rock jetties are quite common in places like New Jersey, and places like Island State Park and Barneget Light provide good access for wading anglers. If you’re fishing off a jetty or wading in the surf, keep your personal safety in mind. Have good wading gear that keeps you warm and dry and, above all else, wear boots with cleats or felt that give you good traction. Going swimming instead of fishing in the fall is not pleasant.

The Gear
Traditional anglers often live line, meaning they use live menhaden or some other bait like spot and put them in areas where stripers are likely to be. Cut bait like squid can also work, but since fishing is greatly determined by locality, check with your local tackle shop. Fly anglers will need eight- to nine-weight fast action rods with Clouser Minnows or Deceiver’s in size No. 2-3/0.

Never been striper fishing? You don’t know what you’re missing. These hard-fighting fish are beautiful, will eagerly take flies or bait and make excellent table fare. Check your local fishing regulations for what can be kept and when, since stripers harvesting laws vary greatly from state to state. You certainly don’t want to hear “You should have been here.”

Beau Beasley (www.beaubeasley.com) is a member of Fire Fighters Local 2068 in Fairfax County, Va. His next book Fly Fishing the Mid-Atlantic is due out this winter.
You are the USA

Can’t Keep a Good Man Down

By Brad Crosby, Guide

Stewart Lewis of the USA and SMWIA Local 20 is no quitter

I

met Stewart at the trailhead with the rest of the hunters. He’d applied for a New Mexico elk hunt for six years before drawing a tag. Stewart, who was 72, knew the Gila Wilderness was going to be tough.

We had six hunters, six guides, a cook, a wrangler and 21 horses and mules. By the time we had the mules unloaded, the rain started. The next morning, it got heavier, and the wind was blowing sideways – not prime elk hunting weather, but that didn’t phase Old Stew.

Making our way up the pass, sheets of rain walloped across our horses. I looked back to see Stewart hunkered down, scanning the morning dawn for the elusive Wapiti. There was nothing at the pass but wind and rain, so we headed deeper into the timber, moving into the next drainage and working our way up the draw to a ridge where I knew elk had been bedding. Two cows crossed in front of us, and we waited in vain to see if a bull would follow.

We reached a grass covered ridge, prime elk country, as a thick wall of clouds moved in. We’ll go on, I thought, roll off the nose of this ridge and ride to the north. Just then, I heard the “snap” and “crack” of a tree giving to the wind. In the Gila, there are three things to be scared of: lightning, yellow jackets and wind.

Lifting my eyes from beneath the soaked brim of my hat, I looked up to see a huge Ponderosa Pine falling directly down on my mule and me. Instantly, my mule leaped three feet to the left, landing barely escaping the mighty Ponderosa as it whizzed by. Turning, I saw the tree crashing down on Stewart and his horse, Bud. Branches scattered. A white horse fell to the right, and the orange of Stewart’s hat and vest disappeared under the cloud of debris. I jumped from my mule and ran to Stewart. Bud was dead with a branch through his head. But Stewart, lying face down with his foot caught underneath the horse, was moving. I helped him to his knees, after freeing his leg, to find him covered in blood, but whose?

Stewart Lewis, 72, killed this awesome 300-class bull despite having a broken hand.

After checking his head, neck and back and running through my first responder checklist, I concluded he was scratched, bruised and stunned, but miraculously alive! As we descended to a safe area, I noticed Stewart’s left hand swelling and turning black and blue.

“Okay Stewart, we’re going to have to get back to camp, get another horse and get to the hospital,” I said.

“Hospital?” Stewart exclaimed. “I don’t need to go to the hospital. It’s eight in the morning. We should hunt the rest of the day and see how it goes.”

The guy had waited six years to hunt the Gila. His hand might be broken, and every instinct told me to get this 72-year-old into better medical hands, but reluctantly I left the decision to him.

“We’ll hunt the rest of the morning and see how the hand does,” I agreed.

It got worse. So the next morning, we made the nine mile ride to Stew’s truck, before driving two more hours to the hospital, arriving at the emergency room late in the afternoon.

The x-rays showed three broken bones in the left hand, a fractured wrist, massive contusions down his left side and a bruised left ankle. The nurse and doctors were fascinated. This old guy had one close call.

Leaving the hospital, Stewart already had the plan. We’d head back to the horses, sleep at the trailhead and be ready to head out early the next morning. The next morning was calm and cold. Tom Klumker, the owner of San Francisco River Outfitters, asked Stewart if he would be able to go ahead with his hunt.

“Give me five minutes,” Stew said. He walked to his tent, picked up his rifle, dry fired it twice, came back and said, “Tom, my fingers move enough. I can squeeze the trigger. I’ve waited six years for this and there’s no stopping me now.”

We headed to top of the mesas to the south. Our route was steep and long, traversing up from the river bottom along the east side of a rocky cliff. Close to the sum-

The Union Sportsmen’s Journal
An hour later, heading to the top of the mesa with the sun brightening the day, it started looking elky! Then there they were, 15-20 elk meandering 250 yards out. I signaled to Stewart, as I slipped off my horse and moved to the scabbard side of his mule. He slowly and painfully lowered himself to the ground, as I took his rifle from the scabbard, chambered a round and handed it to him saying, “the rest is up to you.”

We moved slowly from tree to tree, cutting our distance in half. Behind a small stand of trees, two bulls were pushing cows back and forth. I told Stewart to get a bead on one of the bulls and keep it there.

I sounded a series of cow calls and the bulls went crazy. Both turned and headed straight for us, but hung up in the trees. One more cow call and the screaming bulls went crazy. Both turned and headed there.

Anchoring his .338 with his cast-covered hand, Steward squeezed the trigger and dropped the bull to the ground.

Elated with his 310 class bull, Stewart left the Gila with a great troph, a slew of stories and a lifelong friend. What a hunter! I guess you can’t keep a good man down. USA

**CAMO CALAMITIES**

**Different Kind of Car Wash**

I was still a young buck in the early 80s, and my friend Mark and I were taking his new bass boat out for a day of fishing. We towed it with my Ford Bronco 4x4, which had been modified to a lifted mud truck. Mark and I unhitched the boat, and he climbed aboard as I backed him down the boat ramp. That’s when I realized, we had forgotten to disconnect the bow cable. Since the truck was a stick shift, I put it in neutral and applied the parking break. Then I got out and headed to the boat trailer, where I stepped onto the tongue to disconnect the bow.

I noticed my feet getting wet when Mark yelled that the truck was moving. I jumped through the back window and across the back seat to put it back into gear as water rushed in, filling the floor boards and rising to the door frames. Keeping his head, while I lost mine, Mark jumped onto the dock. I could hear the exhaust underwater like the sound of someone farting in a bathtub. I was spinning the tires in a losing battle when Mark remembered the Bronco was a four-wheel drive. He jumped into the water to lock in the hubs. Thankfully, the engine didn’t stall and I was able to drive out. We didn’t catch any fish that day, but the carpeting in my truck got a good washing.

Jerry Moore, Fire Fighters Local 4667
Victor, ID

**Pole Diving**

The temperature was hovering around 30 degrees with a light snow falling and a stiff breeze as I fished Idaho’s Snake River. I cast my line and let it settle to the bottom before prop-ping my pole on a stick and walking 30 to 40 yards away to explore. When I looked back, my pole was bouncing wildly. I ran toward shore. I was halfway there when my pole was pulled off the stick and ten feet away when it was pulled into the water. When I reached the edge of the water, my pole was six feet off shore in three feet of water.

Without thinking, I jumped in after it. As I reached for my pole, I slipped and fell in up to my chest. After regaining my balance, I grabbed the pole on my second attempt and ran out of the frigid water. The fish was still on the line, so I landed a nice 18” brown trout. Unfortunately, that was the end of our day fishing because I was soaking wet and freezing. My fishing partner and I got a good laugh and a good excuse to leave the snow for a warm house.

Jerry Rausch, Sheet Metal Workers Local 18
Kaukauna, WI

**Send your camo calamity story to:**
USAmembers@unionsportsmen.org.
Have you ever wondered what it would be like to come face to face with a bugling monster bull or asked yourself if mule deer racks really get 30” wide in the desert? Many hunters dream of hunting in the Southwest but only a few pursue their dream and one of these trophy animals.

Maybe it’s because getting a hunting license seems so daunting. But with some persistence and advice from union brothers familiar with the Southwest, you can stop dreaming and start hunting.

First and foremost, you need to understand how the license system works in southwestern states. Typically, you need to obtain a hunt permit or, as we call it in the Southwest, a tag. These tags are coveted, and very few are given out. Many southwestern states use a lottery system for trophy hunt units, so you must register for the lotteries and have a little luck in order to hunt the monarchs of the Southwest.

But diligence and commitment can pay off because southwestern states have systems called the Bonus Point or Preference Point System that give preference to loyal hunters, who try annually for a tag. Eventually, you accumulate enough points that, mathematically, your odds make drawing a tag very likely. Many states allow the small percentage of unlucky bonus point holders with what they define as max points to enter a special drawing that increases their chance of getting a tag to greater than 75%.

Another option, in some states, is to buy tags from landowners, but that can be very expensive, especially if you’re a non-resident. When combined with outfitter fees, you may be looking at $6500 - $10,000 for an average elk hunt.

In many Southwest states, you can purchase an over-the-counter tag for a given species as well as leftover tags that weren’t drawn. These hunts are usually average hunts with a lesser trophy caliber class of animal. But they give you a chance to hunt in the Southwest, and you just might happen upon a bomber while in the field.

If you’re serious about hunting in the Southwest, Big Chino Guide Service (BCGS) can be a valuable resource. We cater to the non-resident hunter or anyone looking for trophy quality animals in Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Nevada and Old Mexico. We provide all the information you need to fill out big game applications and choose units to fit your hunting style and goals. We are hardcore hunters, outfitters, guides and union members with years of practical experience hunting every state in the Southwest. And we offer a 10% discount to all USA members – see details at unionsportsmen.org/outfitters.

USA

The Union Sportsmen's Journal
Among hunters nationwide, few would argue the rich heritage surrounding the pursuit of upland birds while in the company of a well-trained canine. To take this notion of dog and sportsman afield working together a step further, let’s consider two of the most traditional upland species—ruffed grouse and woodcock. For many, these extraordinary forest fowl and a fine-honed pointer are, for all intents and purposes, synonymous.

That said, is the dog-less hunter left out in the proverbial cold when the topic turns to these birds of the timber? The answer is a resounding no; however, the man who finds himself without a bird dog will want to approach this particular game a bit differently than one in the habit of finding dog hair on his truck seats. Here are some quick, no-dog tips to help the gunner, sans hound, put more birds in the bag.

**Woodcock**

The two most important virtues for the dog-less hunter are patience and persistence. Woodcock, a.k.a. timberdoodles, especially those in heavily-hunted locales, often sit notoriously tight, refusing to flush even when confronted with a size 12 boot just inches away. To combat this, it’s vital that soloists (1) move through cover v-e-r-y slowly, taking the time to zig and zag into and out of likely looking areas and (2) stop frequently. As can be the case with cagy rooster pheasants, ‘doodles have a tendency to get nervous when a perceived disturbance—a hunter or predator—abruptly stops. Nerves can lead to a flush often enough to make stopping and admiring the scenery a noteworthy tactic.

Dog-less for more seasons than I care to recall, I nonetheless enjoyed many exciting and productive woodcock hunts in my native northeastern Ohio during the 1970s and into the early 80s. I concentrated my hunt efforts on the edges or the less tangled portions of traditional cover. These included logging roads or skidder paths, relatively new tree plantings or reforestation projects, and young—10 years or newer—timber harvests. Hunting comparatively light cover typically meant a shot opportunity at any flush, and heaven knows I needed all the shot opportunities I could get. And this same light cover meant I stood a much better chance of locating the downed bird.

It’s at this point where persistence comes into play. Masters of camouflage, ‘doodles can be almost impossible to spot against a backdrop of autumn’s array of browns, blacks and tans. The dog-less gunner must get into the habit of never taking his eyes, or ears for that matter, off a falling bird. At the shot, it’s best if the hunter moves immediately to the recovery area, stopping once close for the chance to hear the bird’s final flutters against the leaves. If the bird isn’t immediately found, a blaze orange hat can be used to mark the fall. Then pacing ever-increasing circles out and away from the site usually pays off.

**Ruffed grouse**

Much of what has been said about woodcock can be related to ruffed grouse in terms of the dog-less gunner finding and flushing birds with, perhaps, a bit more emphasis on the patience aspect. Grouse, especially pressured ruffs, often get spooky. Long-distance flushes and the accompanying frustrations become the norm. To combat this, hunters should be stealthy when approaching coverts by maintaining noise discipline and working cover from the downwind side if possible.

The bulk of my ruffed grouse hunting experience and all of my blue grouse knowledge comes courtesy of the Cascade Range in western Washington. Here, my wife and I, dog-less for the first couple years of my Pacific Northwest residency, drove the gravel logging roads of the Gifford Pinchot National Forest during the early morning hours, the time when ruffs and blues could commonly be found roadside picking grit and nipping the occasional dandelion blossom. Sightings or cover that simply screamed grouse warranted a stop and a 30 to 45-minute meander through the alders, huckleberries and young firs. More times than not, our efforts were met with the roar of grouse wings. As for the shooting, well, that wasn’t always as productive.

Hunting grouse and woodcock, the kings of upland game birds, in the company of a wonderful pointer or Labrador is, without question, one of the finest examples of our grand sport. However, not having a dog certainly doesn’t translate into no hunting when the alders turn gold and the air carries with her a chill throughout the morning.

USA
**American Work Boots at a Great Price**

The great American work boot is alive and well, still being made in Wisconsin by the Weinbrenner Shoe Company. And since its introduction in 1926, the Thorogood American Heritage moc toe, rubber wedge sole, safety work boot has been its best-selling style.

For more than 80 years, union members from Boston to San Diego and Miami to Seattle have depended on the quality craftsmanship and out-of-the-box comfort of these popular union-made work boots. With 10 rubber wedge sole styles to choose from, Thorogood has created the perfect job-fitted boot for every possible environment.

In addition to the Thorogood wedge sole styles, TheUnionBootPro.com carries the complete selection of union made, American made, occupational work boots made by Weinbrenner. These include styles designed for electrical workers, utility workers, sheet metal workers, steel workers, and assembly and manufacturing workers - to name a few. Plus, TheUnionBootPro.com offers an exclusive lifetime discount to labor union members.

Thorogood boots are made by the brothers and sisters of UFCW Locals 688 and 711. Your purchase of job-fitted work boots employs Americans and fellow union members.

Union members receive a 27% discount on boots purchased online at TheUnionBootPro.com or by phone at 1-800-723-5384 when you use this code: AcNa7xD (case sensitive). A portion of the proceeds from these sales will support the USA and its conservation initiatives. USA members receive a special 30% discount on all purchases. Visit www.unionsportsmen.org/deals for your special code.

*TheUnionBootPro.com*
Hey Guys, this is for you too. Get your wife, girlfriend or daughter the right gear, and she’ll stay afield longer – and so will you.

Sportswomen know all too well it’s tough to be stealthy when wearing rolled up, bunched up or pinned up men’s clothing. But until recently, they didn’t have much choice. That’s changing thanks to Prois, a company launched in 2008 and committed entirely to the female hunter or shooter.

When Prois Founder and CEO Kirstie Pike discovered her passion for hunting, shooting and archery as an adult, she ran into the same problem as so many other sportswomen; she couldn’t find clothing made for women and certainly none that was performance driven. So she built Prois around the belief that hand-me-downs and make-do gear is not an option. Women require performance outdoor gear for their hunting and field pursuits. And that begins with fabrics that provide windstopping, wicking, waterproofing, silence and thermoregulation.

“We spend a lot of time finding the right fabric when we develop a line. It pretty much has to have every bell and whistle in it. No gimmickry – just function,” said Pike. “Women want to be protected; they don’t want to be cold or sweaty.”

Once the fabric is chosen, they dial in on what the sportswoman needs for that particular piece of clothing and add features that enhance it. Many of the ideas behind Prois clothing come from proven running and cycling apparel.

One of Prois’ most popular lines is the Pro-Edition with its windstopping, water-resistant, compressed fabric that provides good warmth without bulk. While adding to its existing lines, Prois plans to introduce two to three new lines in 2011.

As Prois continues to grow with the needs of sportswomen, it also supports the American economy. All Prois products are made in the U.S., and they are trying to keep it that way.

“It’s hard when we see how cheaply it can be done overseas and what the bottom line could look like, but we are committed to maintaining some support of the domestic economy, and we’re pretty proud of that as we grow and get more people working,” said Pike.

www.proishunting.com
Forget the rut for now. Early archery season is right around the corner, and it’s a great time to shoot a whopper whitetail. Dang near as good as the rut! Bucks have two weaknesses. Singles, doubles and bachelor’s groups—generally a couple of small guys hanging out with a big-racked shooter or two—are visible in fields where you can glass them. Moreover, the deer are still locked into predictable summer bed-to-feed patterns.

Try these early-bird tactics, but be warned. You might have to stop hunting long before the November rut because your tags are filled.

**Take a Field Post**

“Hang a tree stand on the edge of a crop or clover field where you’ve glassed some bucks or even in the middle of the field,” says Luke Strommen, who guides bowhunters on the famous Milk River in Montana. “People haven’t hassled bucks for eight or nine months, and they’re pretty lax. If you’re smart with the wind, you can sneak in tight where they feed in the afternoons, and they’ll linger in the fields in the mornings, too.”

One September, four of Strommen’s clients arrowed four bucks out of the same lock-on in a cottonwood tree in the middle of 200 acres of alfalfa. One early October morning, Luke shot a fifth buck, “Massy,” from the same tree.

**Hunt a Water Hole**

Scout for clean water 100 yards or so back in the woods from a field where deer feed. A river or creek pool, a clear, oxygenated pond…you get the idea. The hotter it is, the more deer have to drink. Sneak to a water hole from downwind and set a stand quietly because some deer are likely bedded close by in the cover. A buck might stop in for a sip before or after eating in the morning or evening, so it’s a double-duty post.
Go Nuts

You can never, I repeat never, go wrong by locating a stand near the first white-oak acorns that fall 50-100 yards from a cornfield or food plot. Many does and bucks will stage and gnaw acorns before heading into the field in late afternoon. Set up downwind of the mast and near a trail that leads to it. Fresh rubs on the trail are hot sign.

Cool Down

The two or three days after the first cold front of the season blows through and drops the temperature from, say, 80 degrees to 50, are the best days. Bucks sluggish in the heat get spunky and start moving and rubbing more. Head to your best stand near crops or acorns and be ready for action.

Get Your Grunt On?

Taylor Fitzpatrick bowhunted in Montana the first week of September. The 19-year-old spotted a buck and grunted at him. “He looked up and walked to me on a string, and I shot him,” Taylor says. No doubt that was the first buck grunted up and killed in America that season.

A young, energetic hunter like Taylor is not afraid to try different things, like grunting to a buck in September. That is something many of us seasoned veterans might not do because we “know” grunting works best later in the rut.

Well, change your thinking. I have. I carry my grunter from day one of archery season, and you should too. If you spot a big deer out of range in a field or slipping through the trees, might as well grunt at him. What’s to lose? I do advise softer, steadier calls rather than the loud, guttural grunts that work best later in the rut.

Who knows, you might call in and shoot a 10-pointer before most of your buddies even start hunting. Good luck!

Check out Hanback’s Big Deer Blog (mikehanback.com).
USA Capital Area Sporting Clays Shoot Sets Record

The USA's 2nd Annual Capital Area Sporting Clays Shoot literally began with a bang at beautiful Pintail Point on Maryland's eastern shore. Throughout the morning and early afternoon, 160 union sportsmen and invited guests blasted away as they participated in the USA's largest shooting event to date.

Among the clay target busting (and sometimes missing) crowd were top ranking union leaders including AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker, Roofers' President Kinsey (The Ringer) Robinson, Painters' President James Williams, Boilermakers' President Newton Jones and others. Incidentally, Robinson and his team won the event, while his wife Mona (Lil’ Miss Sure Shot) and her team trailed close behind.

In true sporting tradition, newcomers and old hands were welcome, with the experienced shooters tutoring “apprentice” shooters as they pulled their triggers at both easy and difficult targets. Like the old potato chip commercial that said, “bet you can’t eat just one,” first-timers discovered that once you smoke a clay pigeon, you want to do it over and over again. It’s just plain addicting.

In addition to the challenging 16 station course, three fundraising stations gave shooters the chance to break bouncing “rabbits” and going away and incoming “birds” for a five or 10 dollar donation. Shooters who broke their targets received tickets, which they deposited in cans next to dozens of items donated by friends and sponsors of the USA. During the post shoot luncheon, winners were drawn and lucky recipients walked away with everything from knives to treestands to a new Beretta shotgun. Winning teams also received trophies.

Trumka didn’t join a team but moved around the course with USA Executive Director Fred Myers visiting stations and lending encouragement. Unable to resist, he occasionally stopped and showed that he’s more than a fair shot, often breaking six targets in a row. Trumka, who holds the USA’s #1 membership card and has been a moving force behind it from the beginning, reiterated his support for the USA and promised to help make it grow because, as he said, “This is our organization; it’s for us and our families.”

Don’t miss a chance to attend an event in your area. You owe it to yourself to go and have a blast!
USA Heads to Alaska -- the Last Frontier

In June, the USA made its way to the Last Frontier where union members came together for fellowship and friendly competition at the USA sporting clays shoot in Anchorage and trap shoot in Juneau. When the sun doesn’t go down, it’s hard to know when to call it a day – especially when everyone is having a blast!
The USA Photo Contest Has Gone Weekly! 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 for a chance to win.

Abbey Meacham, a member of Firefighters Local 1146 from Spout Spring, VA, harvested this impala ram from shooting sticks in the Bela-Bela Province of South Africa with Thaka Safaris.

Don Ols of Pipefitters Local 120 from North Ridgeville, OH, had a great day fishing for spring smallies in Lake Erie with his cousin. They each had a fish on the line at the same time.

Keith Wallace, a member of Fire Fighters Local 1775 from Petaluma, CA, shows off a fine hog he took in Sonoma County, CA. It weighed about 100 lbs.

Bill Fuller, a member of Ironworkers Local 21 from Mondamin, IA, caught this walleye at dusk on the Rainy River, which flows into the Lake of the Woods on the border of Minnesota and Canada.

Michael Gorman, a member of Electrical Workers Local 3 from Floral Park, NY, shares a photo of hunters in training.

Mitchell Berreth, a communications worker with Electrical Workers Local 483 from Tacoma, WA, caught this 20-lb. steelhead in WA’s Wynoochee River with his first cast using an adjustable float and jig set up.

Tom Lucko (right), a member of Steel Workers Local 843 from Hilliard, OH, harvested this antelope from 660 yards with guide Owen Harris (left) from Boulder Basin Outfitters in Buffalo, WY. It received an SCI score of 80 6/8.

Chris Daily, a member of Fire Fighters Local 344 from Redford, MI, caught this lake trout while fishing on Fort Peck Reservation in Eastern Montana.

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Tyler Groshens, son of Laborers Local 563 member Joe Groshens, harvested this 9 pt. at 115 yards during his first year of hunting.

Three-year-old Gerard Scarano III caught his first fish (a fluke) with his grandpa, Bricklayers Executive VP Gerard Scarano, in Sandy Hook, NJ.

Wesley Whiting II, son of Ironworkers Local 66 member Wesley Whiting, placed a good shot on this 7 pt. and made his father proud.

Hey kids, find out how much you know about the great outdoors. Write your answers on the form and mail it in by Oct. 31, 2010 and you’ll be entered in a drawing for a Mossberg 500 Super Bantam 20-gauge turkey gun. If you don’t know the answers, use the Internet or ask a wise outdoorsman for help. Contest open to youths ages 6-16. Parent/guardian of the winner must be able to legally accept the firearm for the youth.

1. Which species of tree squirrel is the smallest and is rarely hunted for food?
   a. fox squirrel  b. gray squirrel  c. red squirrel

2. Which shotgun shell is the largest?
   a. 12 gauge  b. 20 gauge  c. 28 gauge

3. What is the full moon that usually appears in October called?
   a. Harvest Moon  b. Hunter’s Moon  c. Halloween Moon

4. Which big game species is called an “elk” in Sweden?
   a. Whitetail deer  b. Wapiti  c. Moose

5. Which group of ducks does a mallard belong to?
   a. Divers  b. Dabblers  c. Daffy’s

6. Pheasants, America’s favorite upland game bird, were introduced from?
   a. Borneo  b. Argentina  c. Asia

7. Davy Crockett & Daniel Boone hunted deer and bear with what kind of rifle?

8. What is fletching?
   a. Retrieving a bird b. feathers on an arrow c. a shooters reaction to recoil

9. What is another name for the American Woodcock?
   a. snipe  b. timberdoodle  c. woodie

10. Which North American big game animal can run the fastest?
    a. Whitetail deer  b. Elk  c. Pronghorn Antelope


Mail completed form to:
USA – Kids Quiz
3340 Perimeter Hill Dr.
Nashville, TN  37211

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