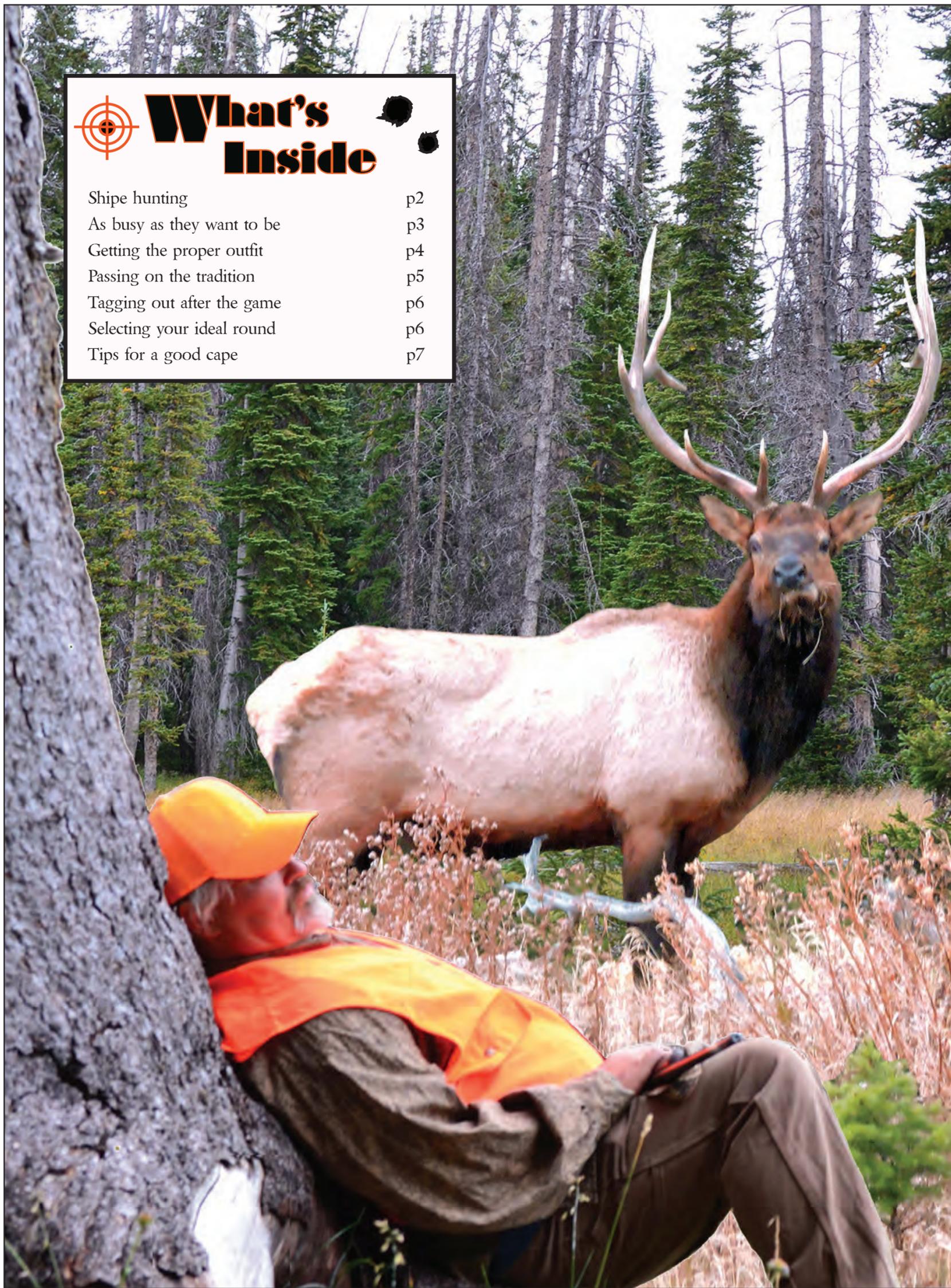




HUNTING GUIDE



A SPECIAL SECTION OF THE *Saratoga Sun* • WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2019



 **What's Inside**

- Shipe hunting p2
- As busy as they want to be p3
- Getting the proper outfit p4
- Passing on the tradition p5
- Tagging out after the game p6
- Selecting your ideal round p6
- Tips for a good cape p7

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Shipe hunting

Medicine Bow welcomes new game warden, Rob Shipe

By Mike Armstrong

The game warden station in Medicine Bow has been in existence since 1953 according to Rob Shipe, the new game warden for the area.

"My district goes along US 30 to Fetterman Road towards Rock River and then I sort of follow the county line to west and quite a lot of my area is public land," Shipe said. "My area includes Shirley Basin, which is a major area for wildlife."

He said his territory covers a lot of the new wind farms that are being built.

"They are cutting new roads and it is changing the landscape a little bit, and anywhere you put in development like this, there will be impact," Shipe said. "I have only been here a few months and have only seen that land with wind farms, but I have to say this town has been bustling."

Currently, he is going on routes checking out antelope before hunting season starts. He said that the routes are the same done every year for consistency sake.

"This way we can see any changes versus me looking for hot spots of antelope," Shipe said. "So literally, I am out counting antelope all day."

He said the antelope are not hard to count because the herds are not wary yet.

"They definitely know the difference when hunting season starts," Shipe laughed. "There is no question about that."

He said the nearest relative is the giraffe and the reason they are so fast is due to a predator that does not exist in North America today.

"I don't know how many thousands of years ago, but there was a species of North American cheetah that obviously fed on the antelope," Shipe said. "So the antelope would get faster and then the cheetah would get faster and then the antelope would get faster and so on and so on until you had this very fast creature related to the giraffe. Eventually the cheetah died out, but the antelope had become so fast that most predators couldn't catch them."

Shipe has been at Medicine Bow for three months, but he has worked for Wyoming Game and Fish since 2014. He has always known since his school days he wanted a job that would have him outdoors.

He was raised in Michigan in a small town about an hour outside of Detroit. Shipe graduated from Oakland University with a degree in biology.

"I studied biology because I thought it would make me a better fisherman," Shipe said. Then he laughed, "It did not make me a better fisherman."

He didn't always see himself as a game warden, but now that he is, Shipe doesn't see any other job that fits his



Photo by Mike Armstrong

Rob Shipe stands next to the sign at the Medicine Bow Game Warden Station.

personality so well.

"Since it is just me, I am out in field all the time and I love it," Shipe said. "I get to see things that I never would imagine. Coming from the midwest, I never thought I would ever see a wildfire in my life, but a couple weeks ago I was out at the Pathfinder fire watching planes dumping water to put the blaze out."

When he left college, he knew he wanted to work in the Rocky Mountain area but didn't think he would find a job. He was wrong.

Shipe was hired by Wyoming Game and Fish to work in Green River at check stations for boats coming in from other states.

"In college, that is one of the things I studied; aquatic invasive species," Shipe said. "These creatures can be a huge infrastructure problem because they can blow up wherever it gets wet. We are talking hydro and irrigation where these waterways can get blocked up."

Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are non-native organisms that can cause significant harm to an ecosystem when introduced. Aquatic invasive species, like zebra and quagga mussels, are small organisms that could have huge impacts for Wyoming's waters, boaters, and anglers.

Shipe pointed out the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's AIS program wants to remind everyone that any boat, jet ski and other watercraft coming into the state of Wyoming is required to be inspected before launching on any water in the state until after Nov. 30.

Boaters must have inspections at regional offices or inspection stations through Nov. 30 when launching in Wyoming. This requirement is extended year round if the watercraft was last used in any water infested with zebra and or quagga mussels. Besides hydro and irrigation, these species can ruin fisheries, clog cooling systems in motorboats, foul hulls, and ruin equipment. Anyone who uses water or recreates on water will be impacted.

He said an owner should clean, drain, and dry the watercraft after every use.

Shipe left Green River after two years as a regional game warden and moved to Lander where he was a

regional game warden there. Coming to Medicine Bow, he is the district game warden.

"I am in charge of the whole district, whereas when I was regional, I went wherever they needed me to go in the district," Shipe explained.

Hunting season has already started in his district for cow elk and Shipe is gearing up for more animals to start being able to be hunted.

Although there are regulations concerning when and how mule deer can be hunted, white tail has much less restrictions. He explained white tail should not really be coming into this range because it is dominated by mule deer. But due to white tail being so prolific, they are making their way into mule deer habitat. He said there is even some hybrids coming out of the two mixing in the area.

He has never seen one, but know they exist. Shipe said the way you can tell for sure if the deer is a hybrid, is the tarsal gland. On a mule deer the gland which runs down the back leg is four to six inches long, a white tail is two to four inches long and a hybrid is three to four inches.

His district is one that has the longest hunting season in the state. It starts Aug. 15 and goes until the end of January

"There are a few other districts that stay as long as I do," Shipe said. "But the real nitty gritty starts in October"

Shipe said, although he has not been in Medicine Bow long, the most unusual thing he has seen was a black bear going through town.

"It wasn't really a big deal, because he just wandered through town and left," Shipe said. "But it was interesting to see a bear wandering through sage brush."

Shipe said he enjoys the diversity of the landscape in his district.

"I have high desert and mountains meeting," Shipe said. "I have black footed ferrets and swift foxes in my district and I find myself learning new things all the time. For instance, black footed ferrets are nocturnal. They are active at night."

Shipe said that was the beauty of his job.

"I am always learning and seeing things that are fantastic, at least to me," Shipe concluded to me. "Its why I wanted to live here in Wyoming."

Good Luck this year hunters!

As busy as they want to be

Local wild game processors keep busy throughout hunting season

By Joshua Wood

Hunting season in the Platte Valley is a busy time of year for many people, but nobody more than the local meat processors. With over 80 years combined experience, Encampment River Processing and Merrill Meat Company are given plenty of business. Lloyd Buford, owner of Encampment River Processing, bought his business in 1983 and experienced his first full season in 1984.

"I think the first year we had this, our first full game season, we did six deer for the whole season," said Buford. "We did quite a few antelope, but back then there were a lot of antelope. We did a few elk."

This didn't bother Buford much as he had purchased the business with the original intention of operating it as a processing plant for beef, pork and lamb. Interestingly enough, this was the exact opposite of how Merrill Meat Company began. According to Cade Merrill, when his parents first opened their

business it was to process wild game and they eventually began processing beef.

Merrill Meat Company first opened in 1972 and, according to Merrill, the wild game business took off for his parents. The younger Merrill stated that, before the winterkill of the early 1980s, Merrill Meat Company processed nearly 900 antelope in a season. The number of antelope has declined since then, as has the mule deer population. For both meat processing companies, elk has become the most common wild game they process.

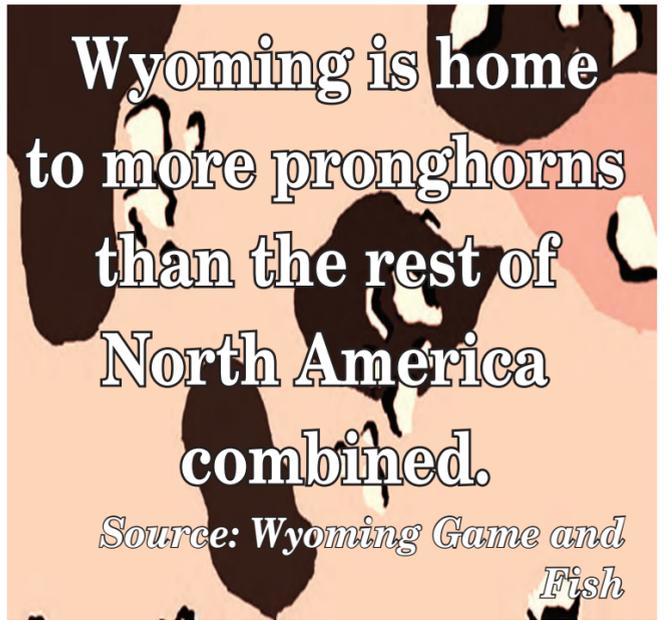
"You can only take as much as your coolers can hold. When we get 35 elk in in a day, that's a full cooler," said Merrill.

According to Buford, processing one elk is equal to that of four antelope. While Buford stated he is only as busy as he wants to be and caters to repeat customers, Merrill Meat Company can see as many as 100 elk within the first four days of elk season.

"It happened for a couple two three days during that time where, late in the day, you might not be able to take anymore for that day, but the most we ever tell people is 'If you can find a place to hang it tonight, bring it about 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning.' If we're that busy, we'll start at 3 o'clock in the morning to get animals out of the cooler so we can make room for the next day," said Merrill.

While Merrill Meat Company is staying in the family as Cade Merrill takes over, Buford is looking at making this his final season after 35 full seasons. With two meat processors, currently, operating in the Valley, one closing its doors may lead to an influx with the other. According to Merrill, if Buford does make good on his decision to retire, Merrill Meat Company may consider increasing their coolers to accommodate.

For the time being, however, there are still two experienced options for hunters to take their harvest to get processed.



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Getting the proper outfit

What you should know before going on a guided hunt

By Joshua Wood

In Wyoming, hunting is big business. A report released in 2017 by Southwick Associates estimated that outfitters and guides in Wyoming collected nearly \$45 million from big game hunters in 2015. It was also estimated that, in total, both resident and non-resident hunters contributed over \$300 million to Wyoming's economy. In just the Laramie region alone, there are approximately 20 outfitters according to the Wyoming Outfitters and Guides Association.

What can someone interested in having a guided hunt do to prepare? It depends on the outfitter and the type of hunt.

"Antelope hunting is generally ride around on the four-wheeler or in the truck and everything stays in the truck most of the time whereas elk hunting we're out all day and it stays on our back," said Johnny Bergeson, owner of Trophy Room Outfitters.

Bergeson grew up in Encampment and guided for Warden Patzer, former owner of Trophy Room Outfitters, before purchasing the business 10 years ago. Unlike some outfitting companies that may own the land, Bergeson takes his hunters onto public lands. Over the decade that he has been operating his outfitting business, he said that many of his clients ask questions about hunting in Wyoming.

"I've hunted with a lot of clients that really ask a lot of questions. They're really

wanting to be informed on how this works or how that works as compared to where they hunt. They just really want to know more information," Bergeson said. "I try to show them as good a time as I possibly can. I make sure all my gear is in good shape, I make sure all the meals are good depending on the type of hunt that we're doing. I've had some hunters, all they want to eat was peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. I've had others that we've cooked pork chops and steaks and hamburgers and all that good stuff."

Many of Bergeson's clients come from lower elevations while most of his elk hunts begin at 10,000 feet. While a hunter wouldn't be able to prepare for the higher elevation, he said that one of the things that they can do is begin exercising.

"It doesn't necessarily mean go out and become a bodybuilder. Just get your mind right, start working, start walking around with a backpack every day or every other day. Get used to the long miles. That's the biggest thing," said Bergeson. "The best they can do is exercise to the point where their body is able to help itself recover when it does get tired. They exercise, they get in shape. Even when they're in phenomenal shape and they came to this altitude, it still wears them out the first couple days, but that getting in shape helps their lungs and helps their body to be able to recover when they need to."

In addition to exercising, Bergeson advises his clients

to bring their sleeping bags, pads, rifle, ammo and any special needs they have.

"Some of them like to bring their own little gummy bears or something like that," Bergeson said.

He also advises his clients to dress in layers due to the changes in weather throughout the day.

"They got to dress in layers. Western hunting requires layering because it gets hot during the day and cold in the morning and sometimes it's the extreme one way or the other. A lot of it's exclusive to the hunt," said Bergeson.

While there is much that is exclusive to the hunt and the outfitter, Bergeson said one thing he has seen quite often is hunters skimping on shoes. In some cases, clients have purchased shoes at a sporting goods store upon arrival and spend the time of the hunt breaking in new shoes.

"You can't break a boot in while you're hunting," Bergeson said.

He also advised that hunters check with their outfitter of choice as to the type of hunt to determine what shoe or boot to wear. If it will be an antelope hunt, there's likely no need for an insulated boot or one that's waterproof. If they're hunting for late season elk, however, they may need a boot that is both insulated and water resistant.

Proper preparation on the part of the hunter will ensure a good time, if not a successful hunt, from the outfitter.

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HUNTING GUIDE

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Passing on the tradition

Dennis Goodwin takes daughter on successful black bear hunt outside Savery

By Joshua Wood

For many people, hunting isn't just something to do during the fall and winter seasons, but is a way of life that is passed down from one generation to the other. Dennis Goodwin is one of those people. Having archery hunted for nearly 25 years and understanding the importance of the hunt to conservation and management, it's a tradition that he wants to teach his children.

"I don't care if they hunt when they get older, but as long as they experience it now as they're growing up," said Dennis. "It's been such a way of life for myself, I'd like to pass the tradition on to my kids."

Dennis's daughter Katelyn Goodwin enjoys hunting with her dad, a lot. While she is shy and hesitant to open up, the smile that crosses her face when talking about going hunting with her dad says more than words ever could. Recently, Katelyn and her dad were able to harvest a black bear outside Savery.

The father and daughter hunters saw a total of three bears as they hunted Savery Creek. The night before the hunt, Katelyn spotted the first black bear. While she wouldn't admit it at first, her dad said that she was very excited.

"She was jumping up and down. 'I found the first bear,'" Dennis said.

The next day, early in the

morning, Dennis and Katelyn both spotted the second bear of the weekend and Dennis harvested the animal.

"It ran around and then it dropped dead," said Katelyn. "Like 30 yards," added Dennis.

With the black bear down, Katelyn was anxious to get a closer look.

"She wanted to go down to see it real quick and we had to wait," said Dennis.

While waiting to make sure the harvested black bear was dead, another black bear came into the area. According to Katelyn, the third black bear of the weekend sniffed the downed bear before running off a short distance. The two waited for the bear to leave before going down to look at their harvest.

Once it was safe, Dennis told Katelyn to wait while he checked to make sure the black bear was dead. While Katelyn said it felt like it took forever for her dad to go down and then come back for her, it took a total of 30 seconds. When she finally was able to see the bear up close, Katelyn said she was "kind of excited."

Katelyn is unsure if she wants to go bear hunting, again. There is no denying, however, that hunting is a large part of the family's life. Two weeks after the opening day of black bear, the family helped Dennis' father-in-law harvest two antelope and Dennis himself harvested a

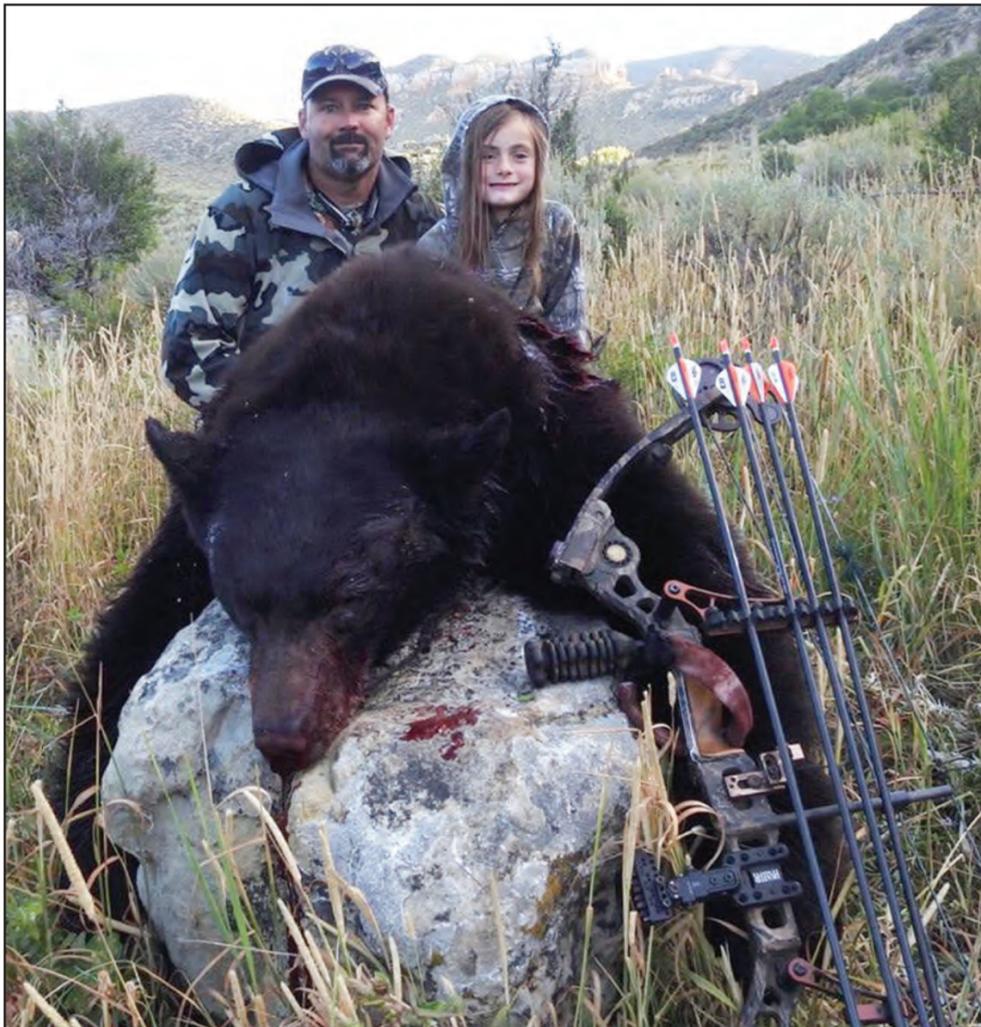


Photo courtesy Mandy Goodwin

Dennis and Katelyn Goodwin pose with the black bear they harvest on the opening day of the season.

spike elk.

"It's a huge part of our lives," said Dennis.

For Dennis, it's not always important for a hunt to end

in a harvest.

"Some of the best days out there with my kids are the days that I don't even harvest. Just getting out there

and spending time with them and see animals and just enjoy the one-on-one time with the kids," Dennis said. "It's nice."

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Tagging out after the game

Encampment volleyball player recounts story of harvesting antelope after volleyball game during 2018 season

By **Lindsie Farver**

Editor's Note:

While interviewing Lindsie Farver earlier in the year, she told a story about hunting antelope in her volleyball uniform. The *Saratoga Sun* is giving her the opportunity to tell her story in her own words.

Hunting is in my blood, I was raised around it. Every year I go hunting with my dad typically rifle hunting. But this last year I decided archery was for me. We practiced quite a bit and used a crossbow for my first big game archery hunting season. As I've gotten older athletics has become a big part of my life. Since volleyball is around the same time of year as any hunting season it is more difficult to go hunting all season long. After a volleyball game against the Lady Panthers last year in

2018, I decided it was time to tag out and fill the freezer. It was fairly late into the archery season, I had been scoping out a buck I liked and Dad had spotted it earlier that day. So right after the game he took me out and I didn't have time to change, I only had time to aim. Killing my first antelope buck with archery was nothing like I'd expected it's definitely different than hunting with a rifle. He didn't make it very far after the shot and I posed for a picture. My dad's coworkers the next day were in awe that I could shoot a buck antelope with archery in my volleyball clothes. They always brag about how they buy the most expensive camo to archery hunt with and that you can't kill anything without it. Well I guess I proved those guys wrong.



Photos courtesy Lindsie Farver

Lindsie Farver poses with the antelope she harvested following a volleyball game last fall.

Firearm Cartridges allowed by Game per Wyoming Game and Fish regulations

Bighorn Sheep, Elk, Moose, Mountain Goat, Black Bear or Grizzly Bear*

Any CENTERFIRE cartridge at least .24 caliber and at least 2" in overall length or other cartridge .35 caliber or better and at least 1.5" in overall length using an expanding point bullet.

Some recommended cartridges

Muzzle-loading rifle or handgun at least .40 caliber (expanding point bullet) using a charge of at least 50 grains



Black Powder



.223 Rem



.22-250 Rem



.220 Swift



.243 Win



.30-30 Win



.300 Savage



Shotgun Shell



.25-06 Rem

*00" or larger buckshot or a slug.



.270 Win



.308 Win



.30-06 Springfield



7mm RemMag



.300 Win.Mag



.300 Weatherby



.338 Win.Mag



.375 H&H



or Larger

*Grizzly Bear hunting is not currently legal in Wyoming

Antelope, Mountain Lion, Deer or Gray Wolf

Any CENTERFIRE cartridge at least .22 caliber (excluding .22 Hornet) and having a bullet weight of at least 60 grains and firing a cartridge at least 2" in overall length, or any cartridge at least .35 caliber and at least 1.5" in overall length and using an expanding point bullet.

Muzzle-loading rifle or handgun at least .40 caliber (expanding point bullet) using a charge of at least 50 grains



Black Powder



.223 Rem



.22-250 Rem



Shotgun Shell

*00" or larger buckshot or a slug.



or Larger

Game Birds

excluding Wild Turkey, Blue Grouse & Ruffed Grouse
Any center-fire or muzzle-loading shotgun not larger than a ten (10) gauge plugged to admit no more than one (1) shell in the chamber and two (2) shells in the magazine or any archery equipment.

Wild Turkey

For the Wild Turkey, a hunter shall use any shotgun, center-fire firearm, .17 HMR or larger rimfire firearm with an overall cartridge length greater than 1", any muzzle-loading firearm, or any archery equipment.

Blue Grouse & Ruffed Grouse

Blue grouse, ruffed grouse and small game may be taken in any manner except as prohibited by Wyoming Statute.

Questions

The Wyoming Game and Fish maintains a phone bank to answer any hunting related questions you may have and can transfer or refer you to the correct official or agency.

Please call 307-777-4600 for more information.



A cape crusade

Tips on how to get an acceptable cape to your taxidermist

Important!
Use a sharp knife!

Unless you are an expert, leave the head attached to the cape. Cutting around the eyes, nose and mouth are best left to your taxidermist. After peeling the hide up to the head, from the carcass remove the head and leave it attached.

Do not cut the throat to bleed out an animal you plan to have caped.

4: Start at the "Y" that starts between the ears and each antler. Make a cut that goes from the base of each antler back to that "Y" creating a Y-shaped cut.

Also skin around each antler's pedicle.

1: Starting from the sternum make an incision completely around the animal at or near the middle rib. Cut order varies but most begin with this cut.

TIP: Cutting more length is better than less—your taxidermist cannot add hide later.

5: This cut starts at the "Y" cut you just made and follows the dark line that goes along the back of the neck and top of the spine.

Keep going until you meet your first cut.

3: Make a cut to each leg from the first cut along the darker fur line.

TIP: Do not cut through the middle of the armpit.

2: Make a ring around the animal's front legs above the knee.

Try to follow the line of the fur when you are cutting.

Never put a cape in a black plastic garbage bag unless you plan to let it cool first then freeze it quickly. Black collects heat and will bake a cape. White game bags are preferred.

Cool the cape down in a shady spot before trying to pack it out.

Do not drag the animal—it will bald the hide.

Meat contains heat. Heat is what destroys capes. Leave the meat on the animal not the hide.