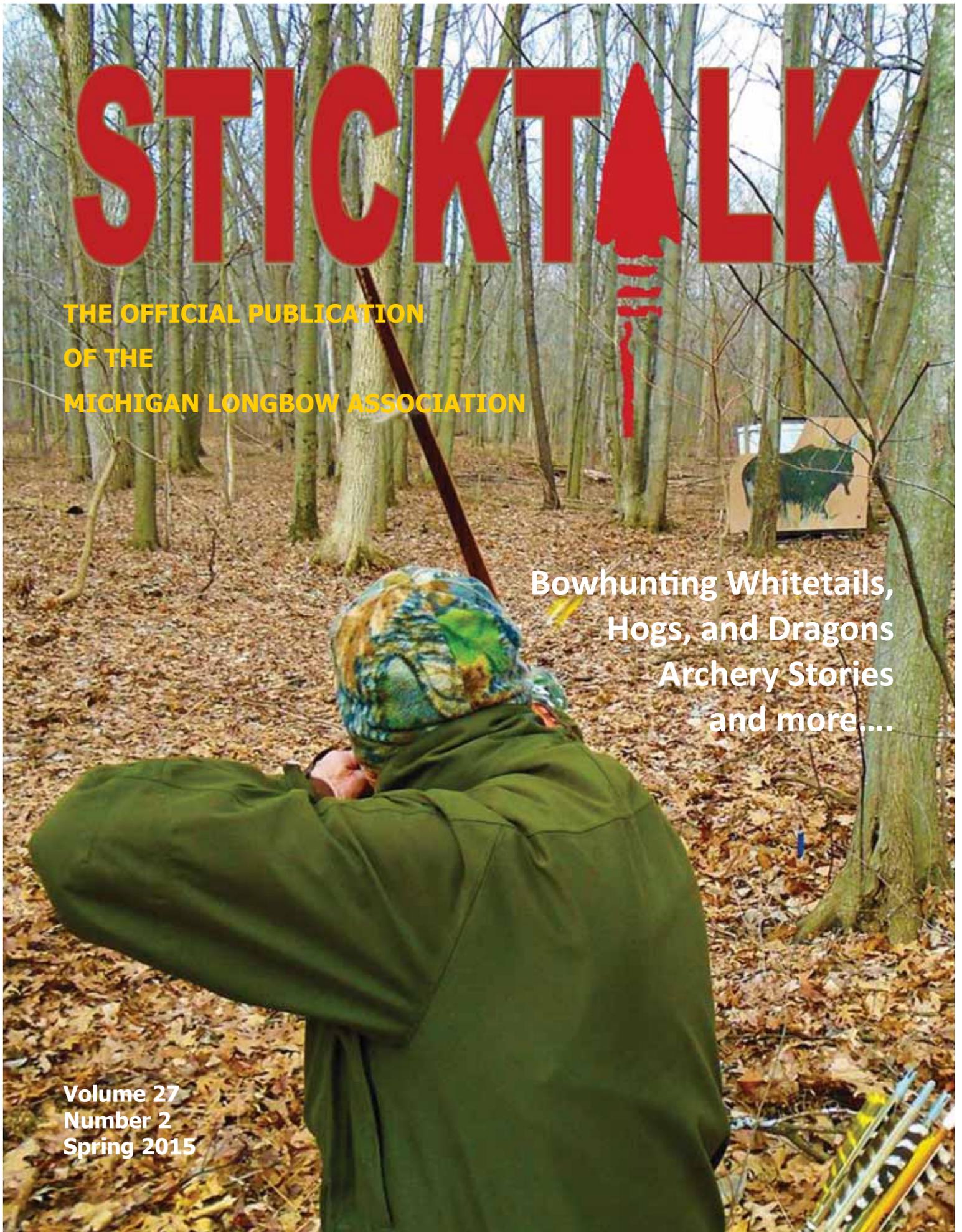


STICKTALK

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
OF THE
MICHIGAN LONGBOW ASSOCIATION

Bowhunting Whitetails,
Hogs, and Dragons
Archery Stories
and more....

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STICKTALK

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Photo submitted by

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Editor's Point

With Caroline and Bub

The winter is behind us now and spring is in the air. We enjoyed a wonderful MLA Winter Banquet and

got snowed in at the Kalamazoo Expo. So things ran pretty much true to form. What is not true to form is the new look we are introducing to the MLA STICKTALK newsletter.

We have heard many times how nice STICKTALK would be if it were in color like some of the other outdoor publications. The cost for a color periodical however is prohibitive. While we feel that this newsletter is a very important part of the MLA experience we cannot break the bank in order to print it. Many of us loved the heavy antique paper that has become a trademark of our club newsletter but in truth, it was cumbersome to work with and the printer had to charge us more to use it. Even though the newsletter was a black and white publication, it had to be printed on a color printer. That costs more.

Greenman's Printing was kind enough to print the last issue of STICKTALK on a variety of different papers in order for us to get an idea of what changes could be made without compromising the quality of the newsletter. Explanations can get a bit complicated but in simple terms, pages are sold and print-

ed in a series of four sides due to the way the magazine is stapled at the center. Thus you will always have a magazine with the number of pages divisible by four. The proof that was chosen gives our newsletter a lighter page background, four color sides on the cover and is several hundred dollars less in cost per issue. This was a win-win situation for Greenman's and the Michigan Longbow Association. The task immediately became easier for their employees to print and the club saved money while upgrading to a color cover.

We believe it is a step in the right direction, but it is indeed your publication. So we would very much like to hear your opinion of what you think about the new format. How do you view the change in the light of it being an upgrade and a money-saving move on our part? While you are looking at things with a critical eye, check the mailing label on the back of your magazine to see when your membership is up. Keep current because you won't want to miss even one issue of STICKTALK or one single MLA event.

Please see your way clear to volunteer at one or more of the upcoming MLA events. Write down your experiences, take some pictures and then share them with the MLA family by sending them to sticktalkeditor@yahoo.com. We need your material desperately so that STICKTALK can continue to be one of the premium benefits of being a member of the greatest longbow organization in the world. It also helps to remember that we'll make you famous.



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President's Corner

Nick Viau

A lot has happened since our last STICKTALK hit your mailboxes and it has all been very positive. First, the Kalamazoo Traditional Bowhunting Expo had an exceptional turnout on Saturday. You could hardly navigate down the aisles there were so many archers there and the MLA youth booth was jumping from start to finish. Derek Sheehan was kind enough to let us borrow his clay breaker, and the kids were all over it. They broke nearly two cases worth and had a blast doing it. You should've seen some of these kids at work. The GLLI turkey shoot should be quite the competition this year. We signed up several new members and received several renewals as well—many of them three to five years. I love to see commitments like that as they assure me the longbow is alive and well.

Michigan Out-of-Doors was there to cover the event. You can actually see the video here: www.michiganoutofdoorstv.com/shows.cfm, episode number 1510 if you were unable to attend. We have a cameo, albeit brief, but cool none-the-less. A special thanks to the Brumms for all the work they put into organizing such an amazing opportunity to connect with archers and vendors from across the country. Hopefully the weather will be better throughout the weekend next year and Friday and Sunday pick up a bit.

Next up was the Winter Banquet, which occurred on Saturday, February 21st at Woodshire Banquet Hall in Fowlerville. We were able to house 185 people and I believe there is room for more after experimenting with a new layout. A tremendous thank you to all those who helped at the event and donated items to our raffle and auction. It is by your generosity that this organization is still kicking. I would also like to thank Tim and his staff at Woodshire for giving us such a warm venue and making the evening enjoyable.

That being said, with greater numbers comes greater challenges. The added folks increased the amount of raffle/auction items substantially, which caused delays and pushed us even later into the evening. Your Council noted this and is currently working on ways to expedite the process. We are always working to make the MLA enjoyable for all.

I'd also like to take a moment to recognize John



Buchin, our 2014 Service Award winner and Ron LaClair our MLA Legend honoree. Both were well deserved.

For those of you who were not able to get tickets in time or simply couldn't attend; you were sorely missed. We value every member and would see all of you at every event if we had our way. We are already thinking about next year's banquet and are hoping to work as many of you in as possible.

All that being said, it is fixing to be a FANTASTIC year behind the bow. I am extremely excited to roll into "archery" season. The Spring Shoot is next on the agenda and I personally cannot wait. Should you be interested in club affairs, I encourage you to attend the membership meeting on Saturday at 1:00 PM.

We have several volunteer opportunities on the horizon as well. Barry County Outdoor Day on May 23, the GLLI, and the Great Outdoor Youth Jamboree in late August. All require a great deal of effort and greater hands make lighter work. Remember that this organization and all of its events belong to YOU the member. You can help us make it better. All you have to do is ask!

In fact, we've already set up a Google Doc's GLLI volunteer sheet for those interested. Shifts will be in 2-hour increments and jobs will be very specific from manning the MLA booth, organizing raffle items, helping out at the kid's range, and assisting with our special events. Please email me at viaunick@hotmail.com if you are interested in taking a shift or two and would like to be added to the sheet. A Council team captain will be there to assist you. I'll be creating a GLLI Facebook group for those who are on our page, as well.

Let's make 2015 a good one! Thank you for all that you do!

Longbows Forever!





Thank You MLA

by Audrey Watson

As we get ready to start the 2015 summer of slinging arrows I want to take a moment to thank the MLA council and members. This will be my family's third summer filled with family time, fun events, camping, great people and lots of shooting. Three years ago my husband, Donavan, drove by himself to a shoot for the day where he met a group of guys. They shot for the day and talked about a group they belonged to called, "the MLA." Donavan came home and told me and our son all about it and the next thing I know, we were all heading to the MLA Spring Membership Meeting at Land-O-Lakes Conservation Club for our first primitive camping weekend shoot.

It helps a little to understand my background as I continue with my story. Working at the MDOC (Michigan Department of Corrections) I see on a daily basis the worst of society and just how cruel and twisted people can be to one another. This has led to me becoming a very private, non-trusting person with a pessimistic personality and not a social butterfly by any means. That is, until I get to know you. It's only after I have acquired trust in you will I let my guard down and only then, will you see the real me. My husband on the other hand, is definitely a social butterfly, spends every waking moment outside and loves his bows.

Going to a primitive camping archery shoot with my only son around a lot of strangers with weapons

was a very big deal for me. I for one, never thought I would allow my eight-year old son to take off out-of-sight for hours at a time with a group of kids that are all equipped with their own bows and quivers full of arrows, let alone throw a tomahawk at a chunk of wood over and over again.

Back to my thank you...here we are The Watsons and the MLA, three summers later. I am thankful to the MLA council and members for showing me that there are still families who believe in traditions and have good morals with good ethics. Also, for showing me that in today's society there is still a place a family can go for the weekend, have fun, relax, loose a lot of arrows, hit wood and maybe a few targets as well and socialize with good people. For those of you who know my son Sam, and laugh at him every time we show up at a shoot as he goes running off yelling "FREEDOM," I will allow him to basically run wild for the weekend and not worry about his safety and well-being.

My family and I have had a great time making new friends and memories that will last a lifetime. I humbly thank the founders for starting the MLA, the council for keeping the MLA going and the members for being you. We have met some great families, made lifetime friends, enjoyed shooting courses, losing, and finding arrows, and seen some of the greatest bonfires ever! I look forward to doing again and again....



MLA BIO's for Council

Nick Viau



Dear MLA Friends and Family,

Well here we are, approaching yet another season with bow and arrow. I'll be the first to admit the last two years have been a wild ride for me. I joined Council with the intention of getting more involved and despite running for VP in 2014, never dreamed of being the president. Nor did I have any intention to be.

Had you asked me run at the beginning of my Council tenure, I would have told you to look elsewhere, but this is a volunteer organization and people come and go as life intervenes. When this happens, someone has to hold the rope and at this juncture that person is me. The job hasn't been easy, but it's been incredibly rewarding. I've come to enjoy it and would like to continue doing it while I am needed.

The Michigan Longbow Association is a very exciting place to be right now. We are the lightning rod of archery in the region and I am excited to be a part of that. I am also very happy to be a part of this Council. We've accomplished many things together: the youth program has grown to new heights, we've filed for 501c3 nonprofit status, have increased our

online footprint, and have taken steps to streamline the way we conduct business to make the MLA experience more convenient for you – our members. As your president, I would continue to address all of the above without losing sight of where we've been and what makes us who we are.

If elected, my goals for this upcoming term are simple:

Grow to and maintain a membership of 600;

Encourage volunteers by better communicating opportunities, needs, and expectations in advance;

Participate in four youth outreach events, including one elementary school appearance;

Form a by-law subcommittee consisting of both Council and volunteer members with the purpose of modernizing our processes and increasing membership participation in our initiatives.

I believe these are solid goals to shoot for and know that all four are possible with your help. That being said, I would like to take this opportunity to announce my intentions of serving you for another Council term and ask that you consider me for Council President in addition.

Be safe, shoot straight, and I'll see you in May!

Todd Greenwald

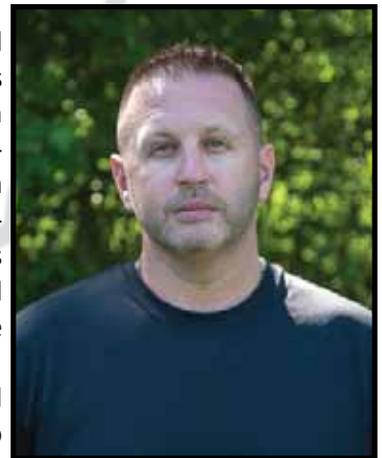
I would like to formally announce my candidacy for the VP position for 2015. I would appreciate your consideration and support as we come to the Annual Spring Membership Meeting.

I was recently elected to the MLA Council in 2014 and through the growth of our organization was appointed the VP during last year. I worked behind the scenes with all the vendors for the Great Lakes Longbow Invitational, recruiting donations for the Youth Silver Arrow event prize table and other duties as assigned.

In the last year I have flown the MLA Banner, apparel and decals throughout Michigan, Pennsylva-

nia, Wyoming and Montana. There is not a day that I am not thankful for being part of such a wonderful organization which assists with my passion and addiction to the longbow.

In closing I would like to continue to serve the MLA as your elected VP. Thank you all for your consideration and support.



MLA BIO's for Council

Peter Collins I've been a member of the MLA for only 5 years—a very short time, really. For me, there's a lot of important history yet to learn and great folks yet to meet! With these thoughts I want to serve you as Treasurer and Membership Secretary for the next two years. I love the MLA and want to help build it up so that it is the premier longbow organization in the country and a place for everyone who enjoys the longbow.

I know that the job of Treasurer and Membership Secretary is a lot of work. Somehow, Ken Scollick made it look easy and not much work. Fooled me, for sure! Without giving it much thought I tried to step into Ken's moccasins last September, and soon realized the job actually requires some time every few days, and before our big events—Winter Banquet, the GLLI, it takes a lot more than a little time!

By the time this issue of STICKTALK hits your mail-

box, the Council will have my first quarter financial summary of revenues and expenses for the EXPO and the Winter Banquet. I feel this information is important for the Council's finding ways to make our membership dollars work as efficiently as possible.

Finally, some on the Council kicked around the idea of dividing this job into two jobs for two persons—one, the Treasurer, and the other, Membership Secretary. But it was soon apparent that it really is one job done by one person. I feel ready to do it, and I ask your support.



John Buchin Some time, but not too long ago, a great friend introduced me to the longbow. A gift I can never repay, but it reignited my love of archery, and reconnected me with my equipment. Even though I participated in archery hunting and shooting, it was with modern equipment. After one week of shooting, all modern archery equipment left the house, as I was "all in" to dedicate myself to becoming proficient with traditional and primitive gear. The first step into a long journey. My only regret is not having done so sooner. Instead of investing money into equipment that would be outdated in 4-6 months, I could have been investing efforts into becoming an adept archer with equipment that would stand the test of time.

The return on investments can only be magnified by how much you put in. And for me, I have realized that in order to preserve the spirit of "Longbows Forever," an investment has to be made not just in our practice, but into those that will follow in the path of the Longbow. Kids and adults (like myself) alike.

After seeing how important it was to the MLA to preserve not just traditional archery, but to keep the spirit alive for future generations, I decided to get involved. The amount of satisfaction I felt after helping at the kid's archery day at West Kelloggsville

Elementary, and at the Barry County Kids day in Charlton Park, was immense. I was able to witness several kids (and some adults) have the "spark" of traditional archery ignited. It glowed very bright, and we gently fanned it, hoping to keep the embers glowing.

The return on the time invested with these kids shoots is intangible...at least for now. Like trying to plant a forest of Loblolly Pines, it will take time before we see the seeds as tall towering trees, standing steadfast.

The fire, the passion for the longbow burns hot within the Michigan Longbow Association, and a great many have worked hard and long to keep the fire fed, and from time to time, coax the embers back to flame. It is with this that I would like to offer my help to keep the fire going, on a seat on the MLA Council.

Thank you for your consideration, and hope to see and meet you all soon!



MLA BIO's for Council



Keith Jackson

Hello my name is Keith Jackson and I am throwing my hat into the ring for a position on the MLA Council. I became an MLA Council member last August after I volunteered to fill a position that became vacant. I live in Coldwater, Michigan and have been involved with some form of archery for the last 35 years. I have basically shot about every type of bow that uses a string and casts something that looks like an arrow.

I was employed for many years as a tool, die and mold maker, but due to illness I had to leave that trade. I also stopped shooting compound bows during that time. When I ventured back to archery I began using a traditional bow. I started with a Bear Montana and found out what archery really was. Now I can say how much more fun going traditional actually is.

About five years ago a huge storm came through our area and blew over a large Osage Orange tree and the neighbor said I could have it. It was shortly thereafter, that I met Marty at the Kalamazoo Expo.

We struck up a conversation and for an Osage wood trade he gave me free selfbow building classes for more than 8 months. Matt Wirwicky also instructed me in the art of selfbow construction. I owe both of these gentlemen a big thank you for their help. Selfbow building is a blast and I always seem to have a few bows in the works.

As many of you know I am the "Keith" that works at 3Rivers Archery in Ashley Indiana. I was building selfbows and when I would complete one, I would need a string for it. Due to wrecked hands from my tool & die days, I was not able to make my own Flemish twist strings so I would show up quite often at 3Rivers. In time, they found I was available to work and was hired to be a Tech Expert.

Traditional archery is basically a seven days a week involvement for me. Due to my experience relating to archery and past leadership positions in volunteer organizations, I believe I have the knowledge to help the Michigan Longbow Association determine what is needed now and also help prepare the MLA for the next generation of traditional archers.

Thank You
Shoot straight and God bless.
Keith Jackson
3Rivers Archery Tech Expert.

Dear MLA Friends,

I'm writing to inform you of my decision to step down from the MLA Council this spring. As most of you know, my life and work situation has changed since joining Council last year. The Gaults were blessed with a beautiful new addition to our family in 2014 and I accepted a new Software Architect position as well. The combination has left me little free time to do the things I love to do and to fulfill Council obligations.

I've enjoyed my time on Council and serving all of you, but will now be doing so solely as your Webmaster. I will remain in this position as long as the Council of the Michigan Longbow Association wishes me to, and will continue to investigate ways to make it better while I am able, or a replacement is named. Regardless, I hope it will continue to serve you all in promoting the MLA and bringing the long-

bow to many people, and I will always be available if needed.

I would also like to say I'm extremely proud to have been a part of where the MLA is headed via our federal filing. Becoming a 501(c)(3) will be a very positive thing for the MLA. It will power our mission, open new doors, and help us give back to those who keep us afloat with their support and donations.

Lastly, I am looking forward to being a member and volunteer for many years to come and will always help when needed as this association and the people in it are very dear to me. I would like to thank those who have supported and encouraged my family in our archery endeavors and can't wait to see you all as we roll into 2015.

Longbows Forever!
-Chris Gault



"Nammies" Shoots Too!

by Patti Viau

"What have they gotten into now?" I thought.

By "them" I mean my son, Nick and husband Steve. They were always on the phone talking bows, or out in the yard shooting them – arrows too. Arrows everywhere. In fact, one day I finally called Steve into the spare bedroom, which to my astonishment was now "the archery room" and told him to sit down and babysit the arrows.

"Are you nuts?" he asked. "Well, somebody has to!" I responded, while pointing to baskets and pails filled with arrows. "These suckers are multiplying at a FAST rate of speed and we have got to stop them!" To which he snickered and left.

He joined an archery league soon after and shot every Tuesday night. I would bake a plate of cookies for them and run for the "clicker" to watch a little TV after watching him leave. One night after one of the Tuesday night groups he came home with an additional bow and set it down on the table. I had just been talking to him about all this archery stuff we were accumulating and couldn't believe he had

brought yet another something to add to the collection. He must have read my expression.... "This is not what you think it is," he said. "This one is for you." I was conflicted. Part of me was elated, "Oh my gosh, how sweet, he wants to include me in this." And the other part of me had the nagging suspicion he'd only said that to save it from the snow-bank.

The next day I stared at the bow still sitting on the table. It was a pretty thing. I remembered Steve telling me it was a Bear recurve, which really didn't mean much at the time, but sounded cool. I picked it up and held it like I watched Steve hold his. It felt pretty good in my hands, but could I shoot it? That afternoon, Steve picked up "my bow" and headed outside with it.

"Hey!" I yelled. "Just where in the world do you think you are you going with MY bow?" He snickered. "I'm going to go shoot it!" "Oh no you're not!" I shouted. "Put MY bow down and go get your own!"

"Oh so you're going to shoot it now?" He smirked. "Absolutely" I said, grabbing it and my boots. "Well, you can't just shoot it like that. You have to have a glove and an armguard at least," he said.

"Ok, go get them for me. We must have extras in that archery room." "You don't even have arrows," he hollered, following me down the hall. "Where are you going anyway?"

"To get arrows." I laughed. "I'm going to pick out the prettiest arrows we have to match my new bow." "That is NOT how it works." He yelled. "I'll get everything, just go outside and wait by the porch."

While waiting outside, I kept thinking, "Well, now ya did it. Now you've got to shoot it." That's when the doubt set in. However, I knew that by raising three boys and growing up with five brothers, if you didn't get involved with what they were doing, you were left behind. That wasn't fun. I thought back to the paintball games we use to have after school and on weekends when the boys were younger and how much fun we had together. If I wouldn't have gotten into that, I wouldn't have all the precious memories I have now and the family wouldn't be nearly as close. The decision was easy: "Yup, I'm going to shoot this bow."

It wasn't long and Steve emerged with his hands full of arm guard, glove, and a quiver full of arrows. He started showing me how to put everything on, how to hold the bow, and how to draw it. My mind was buzzing by the time I was set up enough to take my first shot. I'd love to tell you where my first arrow went, but I don't remember, which is all



you need to know, I guess. I can tell you it wasn't in the target, but it didn't kill anyone or anything, which was good.

I wasn't sure I liked it at that point. It seemed like a lot of things to remember and I kept thinking I was never going to catch on. But we went out every evening and shot and I kept getting a little better every trip. The bow was starting to feel more familiar in my hands, but I was still searching more than I was shooting. I even exploded one off the clothesline post by finding the only piece of steel on the entire thing.

One day Nick called and asked how I was doing. I explained that the target wasn't my friend. He told me I should try stumping. He said it was "a lot more fun than shooting at targets". Well, I'd been on walks with Steve when he would stump so I already knew what that was and told him I wanted to shoot too. We gathered our gear and started out.

The first stump was lying on the ground and when Steve shot at it, his arrow went right up inside of it and vanished. A tirade followed. I got a chuckle out of his carrying on. I couldn't help it. While he was trying to fish the arrow out of the trunk I decided not to wait around and told him I would see him later. He grumbled something I could only assume meant "sure," and I headed down the trail. A ways down the road a stump appeared in a clearing. Steve always shot this one and I decided it was my turn. I brought up the bow, drew, and released.

It was perfect—right dead center of the stump—and I was shocked. "Dead stump!" I yelled. I was so excited! For the first time, I didn't focus on my mechanics and concentrated only on that stump. It worked and it felt amazing. After shooting at and hitting two more I realized I was in love and not just with stumping, but archery in general. I loved the challenge and I loved being in the woods.

I returned down the trail with a new sense of pride. I could do this and couldn't wait to tell Steve,





with Nick and Steve. It was wonderful and still puts a smile on my face a year later. I now look forward to shooting with my daughter-in-law Jessica, and my second grandbaby Mackenzie (alias "Bitty"). Papa and I plan on buying her first longbow the week of GLLI for her third birthday. Nick says she's already popping balloons in the basement with a plastic beginner bow and will be ready for the courses in May. I can't wait to walk the courses again, this time with the whole family. More importantly, I can't wait to show them that "Nammies" shoots too.

who had now gone back to the garage for an axe and was chopping the stump into tiny pieces. I realized between laughs, that his ridiculousness was an omen of sorts. If he hadn't put his arrow up that tree trunk, then I probably wouldn't have ventured out on my own. I couldn't wait to call Nick and tell him the news.

I now have two longbows to call my own and plenty of arrows. Steve and I shoot religiously in our spare time, and I've even joined his Tuesday night traditional league. Am I a good shot? Sometimes, but that is why I love it so much. Its kind of like bowling, you don't always get a strike, but when you do, it's awesome and you can't stop doing it.

This past spring I had a blast shooting with my four-year-old grandbaby girlfriend Aubrey at the Spring Shoot (her birthday weekend). We gathered up the pink-tiger-stripe look-a-like quivers "Papa" (Steve) had made for us and hit the courses



Author's note: Patti and Steve live in Cheboygan, Michigan and are an "archery" family in every sense of the word. Their grandbabies' birthdays are on May 5 (Aubrey) and August 2 (Mackenzie) – only days away from MLA events – so if you see the girls on the courses, be sure to wish them a happy birthday.

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Kids' Korner

Alexis Buchin

The morning started 6:30am as my dad, John Buchin, and I were waiting for Rob Jones to pick us up. I was excited to participate in my first archery shoot. The ride there was excruciatingly long but yet enjoyable by the humor of my dad and Rob. As we pulled in, I began to notice how impatient I had become to get right started.

We quickly got signed in and chatted with Nick, Floyd, Caroline, and a few others before we hit the course. I was a bit nervous but yet ready to see how much my practice would pay off. We chose to do the shoot in 2 sections, stopping for lunch around noon. After lunch, we took part in the 50/50 Dragon Shoot, which was a beautifully painted, 24 foot long dragon target.



After shooting, a large group of us with the MLA had our group picture taken in front of the enormous dragon target. My group (made up of my dad, Nick Viau, Rob Jones, Peter Collins, and a very kind guy named Eric) gave me great advice to eventually get a lot better and keeping confidence in my shooting.

After the whole experience, I'm definitely excited for the Spring shoot, and I'm pretty sure my dad is going to bring me along. If it weren't for my dad, I wouldn't have had this opportunity to learn and have a bunch of fun shooting with all these good, friendly, and helpful people.

Alexis Buchin, daughter of John and Diana Buchin. Attends Plainwell Schools and is new to the joys of traditional archery



Michigan Longbow Association Spring Shoot Membership Meeting

Some years ago, when you attended the MLA Spring Shoot, there were only a faithful few in attendance. You never had to wait in line for anything. There just wasn't many campers and the shooting courses were free of congestion. You could shoot at whatever safe angle you wanted because there was no one else there to be affected by your spontaneous ambitions. There were spring assemblies that saw less than a quorum gathered for the yearly membership meeting, which was a concern when it came to voting on anything new. We are proud to say that this anemic version of the MLA has long since disappeared. This organization is now a vibrant growing club. Current Spring Shoot attendance includes many campers, many shooters and a quorum for voting is a given. Fact is, if you don't arrive early to camp the choice sites are taken and you are regulated to a hillside in the back 40. No matter if you are a rookie or a veteran, it is an exciting time to be part of the Michigan Longbow Association.

We have explored the reasons why the Spring

Shoot is such a success and concluded that there are many contributing factors to this phenomenon that we shall call "flourishing." There are those that believe the weather has a lot to do with it. Some feel it is the exposure traditional archery is getting in the media today. Movies and books depict brave and daring characters fighting for a just cause with their longbows by their sides. Still others feel that having the MLA Spring Shoot in one spot and not moving it around as we have in the past has something to do with it. Even more feel like it is the same date every year that has made the difference. One can't deny the draw of such a beautiful course and great targets that the Land-O-Lakes Club offers either. Everyone has an opinion, and you no doubt have one too. Whatever the truth may be, here's a run-down on what you'll see and do at the 2015 MLA Spring Shoot.

Remember that this is a "member's only shoot." It is not open to the public. It is one of those special perks for being an MLA member. As a current

member in good standing you may camp and shoot for free. No charge. Considering the fact that the membership fee doesn't even pay for the four issues of STICKTALK you receive in a year, this makes the MLA Spring Shoot a huge benefit to the membership. You may use arrows of any material. Field points only unless on the broadhead range, and as always, this is a longbow only event. Most campers roll into the grounds on Friday. There is room for trailers, tents and pop ups but be advised that most camping trailers will want to stay in the first parking area below the club house. Once you top the hill, space becomes limited and most of those places are commandeered early on. Look around quickly and make a choice. The ground at the L-O-L Club ranges from sand to loam, and when wet, can be a pretty slick place to park an RV. The positive thing is that it dries very quickly and never becomes a quagmire unless driven on at the wrong time. There is an outdoor shower but it is quite primitive; most campers bring their own. There will be porta johns at various locations on the grounds. There also will be access to wood for fires and water for your portable containers.

The ranges open on Friday, and will usually include 30 3Ds, a broadhead course, night shoot and pumpkin shoot along with contests and novelties. There are no limits. Shoot as much and as often as you like. The kid's piñata will be there as will the archer's endurance test, the American Round. There will be something new this year at the Spring Shoot as we issue a team challenge. Five person coed teams consisting of no more than 3 males and 2 females or 2 children under the age of 12. A total score of 3 different competitions. One competition

per day. You will be able to check the "leader board" to see where your team stands after each day's competition. Be alert to check the shoot times for this contest each day. You'll want to start looking for your team's uniforms, hats, or team name now. This will be fun!

Friday evening will again see the MLA Chili Challenge being contested at the club house. Please bring a can or pot of chili to add to the cauldron of chili. Any other complementary items you would like to share can also be brought as there will be a place for breads, crackers, cheeses, toppings, desserts, etc., that might embellish the taste of this meal.

At 1:00 PM on Saturday the annual membership meeting will take place. Please set the time and date on your calendar as a good cross section of the membership is important to gauge the wants and needs of this growing organization. Later that day at 6:00 PM we will see a grand gathering as we meet for supper. Everyone brings their best dish and there is a sampling by all, buffet style. You may also want to bring an item to donate for the free raffle after supper. String music around the fires will ring loud and clear as folks retire to their camps after a full day of fun.

Sunday is always a sad day in camp as folks begin to pack up and head toward home. The ranges are picked up midafternoon and the first of the Michigan summer camping shoots comes to a close. But before everyone leaves the grounds, plans are being made to meet again at the next trad event where a large contingent of Michigan Longbow Association members will gather to share the longbow lifestyle.



Kasie Beard,
"Air Shot"



Success at the
Kalamazoo Expo!

2015 Banquet Auction



Name of Donor		Item	Winner	Amount Bid
Rick	Butler	Kanati Longbow with Case	Matt Strabbing	320
Andrew	Harper	\$250 Gift Certificate for Wild Things	Chris Gault	160
Dean & Ellen	Hall	1/2 dzn Arrows	Jeff Wilcox	45
Daniel and Lori	Klee	35 lb Jim Bow	Sheri Stoutjesdyk	105
Rob	Jones	Antler Burr	Don Martin	35
Sam	Morello	AP Design Arrow	Eric Herbert	
Todd	Greenwald	Arm Guard with Knife	Brian Carpenter	60
Jeff	Wilcox	Arrow Making Kit	Sam Morello	60
JoAnn	Kruko	Arrow Pattern Scarf and Mittens	Sam Morello	80
Mike	Vines	Arrow Rack	Ken Scollick	55
Mike	Vines	Back Packers Pantry	Tracey Balowski	20
John	McIntosh	Basket of Spices	Sam Morello	35
		Bear Hunt	Chris Gault	700
Denise	Van Raemdonck	Body Essential Basket	Heather Wirwicki	27
Gene	Hickey	Bolt-on Quiver	Sam Morello	35
Joel and Elly	Ibbotson	Bow Rack	Frank Oltman	70
Andrew	Zwerk	Cabela's Brimhat	Diane Buchin	40
Gene	Hickey	Crestler	Gene Creed	20
Dan	Toles	Cresting Machine	Scot Abbate	37
Ken	Scollick	Cribbage Board	Anthony Shripka	80
Sam	Morello	Dozen Cedar Arrows	Gene Hickey	80
Greg and Ellen	Denny	Flap Jack Quiver	Chris Gault	100
Gene	Hickey	Hatchet	Barb Szymkowicz	35
Sam	Morello	Kids Longbow	Ken Scollick	65
Tony	Shripka	Knife w/wooden case	Jen Jorgensen	25
Ken	Scollick	Ladies Pen	Rick Shephard	37
Matt	Wirwicki	Ladies Quiver/Arrow Making Kit	Melissa Cole	70
Carl	Johns	Leather	Tom Van Liere	
Ron	LaClair	Lil 'Shaver Neck Knife	Andrew Wcisel	105
Ken	Scollick	Men's Pen	?	40
Matt	Wirwicki	Men's Quiver/Arrow Making Kit	Nick Viau	30
Delbert	Bradow	MLA Clock	Matt Cowie	50
		MLA Traveling Bow	Derek Sheehan	100
Mike	Vines	Photo	Butch Bertram	11
		Pig Hunt	Rick Butler	300
Chuck	Butkiewicz	Portable Bow Rack	Dan Klee	52
Carl	Johns	Romantic Basket	Dan Klee	20
Matt	Beard	Side Quiver	Robin Howell	45
Gene	Hickey	Side Quiver	John Rafferty	37
Floyd	Wells	Side Quiver	Scott Ray	35
John	Buchin	Slate Turkey Call	Rob Kruko	60
John	Buchin	Slate Turkey Call	Bob Wyman	55
Don	Gilson	Stone Head Arrow	Caroline Wells	90
Terry	Folts	Taper Tool	Frank Oltman	15
Demetrious	Papatriantafyllou	Throwing Hawk	Matt Stoutjesdyk	95
Bob	Wyman	Tree Seat	Andrew Zwerk	30
Rob	Kruko	Tree Stand	Rob Jones	5
Rob	Kruko	Turkey Barr Joe Vincent Arrow	Ken Scollick	150
Matt	Wirwicki	Youth Qyiver/Arrow Making Kit	Matt Beard	20
Floyd	Wells	Zwickey Broadheads	Todd Greenwald	22



2015 Banquet Raffle Items

Name of Donor	Item	Winner
Tracey and David Balowski	Bow	Mark Carpenter
Jack Benson	Outdoorsman	Nick Vines
Delbert Bradow	Knife	Carl Johns
Delbert Bradow	Golf Balls 12	Ron Peek
Delbert Bradow	Deer Drag	Tommy Gault
John Buchin	Predator Squealer	
Jeff Burns		
Brian Carpenter	Bread and Wine	Robin Howell
Brian Carpenter	Bread and Wine	Melissa Cole
Brian Carpenter	Bread and Wine	Gary Summers
Brian Carpenter	Bread and Wine	John Buchin
Greg and Ellen Denny	Cranberry Wine	Paul Gasiorek
Denny Every	Cuisinart BBQ	Craig ?
Chris Gault	Knob Creek	Linda Noble
Tommy Gault	Bracelet/Key ring	Nick Vines
Tommy Gault	Bracelet/Key ring	Gene Creed
Todd Greenwald	Kids arrows	Tommy Gault
Todd Greenwald	Kids arrows	Wayne Gross
Todd Greenwald	Kids arrows	Terry Folt
Gene Hickey	Camera mounter	Craig ?
Gene Hickey	Deer Call	?
Robin Howell	Gift Basket and Movie	Jennifer Wilcox
Joel and Elly Ibbotson	Bow	Matt Stoutjesdyk
Keith Jackson	Archery and Hunting books	Terry Folt
Keith Jackson	Archery and Hunting books	Denny Every
Keith Jackson	Archery and Hunting books	Jordon Van Liere
Keith Jackson	Archery and Hunting books	Frank Oltman
Carl Johns	Plaque	Matt Cowie
Carl Johns	Birds Nest (Moose)	Craig ?
Rob Jones	Burz Off	Scott Abatte
Thom Jorgensen	Side Quiver	Liam Gault
Jen Jorgensen	Book: Bows, Arrows and Quivers	Ray Ett??
Rob Kruko	Arrows	Wayne Gross
Sam Morello	Pickled Jalapeno	Mike Vines
Derek Sheehan	Soaps	A cluster of folks!
Rick Shepard	Knife/Bug-Off	Scott Ploe
Tony Shripka	Pocket Knife	Matthias Gault
Tony Shripka	Pocket Knife	Dan Klee
Tony Shripka	Book: Kill It and Grill It	Mike Vines
Sheri Stoutjesdyk	Mug: Turkey	Paul Gasoiorek
Sheri Stoutjesdyk	Mug: Elk	Robin Howell
Sheri Stoutjesdyk	Mug: Archery	Dan Handy
Sheri Stoutjesdyk	Mug: Wolf	Bob Busch
Matt Strabbing	Party Basket: Steaks, wine and cookbook	Denise Van
Barb Symkowicz	Deer Antler Table Decorator	Diane Buchin
Stanley Van Liere	DVD	Sophia Williams
Stanley Van Liere	DVD	Dan Toles
Stanley Van Liere	DVD	Bob Busch
Stanley Van Liere	DVD	Sophia Williams
Stanley Van Liere	DVD	Rick Cross

2015 Banquet Raffle Items

Name of Donor	Item	Winner
John Vasos	Robin Hood	Randy Huffin
John Vasos	Elk Call	Craig ?
John Vasos	Elk Hunting Guide	Lori Klee
John Vasos	Goose Decoys	Ellen Denny
Laura Vines	Banana Nut Bread	Dan Handy
Laura Vines	Banana Nut Bread	Jennifer Wilcox
Mike Vines	Book: Look at Life From a Deer Stand	Ellen Denny
Mike Vines	Frying Pan	?
Donavan Watson	White Zinfandel	Anthony ?
Donavan Watson	White Zinfandel	Sheila Clayton
Caroline Wells	Girls Diary	Nick Viau
Caroline Wells	Kids Hunting Set	Rick Cross
Caroline Wells	Kids Lacing Shapes	Sophia Williams
Caroline Wells	Kids Duck Call	Luke Vines
Caroline Wells	Mini Grill	Jack Briggs
Caroline Wells	Kids Hunting Set	Carl Johns
Caroline Wells	Kids Duck Call	Sophia Williams
Jeff Wilcox	1/2 Dzn Eastons 2016	Luke Williams
Jeff Wilcox	LED Light Set	Sheri Stoutjesdyk
Heather Wirwicki	Jam	Gary Summers
Caleb Zweifler	The Art of Zen Archery Book	Peter Collins
Andrew Zwerk	Straw Hat	Tommy Gault
Andrew Zwerk	Glory Hog Movie	Dan Toles
Andrew Zwerk	Instinct	CJ Burns
Andrew Zwerk	MLA Armguard	Bruce Levey
Donna Krogel	Necklace	Caroline Wells
Jason Albert	Rasher Quivers Youth Armguard	Angie Van Liere
Daryl Svaboda	Print: Buck	Matt Beard
Daryl Svaboda	Print: Mountain with antlers	Dan Klee
Ron Winter	Hat	Angie Van Liere
Gary and Kim Summer	Active scrape handwarmers, vanilla attractant	Luke Vines
	Vanilla	Rob Kruko
	Arrow Rack	Wayne Gross
	Broadheads	Chuck Butkiewicz
	Kids Sleeping Bag	Sheri Stoutjesdyk
	11/32 Points 125 grain	Dan Klee
	Arm Guard	Floyd Wells
Jason Albert	DVD	Rick Shephard
Ron Winter	Youth Armguard	Wayne Gross
Jason Albert	Liquid Attractant	Rick Cross
	Hat/Shirt	Diane Folts
Kim Sumner	Hot Seat	Dan Klee
Ron Winter	Multi Tool	Peter Collins
Ron Winter	2 Bowstrings	Sue Creed
Denny Shattuck	LOL Membership	?
Land-O-Lakes		

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Close Encounters of the Best Kind

by Leslie "Butch" Bertram

Let me tell you something, I *"love"* the ground. I mean the real ground. Snarly dead falls, beat down archaic fence rows, thick bedding meadows. The kind of places where the entire spread is a series of endless ground blinds. Like the year I hadn't been seeing much at my spot on old Portage Road, so I took the initiative to stir things up a bit, to make something happen. I found the best worn common trail leading from a grazing field out to a cornfield. The trail went past the main hedgerow to where the trail and hedgerow spliced together. There was an old section of farm fencing barely standing in the mix of it all. The fence was gloriously covered in wild grape vines and woven thru with field grasses. It made the perfect cover.

I quickly and discreetly created some shooting lanes, cleared the potentially noisy debris from around my feet, and settled in. It was about 6 PM when I executed my first sequence of very light rattling in conjunction with some low key grunting. I wanted just enough sound to rouse a little curiosity should there be any whitetails in the area. I repeated the same sequence about 15 minutes later. It was very still and so very quiet. The sky was pristine steely-blue and the temperature was dialed in at 48 degrees. As the sun began to set and then fade, I commented to myself, "Let the games begin."

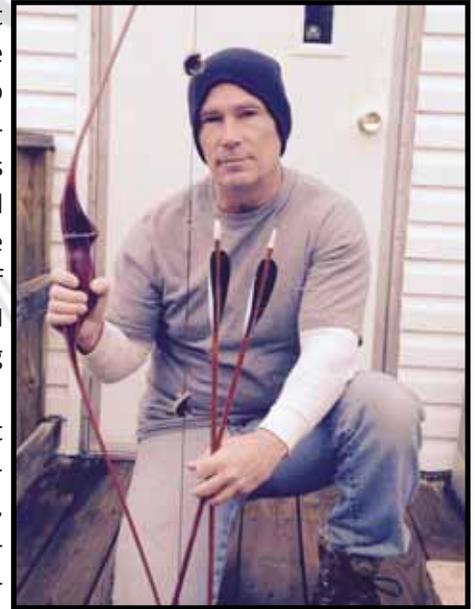
I scanned the field for movement but there was none. Twenty minutes later darkness began to envelope my hunt. Suddenly out of nowhere, a set of antlers literally "rose up" not 10 yards away. Directly out in front of me a very handsome 6 point raised his head. The buck's rack swiveled like a periscope on a submarine. He then pointed his nose north and pulled in a deep breath. The buck stuck his nose into the air and looked straight at me. While he nailed my position, he apparently couldn't quite figure out what I was. The deer did not spook or bolt, just stared. I stood stock still, my eyes closed, only stealing a glance from time to time. I wanted to see what his next move would be. Slowly and cautiously the buck began to weave his way toward me. All the time his head oscillating first one way and then the other. His nose working hard to decipher what his

eyes could not identify. The buck came to within an honest 4 yards and stopped just on the other side of the fence I was hiding behind.

I almost started laughing. It was, after all, comical. His conviction to figure

out what I was could have placed him in harm's way. As it was however, there was absolutely no chance for a shot. If I would have lifted my pinky he would have leapt into the next county. At this point I figured I would establish some "mano-e-mano" eye contact so I lifted my head and looked the buck right in the eye. We immediately locked into a stare down contest. The buck did not blink and neither did I. He looked at me and I looked at him for another 5 minutes! Alas the war of wit and wills in the wild, where there is a tie, is going to go to the critter. The buck never fully winded me and never figured out what I was, but he knew instinctively that things may not end well for him if he stuck around. There was a hint of danger and that alone was enough! The deer began to back away stopping to stare only once. He then turned and melted away into the grass.

That was a successful hunt in my book! While there was no shot, no harvest, there was enormous successes. #1: I called a buck to within point-blank proximity, on the ground, using natural cover. #2: the deer did not identify me so it didn't spook. Meaning that he will likely rotate back through the area on his regular schedule. #3: I actually saw deer and that always reinforces the possibility that an area will be productive. That is a win, win, win. Did I mention that I love hunting from the ground? ➡





The Volunteer Opportunity

Getting Involved with Your MLA

by Suzanne Schmier

It was Abraham Lincoln who said, “When I do good, I feel good.” When I have spoken with volunteers following different events in which our Michigan Longbow Association has been involved, this has been true for them. Sometimes they’ve given a couple of hours, sometimes an entire day, but their feeling of *doing* good leaves them energized and *feeling* good. Many of our members who have volunteered within our organization have been reluctant at first, but ended up having a great time, and coming back for more. That got me to thinking about **why** people are reluctant, or at least hesitant, to volunteer. I’ve seen the same thing in several organizations of which I’ve been a part over the years. The reasons are always the same:

“I don’t know what to do.”

“I just want to enjoy the weekend.”

“I don’t have the time.”

“I don’t want to be stuck working all day.”

This year, especially at the Great Lakes Longbow Invitational in August, we have a goal of getting more volunteers than ever before. I will be assisting Caroline Wells in scheduling volunteers. This is your opportunity to become an integral, even if small, part of this wonderful event. It doesn’t have to take much of your time. If many folks volunteer for just a couple of hours, we’ll have another successful GLLI and everyone will have time to enjoy shooting the courses and participating in the events. As the old saying goes, many hands make light work.

So what might be holding you back from volunteering?

Are you concerned that you won’t know what to do? On the volunteer sign-up sheet, there will be a job description so you can choose where you feel the most comfortable. Also, we’ll make sure that someone experienced is there with you. During the event, we’ll have someone who will

make sure you know where to go and what to do.

Do you think you won't get enough time to shoot the courses and events and enjoy the GLLI? Even if you volunteer for only a couple of hours, it would help the event run more smoothly and still give you plenty of time for fun and fellowship. The schedule will have start and end times for each volunteer shift so you'll know exactly how long you are needed.

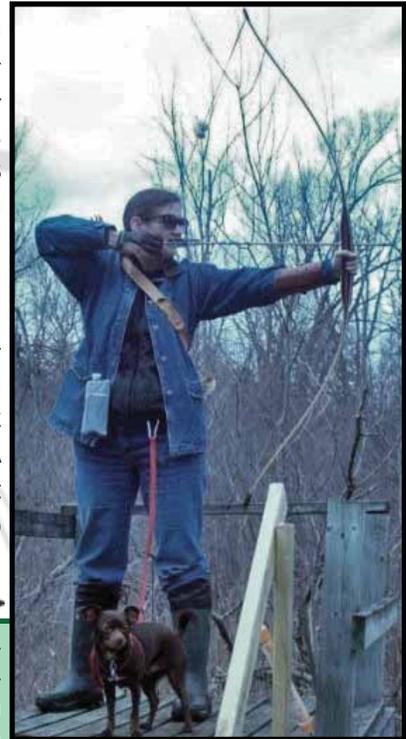
Do you think you don't have time? Then you'll be great, because busy people know how to get stuff done.

Do you think it will feel too much like work? Sharing your interest in the longbow with fellow MLA members and visitors to the GLLI doesn't feel like work. It makes you feel more involved and glad to be a part of our organization.

At the spring shoot, we will have sign-up sheets for the GLLI available to start scheduling volunteers. We also plan to make it possible to sign up through our website. If you are already a regular volunteer, we'll need you to be the experienced person at an event or location. If you're new to volunteering at the GLLI, we'll help you choose some-

thing at which you'll feel comfortable. If you've volunteered before, share with others how it makes you feel good!

Since I started with a quote from a president, I'll end with a revised one-- Ask not what your MLA can do for you, but what you can do for your MLA.



Suzanne is at almost every traditional weekend in the summer with her husband, Doug. She is easy to find because she usually has her little brown dog attached to her belt loop!

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By Bob Busch

Turn! Turn! I was screaming in my mind as the buck continued toward my tree searching for the rutting whitetails he was sure he had heard just minutes before. I was hunting with Bowhunting Western Kentucky Outfitters after being the winning bidder at the 2014 Michigan Longbow Association Winter Awards Banquet. This hunt had actually begun in 2012 when I accompanied fellow MLA members John Rafferty and Mike Schrieber, after Mike had been the high bidder at the 2012 MLA Banquet. Unfortunately we were not successful on that hunt, as the bucks stayed just beyond the range of our longbows. We did see plenty of deer, however, and some very impressive bucks at that. To make things more exciting towards the end of that hunt, three Pope and Young bucks were taken.

After seeing this operation, I knew I had to go back. One thing that really impressed me, besides the quality of game, was how Mark Smith, the owner, stressed having fun and enjoying the hunt itself. There are no score restrictions in this camp. As Mark says, "If it's a trophy to you, that's what matters." Although he does not advocate shooting small bucks, he wants you to enjoy the experience.

The lodge offers comfort, good food, and good company. We met hunters from Tennessee, New York, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Alabama, and Massachusetts. Adding the Michigan representatives into the mix made for some very lively conversation. We talked about hunting trips ranging from Africa to the Yukon, out west and down south. The geographical differences allowed for some interesting insights and useful tips.

I arrived for my hunt at noon on October 31. After settling in, Mark asked if I was ready to start hunting. He didn't have to ask me twice. Tired or

not, I grabbed my bow and headed out. I didn't see anything due to 40 mile-per-hour winds, but it was still enjoyable. I was able to get familiar with the lay of the land and in doing so, saw plenty of big buck sign. Upon returning to camp, I also learned that a hunter from Tennessee had taken a beautiful 14 point buck which rough-scored 147 inches. To say hunters in camp were pumped is an understatement!

The following morning began with coffee and hot biscuits. We discussed where we would be sitting, and we were given the option of sitting all day or coming in for lunch. We even had the option of moving to a different stand if our morning sit had been unproductive. The outfitter had ground blinds, ladder stands, and hang-ons to accommodate everyone's comfort level.

As we dressed for the first morning's hunt, I laughed quietly to myself. The late fall weather on this day was windy and 34 degrees. You could tell the southern boys from the northerners as the guys from down south were dressed like the Michelin Man, trying to stay warm. My first morning's hunt began with a walk down a little ridge, as Mike called it, to a hang-on stand. Sitting there waiting for daylight, I could hear movement around me accompanied by bucks grunting as they chased does in the nearby thickets.

At first light I saw movement about 50 yards in front of me. I watched as a nice eight point made his way up the ridge. He walked to within 15 yards, but never offered a shot. After a time he simply wandered off in search of does. Then the parade began. Does, small bucks and several large bucks came by. Of course the big bucks stayed just out of range. I felt like a kid at Christmas as I watched the bucks

respond to grunt and doe bleat calls. This would continue throughout my hunt, averaging 15-20 does and 8-10 bucks every sit, including 2-3 shooters every day.

One thing to note here is that Mark has thousands of acres of private farm land leased. You are hunting unpressured deer with a 2-1 doe buck ratio. This makes for an unreal hunt. It is just like in the videos I've seen and the hunting articles I have read. It's a surreal experience.

On my evening hunt on November 2, I grunted in a wide, tall, ten point. I watched him weave his way up the hill to within 25 yards. His antlers were so large that he had to turn his head to get between trees. He easily would score 140 plus. At the release, I watched in horror as my arrow deflected off an unseen branch. It ricocheted up and over the deer brushing its back with the feathers. As he ran away, I blew on my grunt call, stopping him at fifty yards. To add insult, he returned to within thirty yards, made three scrapes and two rubs before he wandered off. Rubbing salt in the wound, a nice seven point came in a half hour later to smell the scrapes. Of course he had to freshen them up and leave without offering a shot.

The morning of November 3rd broke clear and cool. It was a perfect day to be afield. I watched the parade of deer going by until about 8:30 AM when a small four point responded to my calling. Suddenly his head jerked up looking up the ridge. In short order the forkie took off with his tail tucked, as I began to hear the leaves rustling behind me. The steady deliberate sound kept coming until a nice eight point appeared at seventy-five yards. The buck came in on a string, looking for the lady friend that was sure to be calling his name.

This is where my story began. The buck kept advancing through the trees, not offering a shot as he was coming head-on the whole time. Finally the buck stopped at a mere twelve yards, looking for the doe he had heard. I stood in the stand, doing my best to look like a tree. I was sure I was having a heart attack, as I prayed for him to turn. After what felt like forever, he did just that. Moving in the direction of the scrapes he at last presented a quartering away shot at sixteen yards. With no conscious decision, I drew and released in one motion. I saw my arrow disappear into his rib cage, angling towards the opposite shoulder.

Upon being hit, the buck mule-kicked then surprisingly did a complete head over butt somersault.

Regaining his feet, he ran about fifty yards and stopped. I

could not see him but several seconds later, I heard loud thrashing and thought I saw white flopping around on the ground. I'm fairly certain

Kentucky experienced a minor earthquake that morning because my tree sure seemed to be doing a lot of shaking. After the quake subsided, I got down, checked my arrow, and called Mark to let him know I had hit a buck. After he congratulated me, he asked, "how big?" I responded by saying, "big enough!" "That's all that matters, I'll be there shortly" he replied.

The tracking was easy as my arrow had hit both lungs and nicked the heart exiting on the off side. The deer had only traveled fifty yards. The buck turned out to be a nice eight point with a broken speed bump which would have made him a nine point. He was a two and a half year-old deer that dressed out at 134 pounds. He is also my largest bow kill to date. You couldn't have knocked the smile off my face with a stick.

Upon returning to camp, everyone came over and offered congratulations and handshakes as I was the only traditional archer in camp. It created quite a stir of well-wishes. The fellowship and just plain fun of this hunt truly made it special. I will relive it over and over for years to come.

I would like to thank Mark Smith of Western Kentucky Bowhunting for donating this hunt for our Michigan Longbow Association Winter Banquet. Special thanks to Ken Myers, for setting this up with his cousin Mark Smith and finally, the MLA for affording me the opportunity of bidding on this hunt. All I can say is, "I'll be going back." Hopefully I will see you there and share a hunt with you! For anyone interested in hunting Kentucky, check out the website at: www.bowhuntingwestky.com





My Very Short Story for STICKTALK

by Muza Abdul

My name is Muza and I am from Malaysia. I came to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, September of 2011 for school, majoring in Economics. I had a little background of archery back in my country, as my older sister competed Olympic style at the national level during her teenage years. I pursued my internal attraction for traditional archery via the computer.

In the summer of 2012, I searched on the internet for the traditional archery that exists here in the US, because it is basically non-existent in Malaysia. To my surprise I found that it is very big here. Step-by-step I looked through the online communities and I stumbled upon TradGang.com, which I joined to connect with other members. I looked for a member in my area and was fortunate enough to get a response from "BentShaft". I was luckier that he was the cool, laid-back guy, Peter Collins.

We met and bonded like any guys would do. Peter is an amazing person that has taught and guided me through my early stages of living independently. He also taught me a little bit about the bow and arrow.

He always reminded me to be patient with my shooting. "Only shoot one arrow, then retrieve." That is what he always said to me. That way, I will give my best shot every single time. True or not, that is what life is, in essence. To be one with our action, to be at present. Peter has become like an uncle to me. *He even helps me with my love life!*

Our first meetings consisted of backyard shooting at Peter's. A few days after, Peter invited me to the Compton Traditional Rendezvous. There, I meet with the most amazing crowd of traditional archery enthusiasts. The atmosphere was so warm and welcoming. At one corner, there was a bonfire with country jams. At another, kids are shooting flying discs as targets. It is a culture all its own.

I had never seen this before. Back in my country, I only had dreams of owning a traditional bow. I'm very lucky to have a father who has interests in archery but generally speaking, no one shoots there. Even if they do, it would be Olympic archery with stationery shooting and tons of mechanical nonsense. I shot one of those before. I quickly put that



it is gorgeous!

I, like many others, am attracted to the simple beauty of the bow. However, what really attracts me to traditional archery is how each shot that I take, each release that I make, each breath while shooting an arrow, is a reflection of my inner self. Every shot is instinctive. And one has to create a relationship between the bow and self. A oneness with the bow. Being one with the bow is being aware that I myself am nothing without it. To me, traditional archery allows me to crosscheck the cleanliness, the purity, and the sincerity of my heart. Of course, it is only an instrument to understand myself. Just like others who are doing other types of activity such as yoga, swimming, running, et cetera.

Because of school I don't get to shoot a lot, but traditional archery has always been, and will always be, dear to my heart. I couldn't be more fortunate to find a great man and a great community (the MLA) that shares similar interests. Peter has invited me to shoot at his backyard, Compton Rendezvous, Jackson Bowmen, MLA Spring Shoot and Tomahawk Archers. Each one is a different time and place, each leaves a distinct memory. The warmth I received from the host of each event, from the circle of friends, and especially from the traditional community has made my heart attracted even more to traditional archery.

I will forever be thankful to the large group of MLAs, Bub and Caroline, and especially to "BentShaft," for such a wonderful experience. Looking back I can say that I am truly blessed with a great family. I'm only 23 and have been wandering this world since I was 13 searching for my eternal home. I am glad to find a piece of it in traditional archery.

down. However, with traditional archery, I'm in love with it!

Our first emails, between Peter and I, mostly contained what bow I should get, since it would be my first ever bow. I knew for certain that I wanted a traditional one-piece bow. I found one at the Compton Rendezvous after I received advice from Peter. Peter hooked me up with Larry from Lost Nation Archery and Larry hooked me up with a Bear Cub. I fell in love with the bow right away. It is a used 62" Bear Cub and 38# at 28" draw. I shoot the bow with pride and joy every time I take it out. I have been sleeping beside my "Cub" even to this night. I think

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QUIVERS



Bacon Blizzard

by Donovan Watson

In October of 2014, a friend of mine invited me on a hunt with Coal Creek Outfitters in Atoka, Oklahoma. I had met Gary while on a hog hunt in South Carolina the year before. After talking to my wife Audrey about the opportunity, she said it was all right and even paid for the hunt. I spoke to Gary a few more times before booking the hunt for February 27-28, 2015. I had questions that needed answering so I called Eric, the owner of Coal Creek Outfitters. I wanted to know about sleeping arrangements, what was included in the 2 day hunt, and how his stand and blinds were set up. Longbows are a whole lot longer than a compound and I'd have to be a whole lot closer to the pigs too. I told Eric I was comfortable taking a shot up to 20 yards. He assured me that I would be fine with most every Coal Creek blind set-up. Before I knew it, the hunt had arrived and I was on the road to Gary's place in Grand Haven, Michigan. From there it was a 15-hour drive to Oklahoma.

When Gary and I arrived at camp, the first thing we did was unpack our bows. Gary was shooting his recurve and I was shooting a homemade longbow. We found a target and decided to shoot away the lag of the trip until Eric showed up. It was a good thing we were ready, because we barely had

enough time to introduce ourselves, before Eric loaded us into his Ranger and hit the road for hogs. On the drive in, I noticed what beautiful country they had, even in the middle of winter. Between the rolling hills and mountains, I could only imagine what it would look in the spring and summer months.

Eric pulled over and told me which way to go and how far. He said that I'd only have to walk 200 yards or so to my stand. Just before I got to my destination I noticed a beautiful doe standing only 30 yards away. I decided to stalk up on her just for the fun of it. I was able to get within 15 yards, which was a great accomplishment for me. I was losing daylight and figured enough was enough, so I walked straight to my stand, running the whitetail off. I was in the tree stand a short time later, watching and waiting. The wind was blowing hard and there were squirrels running every which way around me. Just before dark, a pair of does and a nice-looking buck came close enough for a shot. I was thankful for the experience, but spent the remaining time hoping in vain that something would come in that was at least on the menu. Dark arrived and found me back to where Eric had dropped me off.

Eric arrived a short time later and told me that



Gary had better luck. We met up with my partner and took off to look for his hog. We hit the task hard, but found little sign so we decided to come back and try again in the morning. It was cold and there was no chance the meat would spoil.

I didn't have any luck the next morning. Sightings were few and far between. I climbed out of the stand a little early hoping for a "spot and stalk" opportunity. After about forty five minutes my eyes hurt so I reasoned that it was time to check on Gary. He hadn't seen anything either, so we shifted our attention to the hog he had shot the night before. We were pleased to find the good size boar shortly after locating the blood trail again. Amidst the celebration we found out Gary's hog was the first traditional bow-kill at Coal Creek Outfitters. That was pretty special to hear.

After lunch we devised a plan: Gary was going to sit in the same stand and I was going to a different spot next to an ideal hog set-up Eric had put together the night before. On the way out, Eric suggested I take my rifle, but I insisted on sticking with my longbow. I really wanted to take a nice boar with a stick and string. He explained the last time a bowhunter used that stand all the hogs came in on the back side and well out of range. I decided a rifle wouldn't be a bad backup plan but took my bow with me regardless.

As I climbed into the stand I looked down to find four sets of tracks coming and going. This made me think that I had already missed the action. That wasn't the case because less than an hour later, I looked

to my left to see a single hog trot out. I grabbed my bow and nocked an arrow. The hog stayed out of longbow range, just as Eric said it would. I really wanted the meat, so I set my bow down and reached for the rifle. I knew there was less than an hour of daylight left, so before the hog disappeared, I put it down with a single shot. I was thankful for the meat, but I knew I wouldn't be satisfied if I didn't take a pig with stick and string. With that I put the rifle away and relaxed, hoping I would get another chance with my longbow. Time passed quickly and just as I was starting to pack it in, I looked up to see 15 hogs coming right to left. They were staying out of bow range just like the last one had. The rifle was tempting, but I made up my mind I was sticking with my bow and that was that. I would just have to be patient.

Finally, a hog came within range and I got ready for the shot. As I brought my bow up I spied a larger hog sauntering in. I shifted my attention to take the bigger of the two, which wasn't easy. Picking a spot on a black silhouette was difficult, but I did my best. I focused, drew back, and let the arrow loose just as I hit my anchor. The hog squealed and ran back the way it had come. Suddenly I found it impossible to stay calm. The excitement of talking an animal with a rifle was nothing compared to taking one with my longbow. What a rush! My legs were shaking, so I tried sitting down. That seemed to make things worse, so I ended up squatting on the stand to steady myself. At long last Eric and Gary showed up. I climbed down and waved them over to tell them the news. The shot was a good one leaving plenty of blood to follow. It didn't take long to find the bow-killed hog.

We talked about the next day, which was calling for freezing rain, so we decided to sleep in and try some coyote hunting. We got some time in the next morning when the rain finally broke, but saw no coyotes. The rain turned to snow and the conversation turned back to hunting hogs. Gary and I decided to switch stands after Eric suggested we stay out a little bit later because of the snow. I welcomed the extra time because I wanted another hog. When I arrived for the evening hunt I found the stand completely coated in ice. I created more noise than I would've liked breaking the ice off the stand. The snow seemed to make the country even more beautiful and I told myself it should snow here more often. Then it started getting cold, the freezing rain followed, and I'd wished I hadn't thought anything



of the kind. The top of the snow was a sheet of ice and even the birds made noise flying from tree-to-tree.

Just before dark I heard a hog snort in the distance. When the animals began to move around in the frozen snow it sounded like there was a stampeede coming right underneath me. I started seeing movement through the pines and soon I recognized nine or ten pigs moving toward me. Suddenly a loud grunt caused the entire herd to scatter. I thought I'd lost my chance, but they came back shortly thereafter. I picked a target, drew, and released my arrow. It met its mark and the pigs charged off into the darkness. I had just arrowed my second hog

with a longbow and all the excitement came back again.

I climbed down after dark to meet Eric and Gary and tell them what had happened. They congratulated me and we started tracking. The blood was good and I thought the recovery wouldn't take long. It was about that time that we jumped a pig. Without hesitation Eric took off after the animal so that we wouldn't lose it. In our haste for a speedy recovery however, we wound up on the track of a live hog. Eric attempted to quell the panic and told us to be quiet. I heard a grunt, but couldn't tell which way the pig was running, which was scary to say the least. Eric told us to be ready to run to the nearest tree in case the hog charged. Luckily the hog ran in away from us rather than toward us. Relief washed over me, but it quickly turned to excitement a few minutes later when Gary announced that he'd found the right trail. My second bow killed hog was only 20 yards away. It was a real nice pig leaving me on top of the world.

We left Coal Creek Outfitter the next day with coolers filled with wild hog meat and heads full of memories. We were the first bowhunters at Coal Creek to shoot pigs with traditional equipment and that was something none of us would soon forget.



Donovan and his wife, Audrey, reside in Reading, Michigan with their son, Sam. Donovan enjoys numerous aspects of archery including building bows and designing custom leather arm guards.

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The Longbow Way

by Ron LaClair

*Deep within, the archer's spirit slept
with fate uncertain and promise unkept
wheels and cables that deceived and lied
The sleeping archer's spirit almost died*

*Then the simple beauty of a longbows lines
excited the heart and enthralled the mind
The archers spirit awoke from within
A life-changing experience was soon to begin*

*The joy of sending bright arrows to flight
The hum of the bow when the release is right
The need for companions to share the passion
The search so rewarding, then after a fashion*

*Brothers and Sisters with longbows in hand
Became like a family, with just one demand
To hold to the spirit of the longbow way
It's the oath of each member of the MLA*



They Came to Slay a Dragon

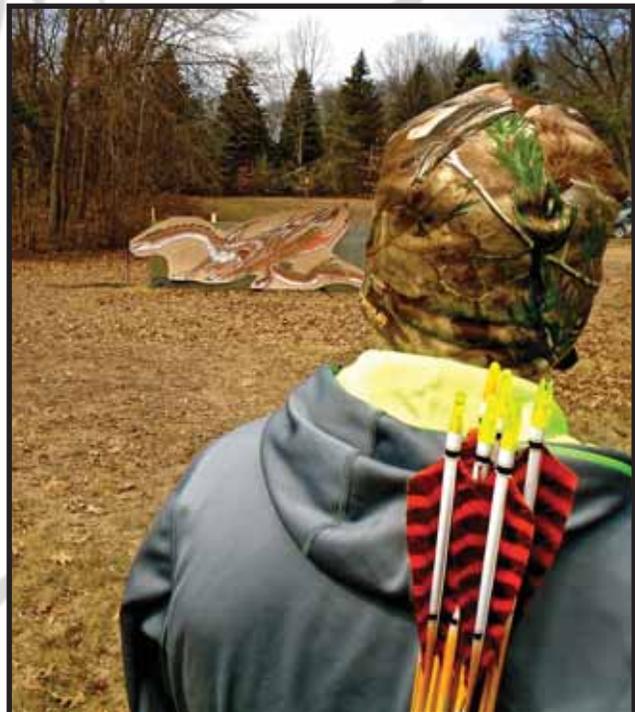
by Nick Viau

Floyd rolled into camp a bit later than intended and lengthened the arrival by chatting with every longbow-wielding passerby he encountered via the window of his pickup. I could see John and Rob making "hurry-up" gestures in the distance and shot them an "it's out of my hands" shrug in return. They were eager to hit the courses and I couldn't blame them. We all couldn't wait to shoot. It had been another long, cold winter and we were itching to thaw our bows and thump foam out-of-doors.

The parking lot of Tomahawk was a beautiful sight; packed full of vehicles flying the colors of the MLA and traditional organizations and hunting clubs throughout Michigan. Our social media efforts had worked and it was exciting to see. "This is a whole lot more than 100 shooters," I said. "More than 20 MLA folks for sure," Caroline commented. And everyone had come in the name of charity to slay a dragon.

World Dragon Shooting Day began as a way for Wisconsin native Wyatt Kauth to honor his father Keith, who passed suddenly two years prior. Keith was an archer and artist who worked on the Dun-

geons and Dragons role-playing game, so Wyatt wished for thousands of archers to shoot dragon targets to honor lost love ones and raise money for



targets to honor lost love ones and raise money for those less fortunate. Last year, his local club (the Kenosha Bowmen) raised \$700 to help grieving children go to camp. This year's target would be a 5th grader with leukemia and people from all over the world jumped in to help.

Pat Hogan of Tomahawk contributed by adding a dragon to their hand-painted 30-target Alaskan Wilderness course. It was long, it was fierce, it was beautiful, it breathed fire, and you could shoot it for \$1 per arrow or six for \$5. You received a 50/50 ticket for every arrow in the vitals and the winner would receive half the winnings. The rest would go to Wyatt and his cause.

We all intended to take a crack at it. The targets at Tomahawk were already famous. I'd first shot one at the MTB Jamboree in Grayling several years prior and was shocked at the time and detail in each. They were indeed shootable works of art, but as nice as those bear, sheep, moose, and deer targets were, this dragon was something truly special. I couldn't wait to poke holes in it.

I stepped out of the cab into the balmy March air, immediately realizing how underdressed I was, but the morning chill and the crunch of old leaves at my feet reminded me of deer season. The trend would continue throughout the morning, which made the shooting all the more enjoyable.

I met up with Rob and John after paying my fee and was delighted to find that John's daughter Alexis was there. I'd met her once before and was happy to see her with a bow in her hand. There are few things in life as special as a father spending time with his daughter in the outdoors. I could be biased



with two of my own, but I love to see it, especially when there are longbows involved. It was now our job to make sure Alexis had a good time, but with pseudo "uncles" like Rob and I, it was obvious that wouldn't be an issue.

Peter Collins joined our group in route to the front 15 and we invited a Tomahawk native named Eric to join us on the first target. He trickled in mid-shot and had been waiting patiently for us to finish when Rob did the MLA thing and extended the invitation. It doesn't seem right for anyone to shoot alone at an archery gathering and he was a welcomed addition.

We pressed on from target-to-target amidst dozens of happy archers, casting arrow after arrow at the unsuspecting critters in canvas and were faring well despite stiff joints. The painted landscape surrounding each animal was also backed with foam and no one spent precious time tracking lost arrows as a result. By the end of the day, I was convinced Tomahawk's 2D target system was superior to the 3D versions we were all so familiar with. This was especially true for new shooters like Alexis, who shot without the fear of a lost or broken arrow and had a better experience because of it.

The sun poked through the early-morning gray, warming our faces and turning the brown undergrowth a beautiful burnt orange. It was indeed busy with over 175 shooters, but the scenery and our company transformed the "waiting" into "enjoying." We talked about the upcoming year and looked forward to another archery-filled summer with friends and family. We shot, and walked, and talked, and





shot some more, and missed, and laughed, and were having a fantastic time when someone glanced at their phone and discovered it was already noon. With an MLA group photo scheduled at 1:00, we had just enough time to warm up in the clubhouse, grab a bowl of chili, and shoot the 50/50.

As we crested the final hill to the parking lot it became apparent that others had the same idea. A mist of MLA green and maroon hoodies appeared from the woods, practice ranges, and tailgates. It

was a cool thing to witness.

After stuffing ourselves with chili and hotdogs we spread the word about the group photo and made our way towards the dragon. Others followed and, before we knew it, 35 Michigan Longbow members were milling around the dragon to find the best place to stand for optimum composition. You can't help but love the people in this organization.

Several photos later the young lady in charge of the 50/50 was getting anxious and decided to use the opportunity to sell tickets. We needed little encouragement. It was time to end the tyranny of this particular winged beast once and for all, and a line had already formed. By that point our shoulders were warm from the morning's festivities and we were ready to rock. Arrow after arrow struck the kill zone and I can tell you the archery prowess of our organization was well represented. You couldn't keep the smile off my face.

When the dust settled it was my turn to take the line and the dragon came to life the moment I put glove to string. My mind drifted back to a childhood filled with wonder and adventure and I was suddenly back home casting sharpened sticks at imaginary beasts with my brothers. My first two arrows flew a bit wide, but arrows three, four, five, and six all hit within an inch of where I intended despite a bit of heckling from the peanut gallery. Whether or not I





won the 50/50 was irrelevant, I was having a blast and it was all for a good cause. Plus, we still had another round to shoot. Could a Sunday be any better?

We were a well-oiled-machine on the back 15, save for a flyer here and there, but the enjoyment of the afternoon was watching Alexis' progression from that morning. She had fantastic form for a young shooter and had made some exceptional shots with her little fiberglass recurve. We did all we could do to encourage and she was responding very well. She approached every target with a tenacity you couldn't help but love. It was all we could do to slow her down. In a year or so she would have her own, genuine longbow and would do great things with it. I was sure of it.

As we progressed through the course, I noticed Michael Grandstaff and his family a target or two ahead. They are new members and I was amazed at how well they navigated the courses with young girls. I couldn't even get my kids to put their boots on efficiently, let alone shoot a 30-target course without holding people up. We were all "seasoned archers" (by definition anyway) and couldn't keep up with them. It was, and always is, a trip to see a family grow together behind the bow and arrow. It's what makes being involved with the MLA at such an intimate level so rewarding. I was happy to have made the trip east and can guarantee it will not be my last trip to Tomahawk. I came to slay a dragon and left a proud president.



Dragon Slayers!



Michigan Longbow Association Sign In Sheet

Melissa Cole
Chuck Williams
Dorothy Watson
Keith Jackson
Tom and Nicole Wasson
Ron Peek
Rick Wittstock
Chuck Butkiewicz
Matt Strabbing
Richard Fecht
Michael Grubbs
Don Brighton
Peter Collins
Noel
John Buchin
Rob Jones
SAM MONELLO
Alexis Buchin
MIKE IRVING
Tim Abel + Aimee Abel

Mark A. Carpenter
Jordan Shaw
Shirley A. Thompson
Craig Thompson
J.P.S.
Curtis
The Wilcox Clan

Upcoming Events

Date	Event	Location	Contact/Email	Phone number
May 1-3	MLA Annual Spring Shoot and Membership Meeting	Land-O-Lakes Bowman: Fenton, MI	Nick Viau	616-635-7194
June 19-21	Compton Traditional Bowhunters Rendezvous	Berrien Springs Sportsman's Club: Berrien Springs, MI	Dave Jarvis Dennis Harper	217-722-3144 816-739-8990
June 27-28	Michigan Traditional Bowhunters Jamboree	Hanson Hills Recreation Area, Grayling, MI	michigantraditional-bow.com	
July 9-12	Pine Hills Traditional Shoot	Pine Hills Sportsman Club, Kennerdell, PA	Ron Himes	814-498-2222
July 11-12	Michigan Bow Hunters Rendezvous	Clare County Fair, Harrison, MI	michigan-bowhunters.com	
July 17-19	Annual Barryton Stick Bow Shoot	Barryton Conservation Club, Barryton, MI	Doug Jackson traddoug@live.com	
July 23-26	Eastern Traditional Archery Rendezvous	Ski Denton, Coudersport, PA		814-435-6653
July 31- Aug 2	Annual Elm Hall Stick Bow Shoot	Pine River Recreation Club, Elm Hall, MI	Brent Singer Brentsinger17@yahoo.com	989-436-1075
Aug 7-9	Great Lakes Longbow Invitational	Historic Charlton Park, Hastings, MI	Nick Viau	616-635-7194
Aug 28-30	Lapeer Bowmen's Annual Traditional Archery Rendezvous	Lapeer County Sportsmen's Club, Attica, MI	Bob Jones	248-217-8500
Sept 19-20	Fred Bear Memorial Broadhead Shoot	Land-O-Lakes Bowman: Fenton, MI	Pat Gleason	



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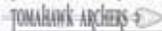
2015 SHOOT SCHEDULE

January 11 - Polar Bear
February 15 - Mixed Game
March 22 - Alaskan Wilderness First Half of Championship
April 11 & 12 - Traditional Weekend Sat. Traditional ONLY, Sun. Compounds ok.
May 17 - Prehistoric
June 6 - Predator Shoot Dinner @5pm, Shoot @7pm
July 12 - African Safari
August 16 - Elk and Muley Second Half of Championship
September 20 - Whitetail Warmup Open shooting on Wednesdays @5pm
December 6 - Mixed Game

Registration is from 9:00am-1:00pm
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Membership Secretary Report

Since January 1st, we have added "new" 16 members, either as (1) renewals that had been away for a while (that is, they were not on the list received from Ken Scollick, or (2) new members. 16 additions to our Roster. This is, therefore, a summary of Expo and Winter Banquet signups. Total membership is 533.

Since January 1st, we have had 33 renewals. A breakdown of renewals/new members, that is, the 16 additions and 33 renewals, total 47:
 1-yr renewals: 20
 3-yr renewals: 12
 5-yr renewals: 4
 New members, 1-yr: 13.

Welcome New Members And Those That Have Been Away...

Ron Gibbs
 Kevin Baker
 Rex Hawley
 Ryan Tucker
 Randy Huffine
 Ken Highfield
 Ed McCarriher
 Ronald and Michelle Koch

Leslie (Butch) and Julie Ann Bertram
 Bob and Pam Clarady
 Matthew Grant
 Scott Abbate
 Annika Kurtz
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 Chris Scott

John Letts
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I was driving through Ohio yesterday when I got a message from Caroline asking the status of this article. This would be the article that I both forgot to pen and to submit!

DANG! At least I now knew what I forgot before leaving the house. I don't know what it is about the time leading up to a hog hunt, but my brain gets distracted with pigs and sometimes things fall through the cracks. Luckily for me I had my laptop in the car and 800 miles to think about things. As I reflected on my distracted mind I thought about an email I received; perhaps the two might be related.

There is a longbow shooting fellow up North whom I keep up with from time to time. We traded a few late winter messages recently about new longbows and the upcoming turkey season. A couple replies into the exchange he asked "So how are you doing with the Hogitis these days?" This cracked me up when I read it, it sounded so serious and very

The Parting Shot

clinical! I thought to myself "I wonder what the symptoms of Hogitis would be?" and I recognized a few right off the bat:

First sign; going afield on the opening day of deer season carrying a map of a swamp a thousand miles away and a notepad to scrawl notes into.

Second sign is hard for me to admit to, especially to this crowd; leaving the peak of rut up North to go hunt a marginal season for hogs down South.

Third sign is when as a Northerner you've finally made it to spring, and just in time for maple sap, morels, and turkey season; you pack up to go chase pigs in blistering heat.

I'm sure there are more that my friends have observed and could rattle off with some good laughs, but those above leave me scratching my own head. Perhaps "forgetting to write StickTalk article" could be number four on my list!

So if Hogitis is a real problem for some of us, what's the cure? From what I can tell there doesn't seem to be one. It's a bit more about managing the itch between hunts. Here are a few things that helped me though the past few months.

Perforate at line, send to address on back.

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I do find some comfort in living vicariously through other hog hunters who are afield. I thought it was fantastic that the very night I was presenting 2014 game awards; Jerry Keck was taking a Florida hog! I saw the picture and it looked delicious, huge congrats to Jerry on that one! A week later Donavan Watson took a trip to Oklahoma to try hogs for the first time in that state. He also scored on the hogs with his longbow! Looks like Game Awards 2015 should be off to a good start! I'll say no more as there could be future articles about the hunts, and as a Hogitis sufferer I really want to hear those stories!

I've tried to read some of the few books on the subject of hog hunting, and most of them have been amazingly disappointing. One afternoon I was thumbing through a 3 Rivers catalogue and saw a book that looked interesting so I decided to try again. The American Feral Hog by Tom Kidwell had good reviews so I bought a copy. I was amazed by

how great this book is! Thoughtfully laid out and easy to understand. The author goes through the history of hogs coming to the new world in great detail with tons of historical references. I spent most of my time rereading sections on habitat and behavior. Reading this book helped me understand the purpose in behavior behind some of my field observations.

There was also a story posted on Trad Gang titled "The Story of Kong" by Jerry Russell. It's a multiyear saga of a very accomplished hog hunter pursuing a particularly elusive boar. The story is extremely well written, there are some great pictures in there. If you search for the title and the author it should come right up.

I will close up this issue with this: I apologize if this article isn't as polished as usual. The sun is now coming up on my first morning in hog camp, and I have a serious condition to attend too!



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Michigan Longbow Association

Spring Shoot and General Membership Meeting



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FRIDAY May 1

NOON: 2015 MLA Spring Shoot Begins

6:00 PM: Chili Cook-off & Dinner, Location: Indoor Range building
(Please bring some chili for the communal pot or a side dish to pass)

SATURDAY, MAY 2

7:00 AM: Ranges Open

9:00-DARK: Novelty Shoots on the Practice Range

1:00 PM: General Membership Meeting, Location: Indoor Range building
(The American Round and Piñata Shoot begin 1/2 hour AFTER the meeting concludes)

6:00 PM: Pot Luck Dinner, Location: Indoor Range Building
(Door prize drawings after dinner)

SUNDAY, MAY 3

7:00 AM: Ranges Open

4:00 PM: Conclusion of the 2015 MLA Spring Shoot

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