

**Central
Wyoming
Chapter**



CENTRAL WYOMING CHAPTER
SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL
June 2009

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6, Number 6

Next Meeting : When : Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 6:30 PM
Where : Casper Petroleum Club

Presentation : Chapter member Kent Sundell will give a PowerPoint presentation on his 30 years of guiding bighorn sheep hunters in NW Wyoming.

Agenda :

- 1) Welcome members and visitors.
- 2) President's remarks.
- 3) Chapter business.
- 4) Presentation.

FUTURE MEETING SCHEDULE

Meetings Suspended for the Summer Months. In keeping with the results from the membership questionnaire completed in 2005, the Central Wyoming Chapter will suspend our monthly meetings during the months of July and August so that everyone can take advantage of our short summer season.

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, September 10, 2009. **Please note that this meeting has been moved to the SECOND Thursday in September.**




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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As hunters, most of us at one time or another have been asked the question “why do you hunt”? It is a simple question, but it has a very complex answer – and the answer that most of us provide carefully avoids the basic question. We tend to rationalize our hunting as being beneficial to wildlife populations, necessary to some local economies, etc. rather than answering the question of why we hunt.

I recently read an article by Shane Mahoney titled “Hunting for the Truth – Why Rationalizing the Ritual Must Fail”, which can be accessed via the Internet.

In his article, Mr. Mahoney discusses the fact that hunters routinely answer the question by identifying the benefits of hunting but rarely, if ever, giving a definitive answer as to why we hunt. To quote Mr. Mahoney “Explaining the benefits of hunting does not in any way explain why we hunt, and why we hunt is the question, really, that society is asking. We confuse and avoid the issue...but we will either answer it, or we will be dismissed. The one thing that we must protect and define for hunting is its relevance; notoriety and debate will not kill it. Fabrication and irrelevance will. Once deemed irrelevant, hunting will no longer be debated; nor will it be engaged in. If we want continuity and recruitment, if we want respect and tolerance for what we do, then we best get busy earning it...by explaining to the reasonable majority what hunting really is”.

I have read this article several times and in so doing have come to realize that Mr. Mahoney is right, as hunters we fail to articulate to the non-hunting public why we hunt. Admittedly, this is a complex social and moral issue, but it is clearly an issue that needs to be discussed if we are to retain majority acceptance for our sport in the future. Those of us who hunt know that sometimes it can be a grueling proposition, pushing our physical and sometimes mental, capabilities to the limit. So why do sane people subject themselves to this seemingly physical and mental abuse. Like anything else in life, we hunt because the rewards can be great – not the material rewards such as the trophy collected, but the spiritual rewards from our interaction with nature. Man, after all, is a hunter. Our ancestors survived by hunting and hunting subsequently evolved into a social event as primitive man was required to hunt in groups as one for their collective good and very survival. Man is a puny animal and in order to achieve success in the hunt, they had to learn to work together in order to succeed in taking down large ungulates such as the woolly mammoth and mastodon during the last ice age, and more recently bison on the plains of North America. Through the ages, the hunt evolved into a tradition shrouded in spiritualism and while the openly spiritual aspects of hunting may have been largely buried in the modern age, the tradition and social aspects of hunting have not.

So, why do we hunt??? I think that each individual hunter will need to search his/her soul for that answer and said answer may be complex for some and surprisingly simple for others. For me, it can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Camaraderie. I value the time spent in the field with friends and family in pursuit of game. I grew up hunting with my dad and my brother – hunting was a family affair, an excuse to get together, and typically occurred during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays by necessity as this was the only time during the school year when I had sufficient time away from school to hunt. I came to look forward to these outings with my dad and older brother and I continue to look forward to hunting with my friends and family despite the fact that both my dad and brother have crossed over. Man is a social animal and hunting camp allows us an opportunity to socialize on a somewhat more elemental level where we don't have to be quite so careful about making social gaffes'. In other words, we can be ourselves without pretense or fear of rejection by our peers.

- 2) Solitude. While this may be a bit of an oxymoron from a “social” aspect, we all have a need to “get away” – particularly in modern society and the pressures associated therewith. Hunting trips allow us an opportunity to get away from our daily routine, experience the outdoors, and reconnect with our more primitive self. The very nature of hunting often takes us to wild lands that we would not normally go otherwise, and we go there in pursuit of specific game.
- 3) Spiritual Renewal. If you are like me, I come home from a hunting trip renewed in spirit. While I can take vacations with friends and family, I do not experience the self-renewal that comes from a hunting trip. I need this spiritual renewal in order to persevere in my daily life and the anticipation of an upcoming hunt is almost as powerful as the actual hunt experience itself.
- 4) Self Awareness. The pursuit of game tends to make us more aware, and more appreciative, of our natural surroundings and instills a feeling of self-confidence in us that may or may not result from our daily business life. This feeling may well come from an ingrained need to demonstrate our ability to provide for our families. The old adage “bringing home the bacon” comes to mind and it is important for us even today to know that we have the capability to provide for the well-being of our families. For prehistoric man, their very survival depended upon their ability to hunt successfully, thereby providing their family group with food and clothing – the basic necessities of life. That need still exists in man today – the ability to demonstrate our personal worth and provide the necessities of life, despite the fact that the term “necessities of life” takes on a whole new meaning in the 21st century.
- 5) Development of Relationships. As stated previously, man is basically a social animal – a characteristic that developed over centuries of inter-dependence engendered by our collective need to survive in an otherwise hostile environment. Humans thrive on social interaction and that is one reason early man associated in tribes and villages. We still thrive on social interaction and we tend to seek interaction with other individuals who share our same values. SCI is a prime example – we all share a common interest and we gather to celebrate and promote those interests. As hunters, we share a common bond and a basic understanding of each other as a result. For myself, I have developed lasting relationships with many of the guides and outfitters with whom I have hunted these past years – not to mention the friendships that have developed through my association with other like-minded individuals.

In rationalizing why I hunt, it occurs to me that hunting is a journey of discovery that renews my soul. It is a spiritual journey that is not predicated necessarily on the taking of a life, but is a celebration of the circle of life. As the Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset said “One does not hunt in order to kill. On the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted”. While I don’t necessarily agree that killing is always the logical conclusion of hunting, I do agree that one must be prepared to kill in conjunction with the act of hunting. As we all know, the hunt does not always culminate with the taking of an animal’s life, yet through the act of hunting, we as the hunter, take to the field committed to the final act should the opportunity present itself.

While there are many other outdoor activities that test specific physical and mental skills and while one might argue that man may “commune” with nature without taking the life of an animal, I would respond that hunting differs from the other outdoor activities. I have backpacked in the mountains of North America, I have dived in the depths of the world’s oceans and none of these activities achieves the spiritual renewal that comes from hunting or the celebration of life that results from the hunt. When we go out to hunt, the intent is to pursue a specific animal with the intent of taking its life – this is a humbling thought and rightfully should increase our awareness of and appreciation for the miracle of life, while strengthening our understanding of the circle of life and the part that we play in that never ending drama. In primitive times, it was kill or be killed, eat or be eaten and survival depended upon man’s proficiency in hunting and defending himself and his family. We all still carry those innate instincts – the instinct for self-preservation and to provide for our families. While hunting for most of us no longer is necessary to provide protein and clothing for our families, the need to hunt is still there, buried deep in the DNA of our history and pre-history. Those of us who hunt are typically peaceful individuals who feel no need to demonstrate our courage or bravado through violence – our souls are at peace because we

understand the circle of life and the great responsibility that comes with the power to take life. We also understand that we are connected with our quarry and that we have an obligation to be as humane as possible.

Ultimately we must define why we hunt if we are to provide a plausible explanation to those who either are unfamiliar with our sport or those who are opposed to hunting for whatever reason. Rationalizations that we are hunting solely to control populations, provide economic gain to local communities, or for meat are rationalizations that will no longer wash as there are alternatives to all of these rationalizations that do not include the need to hunt. Many in SCI call hunting a passion – if indeed it is a passion, then we need to define our passion or it will inevitably disappear.

2010 WHITE ELEPHANT BAR-B-QUE

The eight annual White Elephant dinner event will be held on Saturday, April 10, 2010 at the Best Western Ramkota. I will begin our search for a speaker for the event next year – if you have any suggestions in this regard, please feel free to contact me with your suggestions.

2010 ELECTIONS

The terms of our officers and directors will expire on December 31, 2009 and we will hold our elections for a new slate of officer and directors in conjunction with our January 2010 meeting. In the coming months, I will appoint a Nominating Committee who will be charged with selecting candidates for the upcoming election. We will be electing officers including President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer along with a minimum of 3 directors to be elected from the general membership. If you are interested in serving as an officer or director of the Central Wyoming Chapter, please feel free to give me a call and your name will be passed on to the Nominating Committee once appointed.

MAGAZINES FOR OUR TROOPS OVERSEAS – THIRD REQUEST

As many of you are no doubt aware, a large contingent of Wyoming National Guardsmen and women will be deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq here shortly and one of the ways that the Central Wyoming Chapter can show support for our troops is to collect back issues of Safari magazine and deliver these issues to the National Guard for distribution to our Wyoming troops overseas. In this regard, if you have accumulated back issues of Safari magazine that you would be willing to donate to our troops, please call Bob Anderson at 307-473-1268 or deliver the issues to 5315 East 21st Street here in Casper and we will see that the magazines get to our troops with a letter from the Central Wyoming Chapter expressing our gratitude for their service.

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MEMBERSHIP

Our membership as of April 21, 2009 stands at 151 active members, with an additional 43 members who have allowed their memberships to lapse. If you have any questions concerning the current status of your membership or would be interested in contacting any of these lapsed members in an effort to secure their renewal, please contact Bob Anderson at 307-473-1268.

The New Member Rifle Raffle conducted by the Central Wyoming Chapter generated 30 new members between the end of January and the dinner event on April 18. Our thanks go out to our SCI Field Coordinator, Bill Burton, for his assistance with the raffle during the recent dinner event. The lucky winner of the Weatherby Vanguard rifle with Leupold Vari-X II scope was Lloyd Underwood of Casper.

ADVERTISING

The Central Wyoming Chapter continues to accept paid advertising in the monthly newsletter. Whether you wish to advertise your business or have a personal item for sale, your advertisement will reach our entire membership and will help support the monthly production and mailing costs associated with the newsletter. Rates for personal advertising will be \$5.00 per item up to three lines. For business advertising, we have agreed to charge \$10.00 for a business card, \$50.00 for a full page insert, and \$10.00/column inch for any other ads. If you need additional information concerning advertising in our monthly newsletter, please contact Bob Anderson at 473-1268 or send an email to biologist@prodigy.net.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

A cash bar will be open and available during the evening for refreshments. For those of you who would like to come early and have dinner, you may order from either the bar menu (lighter fare) or from the regular dinner menu at your discretion - cash or check please for non-club members. Spouses are always welcome - be sure to bring your better half and introduce them to our chapter, some fantastic presentations, and the adventure of the great outdoors! Likewise, children are also welcome and are the future of hunting both in North America and elsewhere. We encourage you to bring your kids, introduce them to SCI and the Central Wyoming Chapter and promote our sport. As the SCI bumper sticker says: "Hunt with your kids, not for them". We encourage you to bring a friend, introduce them to Safari Club International, and help our new club continue to grow.

Annual Safari Club International dues are \$55.00 and annual Chapter Dues are \$20.00. Come join us to promote hunting, a great time and some tall tales! Bring your hunting friends - they need to be members of SCI. Pursuant to our bylaws and the bylaws of SCI, you **MUST** be a member in good standing of Safari Club International in order to be a member of the Central Wyoming Chapter. Any questions regarding the current status of your membership, please contact Bob Anderson at 473-1268.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions or require information regarding SCI, the Central Wyoming Chapter, or the contents of this newsletter, please feel free to contact one of the officers listed below:

Name	Title	Telephone
Bob Anderson	President	307-473-1268
Roger Green	Vice-President	307-473-1112
Vacant	Secretary	
Gail Zimmerman	Treasurer	307-235-1173

NOTICE

If you have news or announcements that you would like included in future issues of the newsletter or if you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Bob Anderson at 307-473-1268 or send an email to: biologist@prodigy.net.

Finally, if any of our members have experience with Desktop Publishing and would like to take a swing at upgrading our newsletter, we would be grateful for the help. The Central Wyoming Chapter has a real chance to win a major award from SCI in 2009 if we can take our chapter activities to the next step, so we would appreciate any help from our membership to enhance the newsletter or become more involved in SCI and SCIF programs to promote the mission of SCI locally and on a state-wide basis. So, if you have an interest in helping us to be all that we can be, please contact Bob to discuss these possibilities.

Members Jim O'Neill and Lee Kremers (Powder River Firearms Academy) will host a precision rifle course on May 23 and 24, 2009. The course will cover reading the wind, range finding, and various shooting positions to build a stable platform for shooting at increased ranges. Cost on the class is \$400 and will be instructed by Jim O'Neill. Start time is 8:00 AM on May 23rd. For more information on the course, please visit the Powder River Firearms Academy website: www.powderriverfirearms.com.

 **SCI FIRST FOR HUNTERS**