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THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

BY RICK CHEATUM

Deer

If you have been out this fall, you probably saw more deer in the hills than you have in several years. Nearly every hunter I talked with said they saw lots of does and fawns, but not a lot of bucks, during the three-week season. Once the season was over, bucks began to appear where several of the hunters I talked with would have sworn there weren't any. Many folks have been driving down to the Blackrock area south of Pocatello late in the afternoon to watch the deer herds on Larry Bull's land. He has hundreds of deer there nearly every night, and the composition of that herd has changed dramatically since the season ended. Earlier in the year, it was all does and fawns, and now that hunting season has ended, bucks are joining the herd.

As I write this, The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is finishing their composition surveys and beginning the fawn collaring. Buck/doe ratio statistics for the various surveyed units and the overall numbers counted should be available soon. Preliminary figures I have seen indicate better numbers in most, but not all, units. I haven't heard of a specific plan to improve the numbers in the units with low buck numbers, but I am certain we will see those when the Big Game scoping meetings are held by Fish and Game in late January or early February.

Doe Hunting

One of the proposals I have heard more than once, and not just by Fish and Game, is to hunt does in the fall of 2006. Public pressure is building to have a doe season this fall to allow youth a chance to harvest a doe to help recruit more big game hunters. On the Fish and Game side, they would like to harvest some does to restore the fear of man in problem areas and keep deer away from roads and residences. A doe season would also fix the low buck/doe ratios by removing some of the counted does, not by increasing the number of bucks.

When the Big Game Scoping meetings I mentioned above are held, it will be interesting to see if doe hunting is proposed region-wide or in select small areas where the does are causing problems. The Board of Directors of the SEIMDF is discussing having a survey at the banquet January 21st to measure your feelings on issues so we make sure we are representing the membership in our actions and stands. If doe hunting is one of the topics we survey, it will be interesting to see how you feel it should be handled, if allowed at all.

If you watch the hunting shows on the Outdoor Channel, as I do, you frequently see doe harvests. Doe harvest is a tool used to control deer populations in whitetail deer in areas where they have increased to levels unacceptable to homeowners, insurance companies, and landowners. Whitetail quality deer management programs, or QDM, are all the rage in the Midwest and South, where whitetail populations

are probably the largest they have ever been. Humans have successfully removed most of the deer predators and at the same time, have provided tremendous food crops and habitat for the deer. Now, the only check for the deer population is human hunting, disease, and drought. In some areas, they have a program called ‘earn a buck.’ In those areas, the overall population is so large that in order to be able to earn a buck tag, you must kill a doe first.

In most of those areas, they don’t have a serious or frequent problem with a lack of rainfall. Watching the Texas whitetail population over the past few years indicates drought affects deer size and antler growth more than population numbers. If you want to control deer numbers, you remove the does, the only member of the herd capable of producing more deer. Disease problems seem to affect only local populations of deer and are generally not widespread. We had a problem with whitetail disease in Northern Idaho a couple of years ago, but it only affected the deer in a very small area. We have all heard about Chronic Wasting Disease, but even this has not affected animal populations significantly.

Drought

I think that deep down, everyone would agree the root problem with most of our wildlife populations in Idaho is the drought. We have been in a drought of one intensity or another for several years and it has taken its toll on the land, the vegetation, and the wildlife. This past year, what precipitation we received seemed to come at exactly the right times. And yet, we still are in a drought.

I just checked the drought condition at <http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html> and found that in the latest map, the drought in our area has moderated, but we are not out of the woods yet. This website is updated each Tuesday and has a feature that lets you

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compare this week’s drought condition map with last week’s map.

Feeding

The Southeast Region Wildlife Feeding Committee, of which I am a member, has met twice so far this year. The early deep snowfall and severe cold seemed to indicate we might be feeding this year. Now, with the moderation of the temperatures and most of the snow melted away, the likelihood of feeding seems remote. Feeding Committee Chairman Dick Patchett and Fish and Game staff traveled to some of the traditional feeding sites the week before Christmas to talk with residents just to make sure we are ready if feeding becomes necessary. If we don’t receive another super-cold blast of arctic air and deep snow, we might have the survival of deer we need to bring the populations back closer to the numbers we all want.

Wildlife Disease

For a number of years, the threat of transmitting brucellosis from wildlife populations in eastern Idaho to cattle has been a major concern to the Idaho Department of Agriculture. Now, it has finally happened and been documented. A herd of cattle in the Swan Valley area tested positive for the disease and DNA testing proved the strain came from elk in the area. Now, Idaho has lost its brucellosis-free designation, causing severe economic problems for cattle ranchers across the state.

A few years ago, I read a treatise on brucellosis and remember that the only threat left in North America was from wildlife infected with the disease in or around Yellowstone Park. That paper proposed killing all the elk in a limited radius around the infected herd when transmission from elk to cattle was proven. Wiping out every animal and burning the carcasses.

Disease transmission is one of the dangers of winter feeding. When we concentrate a large number of animals at a feeding site, the chance of passing any diseases present increase; especially if the same feeding site is used several years in a row. Ag Department rules require a ‘sampling’ of deer and testing them for disease if a feeding site is used three consecutive years, based on the supposition that some disease organisms can survive from one year to the next in the soil. That

Continued on page 9

The ideas and opinions expressed in this newsletter are the sole responsibility of the various authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the S.E.I.M.D.F.

2005 DEER HUNT IN UNIT 73 REVIEW

Marc Porter-Senior Conservation Officer-IDFG

Whether you agree or disagree with the rules of harvesting of a four-point or better in Unit 73, or the Fish and Game rule that ATV's are restricted only to roads that are legal to full-sized vehicles, another deer hunt has come and gone in the Malad area. These rules are in place in the unit due mainly to public comment. The hunt this year was extended from 5 to 7 days and the date of the hunt was pushed forward to October 10th in hopes that the weather would be more favorable to hunters.

Counting mule deer from the helicopter last winter, I found the buck to doe ratio had gone up considerably compared to last year. I expected this increase with the four-point or better rule because the two-point segment of the population is protected against harvest. This rule will increase mule deer buck to doe ratios during the first couple of years, especially when your buck to doe ratios are depressed as evident in previous years' counts. However, I caution that this rule may be detrimental in future years as most four-points will have been harvested in previous years and hunters will be left with three point or smaller bucks which are not legal to harvest.

Preliminary results from the people I contacted indicated a fair to good deer hunt in the area. Many four-point bucks with a 20-25 inch spread were taken, however I only checked one buck that had a 30 plus inch spread. A more complete picture of the harvest will be present when the Mandatory Harvest Reports are completed and analyzed.

Enforcement issues were prevalent throughout the seven day hunt. A lot of three point bucks were illegally taken and the ATV rule was violated everywhere I went. Individuals were also cited for failing to tag their mule deer. I saw this same trend last year, and this year is no different. One major problem with a four-point or better rule is many three-point bucks are shot and left to waste on the mountain that otherwise would have been taken home to a family. Many groups of hunters I talked to were frustrated with the ATV rule. Most were frustrated they had walked into an area only to find that an ATV had also worked his way into the area illegally.

Many of the citations I wrote this year were due to concerned citizens. I appreciate all the calls and encourage anybody to call me in the future. You may remain anonymous. If you have questions and/or concerns about anything wildlife related, please call me at (208) 339-3508, the Citizens Against Poaching (CAP) line at 1-800-632-5999, or the Oneida County Sheriff's Office at (208) 766-2251.

Total Expenditures and Economic Output of Wildlife-based Recreation in Idaho (2001)

	Retail Sales	Output	Earnings	Jobs	Sales/Fuel Taxes	State Income Tax	Federal Income Tax
Fishing	\$396,364,348	\$657,461,318	\$151,598,738	7,504	\$22,697,010	\$6,581,745	\$15,254,668
Hunting	\$319,067,286	\$536,360,001	\$125,790,189	6,197	\$17,676,032	\$4,063,023	\$12,687,394
Wildlife Watching	\$227,500,000	\$384,000,000	\$100,700,000	5,938	\$9,000,000	\$3,200,000	\$9,300,000
Total	\$942,931,634	\$1,577,821,319	\$378,088,927	19,639	\$49,373,042	\$13,844,768	37,242,062

All of the expenditure data used for the economic outputs comes from the 2001 National Survey:

U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. *2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 2002.

The specific documents that reported the economic outputs are as follows:

U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. *2001 National and State Economic Impacts of Wildlife Watching: Addendum to the 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (Report 2001-2)*. Washington, DC, August 2003.

International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. *Economic Importance of Hunting in America*. Washington, DC, 2002.

American Sportfishing Association. *Sportfishing in America*. Alexandria, VA, 2002.

OTHER ISSUES

By Terry Taysom

I had the opportunity to visit Nevada this year to help my dad on an elk hunt. The elk hunt was successful and we had a great time. We were out in the "boonies", the closest gas station was 76 miles away, and ran into a resident who was obviously a serious, knowledgeable hunter who was scouting for deer. As we were talking, he lamented the lack of deer compared to what the area had in the past. He noted that in the late 1980's their Department of Wildlife got the mind-set that they had more deer than they could support and in this particular unit, in one year, increased the number of doe deer tags from 400 to 1500 and then continued at this rate for three more years. His opinion was that this was the start of the decline of the deer herd and that it has not yet recovered from this over-harvest. Idaho evidently was in the same mind-set as Nevada, and other western states, as in the above mentioned time-frame we could purchase two over-the-counter doe tags for three years in a row. I believe that Fish & Game census numbers will support the opinion that this was the start of the deer population decline in our area.

Granting the fact that many other factors affect mule deer populations, I believe that all sportsmen should oppose any doe deer harvest until it is very obvious that the harvest is biologically sound.

Before the publication of our next newsletter, the Fish & Game will be holding public meetings for input regarding big game seasons for this coming fall. Please take the time to get involved and let your opinions be known.

The SEIMDF is currently working to help facilitate another Conservation Easement. The property is prime development property, and also critical winter habitat, that borders the Portneuf WMA just north of McCammon. When complete, this easement will perpetuate the availability of critical winter grounds for wildlife and also provide a perpetual travel corridor. This is a prime example of the type of projects the Southeast Idaho Mule Deer Foundation can complete with your continued support. S.E.I.M.D.F., upon completion of this easement, will have completed six

major land transactions that have prevented future residential or commercial development of critical wildlife habitat and perpetuated the availability of these properties for wildlife.

I hope you plan to attend our annual Banquet/Fund-raiser this year. This is the Foundation's major yearly fund-raiser and is what helps fund our projects. The date and location are provided elsewhere in this newsletter. Any and all assistance in helping with this function would be greatly appreciated. If you can be of assistance or have a donation, please contact any of the Board members or myself at 208-241-3337. If you are attending, please take to time to convince another person or two to attend with you and let's make this the best one yet.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I hope to see you and all your friends at the Banquet.

INFORMATION

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Phone: 237-9045 (Rick Cheatum)

or

208-233-3095 (Terry Taysom)

Email: cheatum1@gmail.com

Web: semuley@onewest.net

WHEN WE MEET:

All meetings and the annual Fund-raiser are held at the Ramada Inn, Chubbuck, Idaho.

Meetings begin at 6:30pm.

Regular meetings for 2006 are scheduled for the first

Tuesday of every month.

CONVERTED TO CAMO

By Debra Probart Cheatum

Letters From Mariah, A Puppy's Tale

Dear Santa,

Hey Santa, yooahoo. Hellooo. I'm down here. No, look down Santa, I'm here.

See me, I'm right here. Hi Santa. I'm Mariah. Wow, you sure have a lot of fur on your face. I have lots of fur too, but not like that! Do you get snowballs on your face fur? I get snowballs on my fur, but Mom helps me to get them off.

Wow, this snow stuff is sure a lot of fun to play in. Except it's so deep I can't find all my toys in the yard, I've been digging as fast as I can, but some of them are still missing. I've been hiding my rawhide chew bones under the rose bushes so I can find them, but Mom keeps throwing them back in the yard. Doesn't she know the snow is covering them up?

Mom says you bring toys to kids of all ages, but I'm a puppy. Do you bring toys to puppies too? I've been a good girl. Lately. So, I'm thinking you could bring me some toys and some socks and I really like rawhide chew bones...but I like socks the best. And, don't forget Mom and Dad and Misty. Misty likes chew bones and dog biscuits, but she won't let me play in her doghouse. Mom says Misty is a good nanny. She's 9 years old and sometimes she's kind of cranky when I chew on her ears. But Santa, don't forget to bring her a present too, OK, so she won't eat my chew bones.

You could bring Dad some "Milk Bone" dog bones. But be sure to give him a big box and don't bring the puppy size, he would like the big dog size. He likes to give me dog bones. He makes me sit and hold still. Geez I can't even move my tail. That's really hard but I like the Milk Bones so I sit really still. Sometimes he makes me wait too long and I just want the darn bone, but then he pats my head and tells me I'm a good girl.

And, you could bring Mom some rawhide chew bones. She would like a bag of those chicken basted ones and a big bag of those with the chicken flavored strips wrapped inside. She'll need a lot of chew bones, so you can make it a big bag of each. Mom gives



me chew bones so I'll leave her socks alone, but I still like socks the best.

Besides, it's easier to hide socks in the cushions on the sofa, but if you chew on those rawhide bones and get them all slimy, they slide better between the cushions.

Mom says I'm getting a shock collar for Christmas, but I don't want one so you can bring me toys and socks, instead, OK? I like socks. My favorite socks are "Smart-Wool" socks. I worked real hard and chewed some holes in Mom's wool socks so her feet will breathe and they work much better now, but she still said, "No, No Mariah". Geez, I was just helping.

Hey Santa, if you come down our chimney, you better be careful. We use our fireplace and you'll get your face fur all dirty. If you make a mess, you'll get in big trouble so if you hear them yell, "No! No! Damn It, Santa," you better run and hide behind the sofa.

Did you know they put a big tree in the living room? Geez, I get in trouble for bringing in sticks and pinecones and they brought in a whole tree! They put all these lights and glittery things all over it. I've been working real hard to get all that glittery stuff off the tree. It doesn't taste very good but I'm still working at it. There was a little birdhouse with a white bird and red berries and snow and stuff. Well, Mom doesn't like birds in the house so I tried real hard to get that bird off the tree. Mom kept moving it higher up the tree, but I finally got it down. It's hiding behind the sofa with a couple of socks, and some more of those glittery things I took off the tree, but don't tell anyone, OK? It's a secret.

That tree is so big I couldn't see the stuff way up there, so I gave it a couple of tugs so it would lean down and I could see to the very top. Dad yelled, "No! No! Mariah!" and then he crawled underneath and moved it back upright. I tried to help and get under there with him and give him kisses, but he kept saying,

“No, No, Damn It, Mariah!” Geez, I just tried to help. Besides I don’t need to crawl under that tree, I can just walk around under it anytime I want. But now, I can’t see all the stuff, so I need to fix it again.

I really like that fuzzy, red and white blanket under the tree. Mom calls it a tree skirt, but it’s not a skirt, it’s just a blanket. It’s real soft and I like to lie on it. I didn’t mean to put that hole in it. That was an accident. I had to tug kind of hard to get it out from under that tree so I could drag it behind the sofa. Now, it’s back under the tree, but if you push those packages around, you can still make room on the blanket to take a nap.

I like those packages with the curly ribbon the best. You can pull on the curly ribbon and drag the packages all over the house. And, if you get a good grip on that ribbon and run really fast, you can bounce those packages from the floor to the walls, against the banister and everything. It’s cool. Besides, they’ll be easier to open that way. I tried to take some outside to hide for later, but Mom grabbed them away from me before I could run past her. I need my own door.

Hey Santa, that’s what I need for Christmas! A Doggie Door! My very own door. That way I could come in and out of the house whenever I wanted. And, I could bring stuff in and out of the house to play with and Mom couldn’t take things away from me, like the prunes that fall into our yard. They taste better when they get all soft and gushy, but they won’t let me bring them into the house. And socks! I could take some socks outside!

That’s what I want, Santa. I’ve been a good girl and I would like some toys, some socks and my very own doggie door. I don’t want one of those shock collars things, so if you bring Dad some dog bones and Mom some rawhide chew bones, maybe they will forget about that shock collar. I promise I’ll be good and I won’t bark at you and the reindeer when you come visit us on Christmas Eve. Well, maybe I’ll bark just a little so you’ll know it’s me. Hey, those reindeer aren’t going to leave any droppings in the yard are they? Mom says she’s raising a poop machine cuz she has to take a shovel and clean the yard all the time. What’s a poop machine? I don’t want one of those for Christmas!

Hey Santa! I got to go bird hunting on Thanksgiving and caught my first pheasant. It was way cool. Dad kept telling me to, “Find the bird, Mariah,” so I did.

I found that pheasant he shot and I caught it. He wanted it back though. What’s with that? I caught it so it should be mine. That big old bird tried to get away so I had to give it a good shake and Dad said, “No, No, Mariah. Bring me the bird”. Geez, it was trying to get away, I had to shake it just a little. But Dad made me give it to him.

I guess maybe that’s OK though, cuz after I gave him the bird; we got to go hunting some more. I tried to give him that mouse I caught too, but he didn’t want it. He just said, “No, No Mariah, find the bird.” He sure has a thing about birds. Mom cooked some of those pheasants and she gave me a little piece. Tastes like chicken.

You know, those pheasants are awfully big, but if you hold your head really, really high, you don’t trip over the wings as much. I’d like to go hunting again and catch more birds, so maybe you could convince Dad and Mom to go hunting on Christmas. After we open all your presents that is, then we could go hunting for more birds. I had lots of fun and I want to go again. Maybe you can go with us. Do you want to? Huh? You could even bring those reindeer, if you want. I’m not supposed to chase rabbits and deer, but do your reindeer like to play?

Santa, if you’ll bring me some toys and socks and bones and maybe a doggie door for Christmas, I’ll give you some cookies and milk, OK?

Uhhmmm, about those cookies...

Yours ever so sincerely,
Mariah Cheatum





SOUTHEAST IDAHO MULE DEER FOUNDATION

7th Annual Banquet and Auction

Saturday, January 21, 2006
Ramada Inn, Chubbuck, Idaho

5:00 p.m.

No Host Social Hour / Silent Auction / Games

7:00 p.m. Dinner

featuring Baron of Beef, Sweet and Sour Chicken and all the trimmings!

7:30 Live Auction / Raffles

Tickets may be purchased from

Aikin's Sport Shop 208-233-3837

or

Terry Taysom 208-241-3337 208-233-3059

\$25 per person

REMINISCING—RICK CHEATUM

As I write this, there are only a few days left in 2005. Another year is nearly done. For most of us, the past year brought seasons for turkeys and deer, elk and pheasants, ducks and geese, grouse and partridge and doves. Anytime I let the cold and snow, which I hate very much, get the best of me, I just have to think of the incredible bounty of game we enjoy in Idaho.

I was born in Kansas and left there in the late 70's to move to Idaho. I killed my first pheasant with a 410 bolt-action shotgun my first season in the early 60's. I am still proud of that shot. A hen, they were legal that year, flew behind the line of hunters and I spun around at the sound of her flying and hit her with the first shot at about 30 yards. She lay dead where she fell when I ran through the weeds as high as I was tall, to find her.

In the early 60's in southwest Kansas, before the days of 4WD John Deere tractors, the low spots in the fields were often too wet in the spring to be plowed and planted, so they weren't farmed. That left weedy patches, sometimes large ones, in many of the fields. This particular field was a quarter-section with an abandoned house in one corner and this roughly 10-acre patch of weeds in the middle with a couple of old dead cottonwood snags in the very center.

Every year, several families would meet there about 10AM, after every one had hunted their 'secret' spots, to hunt this patch. 10 to 20 hunters would line up across the south end and begin the slow march to the north, flushing a few birds, but pushing most of them to the north edge, where blockers waited to hold them until the drivers arrived. This year, one hen took off after we had only walked 30 or 40 yards into the patch and I nailed her. I don't remember the rest of the hunt, or even the rest of that season, but that hen and the shot that brought her down will be etched in my memory forever.

Pheasants were the primary edible game we had in western Kansas. We started the shotgun season in September with doves, took a long break until pheasants opened in mid-November, and occasionally had a duck or two wander into a local pond or pothole. I remember hunting quail once with my brother, and we made a great day of it, chasing them back and forth along an irrigation canal, until we had killed

nearly every bird in the flock. We had a small herd of deer along the Arkansas River, but they were so few in those days that hunting was not permitted.

Most of our hunting time was spent chasing prairie dogs, which over-ran nearly every pasture in those days. When I was about 14, my paternal grandfather made my younger brother, Jamie, and me a deal to encourage us to shoot more prairie dogs. His eyesight was failing and he couldn't see open sights well, so he bought a Winchester Model 190 semi-automatic .22 with a four-power scope and told us that we needed to learn to shoot a scope. To keep us in shells, he paid us 25 cents for every prairie dog tail we turned in to him. In those days, we could buy a box of Western Auto or Gambles brand .22s for about 50 cents. That meant we had to be very careful in shooting prairie dogs so they died before they could crawl back into their holes and we could retrieve them to harvest the tails. At two tails per box of shells, we could keep shooting forever.

Grandpa was a cattleman and the more prairie dogs we shot, the more grass there was for the cattle he brought up out of Arkansas and Texas each year. We only had about a hundred acres of pasture at our farm, but he had another piece of land ten miles away that had over a thousand acres of grassland and most of it was covered with prairie dog holes. Rattlesnakes love to make the holes their homes, so if we had fewer prairie dogs, we would have fewer holes, less rattlesnakes and more grass.

We kept the Winchester at our house on the farm, because Grandpa lived in town. Beginning in April, when the prairie dogs began to come out of their holes in the afternoons, I would grab the gun and a box of shells as soon as school was out and spend the rest of the afternoon driving an old '57 Chevy truck around in the pasture looking for a careless dog. Most of the time they would dive back in their holes when they saw us drive by, but if we shut the truck off and waited, they would usually peek out and look around.

If you have hunted prairie dogs, you know they don't make a huge target when you have the entire body out of the hole. But, when you have only a head to shoot at, the target is tiny. Many afternoons, I would get only one shot at one dog after a couple

of hours of waiting/hunting. We still have that old Winchester, hanging on a gun rack in the farm office, and it still has that same old scope. I would hate to try to count all the shells it has fired over the past forty years, but I know few guns I have shot over the years taught me as much about hunting and shooting as it has.

Today, I have a gun safe full of shotguns and rifles and handguns and I enjoy them in one of the greatest places a hunter could want to live. The hunting may not be as good as some remember, but it is still some of the best in the country. There isn't a month of the

year we can't hunt something, big or small. If we are lucky, we have a special tag to fill, but if we're not, we can still hunt the open hunts. Archery opens in August and waterfowl closes in January, just in time to let us chase coyotes and rabbits until spring when the ground squirrels and rock chucks are out and it all starts again.

Now, if we could just move the whole state to a slightly warmer place so I would never have to drive on ice and snow again, it would really be paradise!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued from page 2

'sampling' means killing the deer.

Now, we are facing the possibility of Chronic Wasting Disease in the deer herd. Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Utah have all had deer diagnosed with CWD, so it is coming at us from three sides. This season, Colorado even had a moose that tested positive for CWD. It is moving our way with the natural migration of the animals carrying the disease, and it seems inevitable that eventually we will have the disease here in Idaho. Hunters transporting animals from CWD designated areas also increase the threat of infecting our local herds. If you want more information on CWD, look at this website: <http://www.cwd-info.org/index.php> Two years ago, we held a seminar on CWD that featured a speaker from the CWD Alliance and Dr. Phil Maimer, IDFG veterinarian. I thought it was an excellent seminar, but attendance was very low.

Buy Local

As I was writing this, I received a phone call from a charter member asking if I would include a comment on supporting our local businesses. Every year, as we solicit donations for the banquet, we get great support from most of the local sporting goods stores and other local businesses. We don't receive support from the mail order firms. So, the next time you are ready to buy decoys, or a bow, gun, or new coat, take the time to see if you can buy from a local merchant. Yes, it is a little harder than setting down at your computer and ordering something on line. However, you'll have a chance to handle the item before you spend that hard-earned money and you'll know if it is going to fit. You might spend a buck or two more, but consider the freight you'll pay on that mail-order item or the gas and time you'll

spend traveling to save a few bucks. In addition, if you have a problem with your purchase, the local merchant is right here to stand behind your purchase.

When you attend our banquet, make a note of the donations and you will see who the friends of wildlife really are in Southeast Idaho.

Website

For the past year and a half, we have been without a webmaster. The Board voted to hire Rave Communications to build a new website that will be easier for us to maintain. The web address will remain the same at www.semuley.com, but the content of the site and its ability to communicate with you will increase. Rave has promised they will have most of the site completed so I can show it to you at the banquet. We need wildlife and landscape photographs to publish to the web, so if you have any photos we can use, send them to me at cheatum1@gmail.com.

Banquet

I can't finish this column without taking a moment to encourage everyone to attend the 2006 banquet. In an effort to grow our membership, the Board voted to require at least one membership in every family attending. We need your support to make the banquet successful and raise enough money to continue our efforts. Tickets are available at Lee Aikins Sport Shop or from any Board member. Get your tickets early, because seating is limited. If you would like to help with the banquet in any way, please contact me. See you January 21st at the Ramada Inn in Chubbuck.

CAMPFIRES & KETTLES

I hope everyone has enjoyed his or her 2005 hunting season to this point. For some of you it resulted in backstraps fried in bacon grease; for others it ended with burnt paper and plastic in the fireplace. However, we all have moments that we can reflect on for many years to come.

Over the years, I have been blessed with many great hunting partners. This year, as for the past 6 or 7 years I have had the privilege of hunting with Moses a.k.a. Mayo Haskett to which we added two new faces to our whitetail hunt on the Lemhi, Roger Sievers and Colton Aikin. Mayo and I put the cherries through the paces and after considerable effort on their part, they passed the many tests laid before them. They ate enough of Mayo's' excellent cookies to put needed pounds on Roger and unwanted pounds on Colton. Then there were the Ritz crackers topped with wild game salami and the infamous easy cheese. Mayo thought we might have to render first aid to both cherries for stress fractures of their index fingers. Being real troopers, they refused the aid and continued to assault the easy cheese.

Just some of the many snippets of this hunting season I will carry with me for as long as my sixties mind will allow.

Now for a recipe Roger told me about while sitting around the fire one night on the Lemhi or more accurately the fire pit at the Sun Rise Motel in Salmon.

- 1- 14" Dutch oven
- 5 lbs- potatoes cut in 1" cubes
- 1 lbs- bacon cut in 1" chunks
- 2- large onions coarsely chopped
- 1- 64-oz. tub of large curd cottage cheese.
- 2 lbs- Tillamook vintage white sharp cheddar cheese, grated
- salt and pepper to taste

Place the bacon in the Dutch oven and brown. Then add alternating layers of potatoes, onions and cottage cheese ending with onions on top.

Do 18 to 20 charcoals on top and 12 to 16 on the bottom, depending on the outside temperature. The potatoes should be done in about an hour.



After an hour, take the heat off the lid, add the cheese to the top, and put the lid on for 10 minutes or until the cheese is melted.

As soon as it gets warmer, I'm going to give this one a try!!!!

Mayo thought I should share a small meal we had on our hunt. There is nothing to this recipe other than buying the stuff. However, the ingredients are exact. Any deviation to the ingredients will spell failure.

Colianni mild or hot Italian sausage from Nel's on 15th, the amount determined by the number of people you are feeding. You will be making patties the size of hamburger patties only half as thick.

1 -can Chef Boy-R-D pizza sauce

1 -package Kraft Swiss cheese. Not the one with holes.

Good hard rolls from you favorite store

A diamond grate, not a griddle, with holes small enough to cook the sausage without falling through.

Press an appropriate number of patties. Build the fire and let it burn down to a good bed of coals. Place the grate over the fire about 10" or so above the coals.

Cut the top off the can of sauce and place it on the grate to heat, and then slice the hard rolls. Put the patties on to cook. After turning, place the Swiss cheese on the patty and start browning the cut side of the rolls over the fire. When you smell them starting to burn, pull them off the fire and apply sauce to both sides. When the cheese melts, lay the patty on a roll and enjoy.

A couple of parting thoughts. Please say a prayer for our men and women in uniform and enjoy your families, as they are the only thing of real value you have!

Also, remember that any of these recipes can be cooked at home on the stove or in the oven.



Application for Membership

SOUTHEAST IDAHO MULE DEER FOUNDATION

P.O. 2724, POCA TELLO, IDAHO 83206

TELEPHONE (208) 237-9045 or (208) 233-3059

E-MAIL cheatum1@gmail.com

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Date _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-Mail _____@_____

MEMBERSHIP TYPE

LIFETIME \$750.00

ANNUAL \$25.00

CORPORATE \$1,000.0

Remit form with total payment to address above.

PURPOSES and OBJECTIVES of SEIMDF

The purposes and objectives of the Southeastern Idaho Mule Deer Foundation are:

1. To promote and enhance increasing populations of mule deer in Southeast Idaho by promoting and cooperating in any items of business that are beneficial to or concern mule deer.
2. To promote the professional management of Southeast Idaho Mule Deer in order to augment the number and size of game herds, such professional management to include the use of regulated hunting as a legitimate tool of conservation and game management; and to achieve optimum populations of mule deer wherever possible throughout Southeast Idaho, and to safeguard against the decline of mule deer populations.
3. To promote biologically supported management of all species indigenous to Southeast Idaho and to ensure that no species is managed to the detriment of any other species.
4. To protect, defend and preserve the lawful right and privilege of recreational hunting through education of the general public as to the conservation benefits of lawful hunting, and to vigorously respond in a positive manner to those anti-hunting individuals and groups who strive, either legally or unlawfully, to prohibit this legitimate recreation.
5. To encourage all men and women hunters to be responsible conservationists who harvest animals humanely and utilize their meat without waste, while hunting under conditions of fair share and good sportsmanship.
6. To advocate the funding of both federal and state fish and wildlife departments and agencies through the purchase of hunting licenses, federal and state game stamps, and the payment of excise taxes on firearms and other sporting equipment, the combination of which continues to provide funds for fish and wildlife management.
7. To advocate the legal use of all methods of travel on public lands and to support enforcement of travel laws and regulations.



P.O. 2724
POCATELLO, IDAHO 83206

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Troy Eastvold with his mule deer taken during the traditional muzzleloader hunt near Salmon.