



THE CHRISTIAN Outdoor Fellowship of America COFA

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COFA Newsletter

Greetings Friends



By: Michael Brooks

I received a call from a good friend of mine from North Carolina a few days ago. He was wanting to know how to start a COFA group and a game dinner with seminars in his state. This is a big task and undertaking, one I know he has the capability of

doing. We get calls like this all the time and believe me, it's exciting to hear how God has put COFA on people's hearts. The one thing my friend said to me that was very refreshing was this, "Mike, I am the behind-the-scenes kind of man. I have a temper and do not want my friends see me leading this sportsman's seminar and dinner." I like his integrity and honesty! This is my kind of guy; a man who can admit his faults and be up front about them. Where do we fit into this process? Do our friends see us one way and we act differently around those at church, or in different situations? Can we be who we say we are all the time? I have seen good friends struggle with attitudes towards non believers, and let them know it. I figure that if we can be even tempered with everyone, then it will be so much easier to talk to people about the Lord. What changes do we all need to make so the world sees us as ambassadors for the Lord and not of the enemy?

I want to formally introduce you to Wilbur (Grizz) McCormick, the new COFA State Director for Ohio. Grizz brings a lot of talents and gifts to COFA. Having known him for over three years, I can say that he is a great fit with COFA's ministry. His love for the Lord is very evident when you sit down with him and have a cup of coffee. He brings vision and passion to all outdoor enthusiasts he encounters. If you're from the great state of Ohio and are interested in getting a COFA group started in your church or community, give Grizz a call. I know he would love to hear from you. Grizz, welcome aboard!

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I want to encourage you to write our troops a note and let them know you're thinking about them and praying for them. I know that they would really appreciate hearing from you. Send them a note through COFA. We are getting several requests from troops wanting to receive the e-mag. If you have loved ones in Iraq, Kuwait or Afghanistan and you want them to receive COFA's e-mag, drop me a line and I will get them on the list to receive the e-mag. If you'd like a note included in the e-mag to our troops, please e-mail your notes to Cathy Channing at channing@gkbaum.com. We are proud of our troops, God bless you all!





So, You're Afraid of Mountain Lions, Huh!

By: Michael Brooks

Last year when elk hunting in Colorado, I had a great event happen to me, but before I tell you about this event, let's backtrack here. My elk hunting spot is a good climb; its elevation is 9,800 feet. I figure that it's a good 400-yard climb, all uphill from where I park my ATV. It's a great spot—lots of aspen on the hill I overlook, and on the other side of the drainage ditch it's just about all fir trees. I sit where the drainage ditch starts and I have taken a lot of elk off this spot, crossing from the aspens to the fir trees.

I have a lot of gear to carry up to this hunting spot, and I always take my stuff up the day before the season begins. I carry my rifle, my web gear with fanny pack loaded with all kind of necessary hunting gear, canteens of water, a big black bag with coveralls, hunting coat, and this past year a pop-up blind—easily 75 pounds of gear to carry. When I hunt this area, I plan to stay all day so I want all the comforts of home. I have seen plenty of elk pass through my area when most hunters are back at camp having a late breakfast or lunch. I have shot many animals during these times, so if someone hunts with me they should plan to be out all day. If a snowstorm comes in or rainy weather hits, I am safe and dry as can be in a pop-up blind. In the good old days you would sit in the rain and snow and wonder why you were doing such a thing. I'm sure all of you have thought that one time or another. I remember one year where I had a military poncho cover myself and my gear, as I sat overlooking a nice aspen valley. The rain was steady all day, yet I couldn't really move very much because if I did, my gear would get soaked. I had my rifle in my lap with the poncho covering it. As I leaned against a downed aspen tree, I would love to been in a blind where I could keep dry and still move about without being detected. That's why I got the pop-up blind last year. I was ready for any kind of weather, be it rain or snow.

Another nice thing about a pop-up blind is you can use your elk calls and have your rifle ready without ever being detected. I like to move when cow calling for bulls, cupping my hands over the cow

calls and moving my head to the left or right giving the impression that I am a moving cow. This is a trick that works really well.

It's Saturday morning. Joe and I take the long ATV ride from base camp. We drive through swollen creeks, steep inclines, over gravel trails and some scary curves. As we pull up to the base of a valley where we will hike up, I look up and realize it's a heck of a climb to my stand in the dark; you have to take the steep angle up. The downed trees, the ankle deep wet aspen leaves, and the small branches that cover the forest floor are hazards like no other. I usually fall a few times climbing up hill each hunting season. I have broken some branches that made a lot of noise and wonder what the elk in the area are thinking. I finally reached my stand with one of our cameramen. We stopped several times during the climb, both of us are gasping for air, sitting on the steep slope, bent over heaving for air. I am sweating profusely and can't wait to get to the top bench that I will be hunting from. It's only two hundred yards to go. I am now crawling on my hands and knees (this is the spot on the hill where everyone either thinks about it or actually do crawl on their hands and knees). We finally crest the top bench, fall down and lay on our backs gasping for air again. We sit there about 5 minutes breathing heavily, looking at the night sky.

As I am gasping and sitting against a tree, I am trying to release my extra LC belt around my waist. I roll over to where the pop-up blind is and unzip my gun case. I take my 338 Browning and lean it against the wall in the pop-up blind. I then zip open my scent bag, and get out the cow in heat scent that I will use to place on the wafer plates. As I sit against the tree, I hold the wafers up and spray them with elk urine. I slowly get up and walk to key areas (like trees) that I will place these wafers in. You have to be extremely quiet when walking the upper bench, as this area is a hot spot for elk early in the morning. This bench is about 5 yards wide in spots and 125 yards long; it had firs and aspens on top, and very steep on the backside with all black timber behind where I sit.

I have now placed the scent wafers where I think they will do the best job. My cameraman is in the pop-up blind getting the camera ready with





batteries and loading DVD tapes, and he can move about with the camcorder without any worry about being seen. I am loading my rifle, and it's about 6:30 in the morning and not a cloud in the sky, but it's still too dark to shoot. I whisper to Joe, "Hey, make sure that you have all your food out of your pack and your beverages ready as well, and if you have cookies or candy in wrappers take them out so you don't make any wrapper noises when you open them, OK?" He said, "Fine." and did what I asked him to do, so we were all set to go.

I waited until I thought it was legal shooting light, which was around 6:45. I then tried using my cow call. I did a soft lost cow call several times and then I threw some calf calls in for effect. I waited about 5 minutes and did the calling sequence again. As I looked at Joe, he smiled and I waited 10 more minutes and tried again. This time I hear a loud roar and instantly Joe leans to the open window and whispers, "What's that?" I was so excited! I said that we are calling in a mountain lion and a big one too! Now keep in mind that Joe is in the pop-up blind and I am sitting outside and away from the big cat. I whisper back to him to keep the camera ready and let's see if we can call the cat in. Joe is very nervous now and I told him not to make any noise, keep quiet as possible, but get the video that we need. He didn't say a word, but shook his head yes. I was pumped; I wanted this cat on tape so bad.

I started calling with the calf call again with no response. I figured the cat was moving in for the kill. I waited several minutes and called again with the calf call. The silence could be cut with a knife. The sun was coming up, and the mountains that I faced were still dark on the western side. The birds were starting to chirp and the wind was quiet but pushing up the drainage ditch quietly, so I didn't worry about us being scented. Our scent was being carried over the top and the cat was coming from the fir trees.

I called again and instantly the cat responded loudly. He had to be only 20 yards away. Out of nowhere, Joe shouts in a loud voice, "WHAT WAS THAT?" My head spun around and looked at Joe, asking, "Why in the world did you scare the cat away?" "I was afraid, I was afraid!" he said twice. I reminded him that he was sitting in a pop-up

blind on a folding metal chair with pepper spray. I was the one exposed to a prowling cat. Needless to say, Joe no longer works for our show. When I first began using cow calls, I thought they would never work. Boy was I wrong! What did I learn from this experience? Do your own camera work.

How does God use nature to get our attention? What are your favorite hunting spots and why? Write a story about a great hunt, and send it to COFAUSA.org

Deer Scents—Do They Really Work?

By: Michael Brooks

I picked up the hunting magazine and browsed through it while waiting for my dentist appointment, when I came across an article that peaked my interest. "Using deer scents to attract big bucks" hmmm... So I started reading the article, and got half way through when I heard my name being called to see the doctor. As soon as I was done with the dentist, I headed to my local drug store and bought the magazine. I read the article with great interest, as the people that I hunted with never used deer scents. This was a relatively new concept in deer hunting at the time. I talked with some hunting friends and they never heard of using deer scent.

I decided that I was going to try using Tink's Doe In Heat #69. Some of the guys in my group thought I was nuts. I went to the camera store and asked for empty film canisters and then headed to Piggly Wiggly and purchased unscented cotton. When I got home, I soaked the empty film canisters in hot water for about 30 minutes. I air-dried them and put unscented cotton into canisters and placed them into a zip lock bag. This was a new way of hunting and I was going to be the first kid on the block to try using this method of filling my tag.

One important aspect of making any scent work for you is to make sure that you're as scent-free as possible. If your clothes stink with breakfast odors, bacon, tators, etc., you will not do well in the woods. Deer pick up smells that you can never imagine. When you pump gas while wearing your hunting boots, petroleum odors cling to the soles of





your boots; wear shoes that you will not hunt in. Make sure that your hunting clothes are kept away from household smells. Don't wash your hunting clothes in scented soap; make sure you wash them in unscented soap. Most sporting good stores carry unscented soap. When drying your hunting clothes, don't use your dryer, try to hang them outside. Most times people will use fabric softeners on their clothes. This smell will cling on your hunting clothes, and you will stink up your hunting area. I like to gather leaves or pine branches from the area I hunt, and once I get home and have washed and dried my clean hunting clothes, I will place the clean clothes in the bag with the leaves or pine branches. One of the biggest killers in all of hunting is not being scent-free.

As I walked to my deer hunting stand on opening morning of Wisconsin deer hunting, I took out the film canisters and filled them with about a tablespoon of Doe in Heat #69 urine. I walked to my stand, placing them about 30 yards apart until I reached my tree stand. I placed the last one under my tree stand. As dawn began to crest over the oak trees and ridge behind me, I waited in anticipation. I looked at my watch and it was 6:30. I heard a shot off in the distance. As I cradled my 44 mag Ruger rifle, my heart started pounding. I could see the film canisters that I placed in the distance. I notice some movement off to my right and my eyes began to water. I tried to see what was headed in my line of sight. Then suddenly there he was—a nice eight pointer, following the scent canisters right towards my tree stand. He had his nose to the ground walking quickly towards me. I raised my rifle slowly and waited for my shot. As the cross hairs centered on the shoulder, I pulled the trigger and my Wisconsin deer hunt was over.

Looking back, can I say that deer scents work? Absolutely! Here is my take on how to make deer scents work for you. First of all, there are several companies on the market that produce quality deer scents. Check them out and do your research on the internet. Not every product works, some are sold as the end all to deer scents. You want 100% pure whitetail female deer in heat estruses urine, secretions and hormone discharge; many are not natural and have alcohol as a base. So do your homework!

How to Use the Film Canisters

The canisters should be placed 3 feet off the ground and 30 yards apart until you reach your stand. This will increase your downwind coverage of the scent and improve your odds of pulling in bucks. Make sure that you have a line of sight with your film canisters (paint them 10 mile orange so you can see them better). Mature bucks will generally approach cautiously from downwind, checking the air for danger before moving in.

Remember that weather conditions will alter the way that deer scents work. A gentle breeze will carry the scent a great distance which is ideal for hunting. When the air is dead calm, you will have limited scent being spread. High winds make it almost impossible to use deer scents. When high humidity conditions mixed with drizzle are present this can enhance the use of deer scents. Deer smell much better in these conditions. Knowing how to hunt temperatures is an added benefit to using deer scent. Here in Colorado, knowing how to hunt the winds helps elk and muledeer hunters hunt early morning and late evenings. In the morning, warm currents rush up mountains and hills, while later in the afternoon the warm air goes down hill. So knowing how to hunt therms is important!

Keep in mind that not all deer scents work the same way or at the same time. You don't want to use doe in heat scents during the opening of bow season. When the bucks come into rut is when you should use Doe in Heat lure. In most of the country, the rut starts in late October and runs into November!

How often should you refresh your scent canisters? This is entirely up to you. I suggest at least once a day. I have had nice bucks come to my scent line throughout the day—it's just not an early dawn or dusk attractant. Bucks will move throughout the day, so be prepared to sit all day. When other hunters go back for breakfast or lunch, you sit tight. You never know what will come by. More often than not, other hunters will work the woods for you and push game your way.

My last thoughts on using scents are this. Do your research, read and check with companies that sell deer scents, ask questions on how they make their liquid gold. Do I think deer scents work? You bet I do. Try it, you will be glad you did!





An Olympic Gold Medal Winner!



By: Robert Jankowski

When my mother married my step father I was 10 years old. Up to that point I had been raised up by my grandparents who were wonderful Christian parent to me. My new father was in the Air Force and on the Air Force Marksmanship team. He traveled

all around the world shooting in National Rifle Association sanctioned matches. When he married my mom he was shooting big bore M1 carbines. Later, he switched to small bore 22 caliber. His rifles were all custom made, including his optics. Whenever he went to a match his personal gunsmiths were there to insure he was shooting the best equipment depending on certain weather conditions.

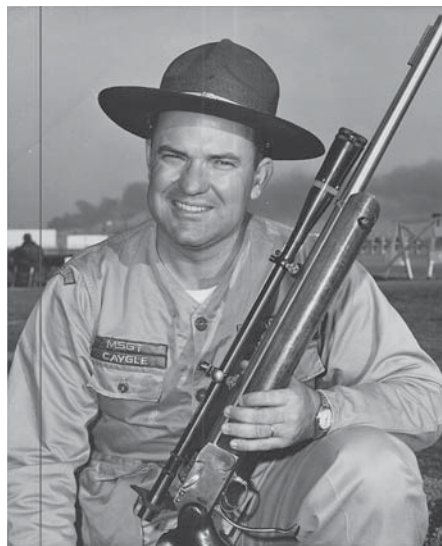
His success was incredible. It seemed he was winning every match he shot. I remember coming home from school seeing newspaper clippings on the kitchen table “Sgt. Caygle wins Zeppelin rifle matches” or “Lackland Sergeant wins Sawgrass”. He was on a roll in 1964 when he won the gold medal at the Pan American games in Brazil. I was so excited—my dad won an Olympic gold medal.

My dad tried to get me involved in this type of shooting but it was cumbersome and very demanding. After all, young boys were supposed to be fishing every chance they could get. I am sure it upset my dad that I didn’t want to follow in his foot steps, but it wasn’t like shooting at squirrels or rabbits; this was more like doing math in school, and I hated math.

My dad, Edward Caygle, was on top of the world. He broke and held many world records and associated with others at the top of their game. That same year he had a terrible accident while going to a rifle match. He hit another car head on doing 70 miles an hour. He did have on a lap

belt that saved his life, but his shooting days were over. He wasn’t able to stay in shooting position for extended periods of time. So he retired in 1966 from Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas and moved to the Dallas Ft. Worth area where he built and ran a public shooting range.

I had a new-found love. I fell in love with skeet. I started working for my dad as a trap boy—the ones that load the trap and skeet houses and works the device that sets the clay pigeons flying when the shooters yells, “Pull!” I loved skeet. I shot every chance I could and soon I became an instructor. I was breaking 25 straight with a 410. I entered all the events that came to our range, and won most of them. I had spoken often to my dad about me joining the Army. Now, this was the height of the Vietnam war. He told me he could make some calls and I could get into the Army marksmanship team shooting skeet. I declined and joined the Army and off I went. When I finished my tour of duty, I got married. My dad had long since sold the rifle range and worked as an engineer for various oil companies.



My dad and I developed a love for each other in early 1980. We had always gotten along, but I don’t think we loved each other like father and son. He bought some land out in the country and together we cut down trees, made a road and built a barn. He was going to build his house on a hill and I was going to build one closer to the main road.

When the bombshell hit, my mom called from the hospital saying dad was in the hospital. He told us the doctors had given him a month to live. He had inoperable lymphoma. I asked my dad that day if he

was ready to die. He answered, “I have made peace with my God.” That answer frightened me. My dad had never proposed to be a Christian. Earlier on when I came to live with him we went to church, but then quit going, and I never heard him speak of God or church again. I, on the other hand, got saved in Vietnam, and I was on fire for Jesus.





I would come to the hospital as often as I could. Each time I came I would bring him a Bible track and each time I came I brought a different one, hoping one would spark his interest. One month turned into two and two into three and so on. He kept fighting this disease, and I kept praying for his salvation. A year had almost passed and he told us he had made his mind up—he was going to get baptized and proclaim his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Two weeks before he died I carried my little frail step father into the baptismal and I heard my dad accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.

The day he died I was at the hospital with him. I had been rubbing his legs even though he had been in a coma for almost three days, but I could tell his legs were hurting. He would raise up his knees and moan. I noticed his breathing changing. The he spoke, he said, “I see them. They are on the other side, they are calling me home. The trees are so beautiful and the water is so beautiful.” Then he passed away. I knew my dad was home and free from the pain he had fought for almost a year. He was now blood bought and saved by the grace of Jesus.

This giant of a man who never quit or gave up, died the same way he lived. He again had won the gold.

Danielle’s Hunting Story

By: Danielle’s Dad (Dan Darnule)

My family and I moved from Florida to WV. Prior to having a family my wife and I both lived and grew up on Long Island. Neither of us had ever been around people who hunted nor had either of us held or shot a gun. Hunting was just something we had never thought about.

After moving to WV, my (at the time) 12 year old daughter Danielle got into playing several sports, including soccer. Over the next few years she made quite a few friends. In particular a girl named Jessie. During that same time period, through soccer, Jessie’s dad, Bud and I also became good friends.

One day, out of the blue, my 12 year old daughter asked me a question that to this day I can remember very vividly. She said “Hey dad, can I

go deer hunting with Jessie?” I think I may have just stared at her for a few seconds pondering exactly what was meant by that question, even though I had an idea what she was talking about. Because our families had become close I knew that my friend Bud and his daughter Jessie had been hunting together. We had heard stories from their hunts together, but I didn’t think much about it and never had I even considered doing it myself.

So, there I was with this question before me that my daughter had just let loose. Of course the words “no” came to mind right away but before I actually spoke I thought for a moment and said, “Well, I don’t know anything about guns or hunting but maybe we can learn together and then we will see what happens.” Since this question was posed to me in April, we had until October to see if it was something she really wanted to do, and also for me to consider if it was something I felt comfortable with both from a moral and safety standpoint.

The very next day I began doing research on hunting and firearms. I looked at many websites, picked up several magazines, and talked to quite a few people including my friend Bud. Bud, who has lived here in WV his whole life, had many years of experience with guns and hunting. Along with the research we attended a NWTF day and a National Hunting and Fishing day event here in WV. At both of those events there were instructors teaching young kids to shoot. Danielle was able to shoot a 22 rifle and a 38 pistol at both of those events. She very much enjoyed the 22 rifle.

After much research and asking a ton of questions we picked up a 22 rifle and I headed out to the range. I wanted to learn about the gun myself prior to introducing it to Danielle. Once, I became familiar with the operation and safety of the gun I took Danielle out to the range to learn. Over the next 2 months she put at least 2 boxes of 500 rounds through that gun. She became an excellent shot at 50 yards, rarely if ever missing the 2 inch circle.

Now it was time to choose a gun for deer. I had begun doing the research on deer rifles when I began looking at guns and hunting. Now I had to make a choice and choose a gun that would work for both of us. After much consideration I chose a Marlin model 336 in a 30-30 caliber. After a few months on the range with this gun both Danielle





and I were ready to give it a go on West Virginia's Youth Day deer hunt.

If you recall the original question my daughter had posed to me many months ago was if she could go deer hunting with her friend Jessie. Well, Danielle and I, along with Jessie and her dad, Bud, headed out to the woods on Youth Day 2004.

The morning was cold, about 15 to 20 degrees. We climbed a hill and sat on a ridge waiting to see what we hoped to be her first deer. Prior to the hunt I talked to Danielle about shooting the deer. Although she became a very good shot, and she knew exactly where to place the bullet, I said when the time comes for you to pull the trigger and you do not feel comfortable doing it for any reason, whether they be moral or nervousness, then don't do it. The worst thing that could happen is we walk away having spent months of quality time together learning how to shoot a gun properly and that would be a great experience in itself.

That morning we did not see any deer. We all headed back to town to get some lunch. Although Bud and Jessie could not go out with us that afternoon Danielle and I went to another location near the gun range where we had seen deer coming out into a field in the evenings when we were leaving the range.

We set up at the edge of the field about 3 PM. We had seen the deer the previous days moving into the fields closer to 5:30 so we knew we would have to wait. Around 5:15 Danielle says to me, "Dad, look at that dog over there looking at us at the edge of the woods." The other side of the woods was about 150 yards away and I could not see what she was talking about. I picked up my binoculars and saw that it was in fact a deer that was at the edge of the woods looking to come out into the field. I told Danielle that it was a deer and that she should get into shooting position and wait to see if it would come out.

The deer began to walk slowly into the field and was crossing us from right to left at 125 yards. I said to Danielle that she knew what she was doing and that when the deer presented a good shot to take it if she was comfortable. Danielle, who was originally in a prone position, slowly sat up and asked me to hold the shooting stick that she had

to help her steady the gun. I went to look at the stick and grab it but before I could, BOOM the gun went off. I looked at the deer who was running and then looked at Danielle and asked her if she had intentionally shot the gun or if it had gone off accidentally? She said that she shot it at the deer. I asked her if she had hit it and she said that the crosshairs were right behind the shoulder when she pulled the trigger.

My heart was pounding so hard that I thought it would jump out of my chest. I could barely stop shaking and I wasn't the one shooting. I kept looking at Danielle and she just had the biggest smile I ever saw. After the shot we saw the deer run back through the thicket where it had come into the field. There was a dirt access road then the woods after that. It was getting dark and we saw a truck stop on the access road moments after we saw the deer run in that direction. Our hope was that the driver of the truck saw the deer run into the woods to give us an idea where to pick up the trail.

We gathered up our belongings and headed out to start tracking. We got across the field and broke through the thicket. The deer lay on the other side in the middle of the access road. It had run about 35 yards and expired there. My heart continued to pound like crazy while Danielle continued to smile from ear to ear. The shot placement was perfect. Double lung broadside from 125 yards with a 30-30. Just like we had practiced.

Fortunately for us the deer expired within 20 yards of our truck. By the time we had cleaned the deer and headed out we had called everyone we could think of. Danielle wanted her first call to be to Bud and Jessie. Bud was so excited for her as was everyone we called.

Why did I get into hunting? Well it all started with a simple question from my daughter. The time we spent together learning how to shoot a gun and hunt was and is priceless to me. There were special bonds created then that will last forever. Danielle and I continue to hunt together. Sometimes we go out there and we see nothing. Sometimes she falls asleep in the blind and misses seeing the deer. I have realized that the killing of the deer, although exciting, is only a very small part of what hunting is about. We spent countless hours together, shooting, being in the woods, talking about deer,





the woods, hunting, etc., that might have been spent in separate rooms watching TV apart or something similar. Just one day of hunting may keep us together for 10 hours that day. Ask other dads if they spent 10 hours doing something with their daughter that day. What percentage do you think can answer that they spent that much time?

Lessons From Elk Camp—Part 1 “Catching Elk”



By: Dan DeWitt

Dan DeWitt is the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Caney, Kansas. He has been married to his wife, Linda, for 26 years. Dan and Linda have two sons, Luke and Levi, who still live at home. The whole family likes to hunt white tail deer – but Dan is the only one of the clan who has a passion for bow hunting. The family also loves to backpack in Colorado, and they lead an annual “Wilderness Camp” for youth from their church each summer. Although the bulk of his hunting is in the woods of Southeast Kansas, he has also made several elk hunting trips in Colorado. The following article is the first of several in which he is describing some of the lessons he has learned from “Elk Camp.”

To be perfectly honest, I don’t know that much about hunting elk. It’s not that I haven’t been elk hunting; I’ve gone out several years. And it’s not that I haven’t done my homework; I’ve read reams of articles about elk hunting and have talked to many different successful elk hunters. And it’s not that I’m a lousy big game hunter; I’ve had success hunting mule deer in Colorado and white tail deer in Kansas; I have even been successful hunting wild turkeys. I have been a successful hunter. It’s just that I am lousy at hunting elk. I try and I try, but I never seem to be quite able to get an elk.

The last time I came back from elk hunting, my seven year old son came up to me and said, “Daddy, daddy, did you catch an elk?” I must admit that I laughed when he asked that question.

It sounds kind of silly for a 180 pound man to think that he can “catch” an 800 pound elk. But I like the sound of “catching” an elk. But, no, I did not catch an elk. In fact, I have never caught an elk. My lack of success in catching elk has not, however, diminished my passion for elk hunting one bit. I absolutely love it. I love hiking in the mountains; breathing the crystal clear high-altitude air; taking in the beautiful sunrises and sunsets; watching the changing colors of the aspen leaves in the fall; seeing the first snow fall of the season; and being in the “back yard” of some of the most gorgeous creatures God has created. It is marvelous to just be able to get away from the office and the responsibilities for a while and to totally immerse myself in the freedom and beauty of the mountains and forests. I love it!

There is another reason I love elk hunting, and it goes hand-in-hand with the fact that I’m lousy at hunting elk: When I am out in the mountains taking my bow and arrows for a walk, I have lots of time to think, reflect, pray and listen to God. I suppose if I had ever caught an elk while hunting, my mind would have been so distracted with the task of getting an 800 pound animal off the mountain that I wouldn’t spend much time thinking about God. But since I am a lousy elk hunter, God has plenty of time to speak to my mind and heart when I am out enjoying His marvelous creation. It could be that God has intentionally thwarted my elk hunts just so I would be able to listen to what He has to say to me. Whether that is true or not, my failures as an elk hunter have certainly increased my ability to listen to God’s voice while away from the pressures of home and work.

Jesus loved to teach great spiritual lessons by using common, everyday earthy stories. We call these stories parables. It seems Jesus never taught any lessons without taking principles from everyday life and drawing some powerful spiritual lessons from them. Several of Jesus’ disciples made their living by catching fish – so he used a lot of fishing analogies to make his points. At one point, He told His disciples that if they would follow Him, He would make them fishers of men. I don’t know if, at the time, the disciples fully understood the meaning of this promise. If I understand His promise correctly, Jesus means that His followers will begin the process of learning





a much more meaningful use of their time and efforts than merely catching fish. Instead, they would begin to learn the process of catching people who desperately need to receive the love and grace of God and to bring these individuals to experience the saving power of Jesus.

When I go elk hunting, my goal is not unlike the goal of the fishing disciples. They wanted to catch some fish, I want to catch an elk. A few years ago, I began to get very frustrated with my lack of elk-catching success. I had seen some elk on a hillside a couple of miles away, and a friend had seen an elk at a few hundred yards away, but I had not seen a single elk that was anywhere near close enough to catch. After getting more than a little discouraged with my elk-catching failure, I decided it was time to ask God for divine intervention in helping to catch an elk. It only made sense, I told myself. After all, the Scriptures tell us God is concerned about the everyday, mundane events of our lives. God has repeatedly told His servants that He delights in blessing His children. Not only does God promise to bless us, but he promises to bless us exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or imagine. Now, I've got a great imagination! I could imagine me taking home a huge freezer full of elk steaks! So, I decided to ask God for some help in my elk hunt. I began to earnestly pray that God would help me be a better hunter; that God would send some elk my way; that God would supernaturally intervene so that I could fulfill my dream of being a better elk hunter.

That's when it happened. No, I didn't catch an elk. I didn't even see one. But God did intervene in a special way – He intervened in my stupidity. He broke through my thick-headed ways and got my attention. God spoke to me. I did not hear any kind of audible voice with my ears. Instead, He spoke to my heart with that still small voice that I have come to recognize as His. God told me that He really wasn't that concerned about whether I gained special expertise in the art of catching elk.

Rats!

God went on to tell me that, while He wasn't that concerned about me catching elk, He was very much concerned that I learn to catch something else. He wanted me to catch His heart and His passions. He wanted me to learn to be more

concerned about the things He was concerned about. And He showed me just how far away I was from catching His heart and His passions. While He was talking to me, He pointed out that I had spent countless hours honing my skills with the bow and arrow, but I didn't seem to have much time to let Him hone my ability to commune with Him. I was willing to spend lots of money on gear, permits, clothing, etc., to pursue elk, but how willing was I to invest in His desire to reach those who are lost and desperate to receive His love and grace? I was asking God to make me better at catching elk for my freezer when I should have been asking Him to make me better at "catching men" for His Kingdom.

To be honest, I felt totally ashamed. Here I was, a "great" spiritual leader who got up in front of a church every Sunday and acted as the mouth-piece of God. I was trying to teach my congregation how to become mature in their faith so that they could fully achieve the blessings God had for them; and all the while I was not even coming close to becoming spiritually mature myself! I was playing church with other Christians while lots of people in my community were experiencing slow spiritual death because of their separation from God. And I was more concerned about catching an elk than I was about catching the living souls of those for whom Jesus had died on the cross.

That day, God began giving me some lessons which are making a difference in my life and ministry. I have not fully integrated all of these lessons, but I keep on trying. I am still on the journey of catching God's Heart and His Passions. I still need to be reminded of the lessons God gave me while in elk camp. I still hope to catch an elk someday, but if I never do, I'll be happy if the lessons I learned from Elk Camp will help me to become more like Him.

"... so that we can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. And as the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him and reflect his glory even more." 2 Cor. 3:18 (NLT)





New COFA Staff Member



Bob Luce

Bob's love for the outdoors is very apparent when you sit down with him over a cup of coffee and talk. His love for the Creator and the wilderness go hand in hand. Bob grew up in a home where hunting and fishing was a way of life.

He has carried on that tradition with his love for hunting and fishing. When asked how important it is to share the gospel with outdoor enthusiasts, Bob responds with "it's the most important aspect of sharing my faith." What better backdrop do we as Christians have to talk about the Creator. Look at the forests, lakes and wildlife and tell me that there is no God!

COFA is a leader in getting the word out about the gospel in the great outdoors. We take hunters out and bring the gospel to them, they hear the testimony of a fellow hunter around a campfire, and the Holy Spirit takes over. Even the toughest of men seem to listen to the Holy Spirit. Bob brings a new dimension to COFA—his love of horses and seeing them used in hunt camps for packing out animals. His ability to get into the horse's mind is incredible. Bob was great to have in Elkcamp this past hunt, his campfire devotional about God and horses was really inspiring and touched a lot of hearts.

Bob and his wife Paula attend Elk Creek Community Church in Conifer, Colorado. Bob works for Concrete Express in Denver, Colorado. Bob trusted in Christ as an 8-year old at Valley Bible Christian in San Marcos, California. Bob's role in COFA is one of the National Hunt coordinators.

Favorite Verse: Psalm 104:24—How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Pesach: Passover 101 for Us Christians



By: Cathy Channing

And this day shall become a memorial for you, and you shall observe it as a festival for the Lord, for your generations, as an eternal decree shall you observe it. For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove the leaven from your homes ... you shall guard the unleavened bread, because on this very day I will take you out of the land of Egypt; you shall observe this day for your generations as an eternal decree. - Exodus 12:14-17

As Christians, do we really understand Passover? I would venture to say that most Christians think of Passover as primarily a Jewish holiday. However, if the whole Bible is meant for every believer, doesn't it make sense that ALL of its content (including the Jewish festivals and holidays outlined throughout the Old Testament) is for ALL believers? Perhaps we don't necessarily celebrate Passover as the devout Jew does, but we do need to be aware of the significance of this most holy holiday leading up to Easter and the true meaning of why it is celebrated. Passover ties directly into Resurrection Sunday/Easter as a symbol of the blood shed to save us – by the lamb on the door posts of the Israelites to prevent their first born children's death during the last curse prior to their exodus from Egypt; and by the blood shed by Christ Jesus to save a lost world. The following is an in-depth review of how the Jew celebrates Passover—something each and every Christian could learn much from.

Of all the Jewish holidays, Pesach (Passover) is the one most commonly observed, even by otherwise non-observant Jews. Pesach begins on the 15th day of the Jewish month of Nissan (at sundown on April 12th this year according to the Gregorian calendar). It is the first of the three major festivals with both historical and agricultural significance (the other two are Shavu'ot and Sukkot). Agriculturally, it represents the beginning of the harvest season in Israel, but little attention is





paid to this aspect of the holiday. The primary observances of Passover are related to the exodus from Egypt after generations of slavery. This story is told in Exodus, Ch. 1-15. Many of the Passover observances are instituted in Chs. 12-15. The name "Pesach" means to pass through, to pass over, to exempt or to spare. It refers to the fact that God "passed over" the houses of the Jews marked with the blood of the lamb when he was slaying the firstborn of Egypt. In English, the holiday is known as Passover. "Pesach" is also the name of the sacrificial offering (a lamb) that was made in the Temple on this holiday.

Pesach Laws and Customs

Probably the most significant observance related to Pesach involves the removal of chametz (leaven or yeast) from Jewish homes. This commemorates the fact that the Jews leaving Egypt were in a hurry, and did not have time to let their bread rise. It is also a symbolic way of removing the "puffiness" (arrogance, pride) from our souls.

Chametz includes anything made from the five major grains (wheat, rye, barley, oats and spelt) that has not been completely cooked within 18 minutes after coming into contact with water. Jews may not eat chametz during Pesach; they may not even own it or derive benefit from it. They may not even feed it to their pets or cattle. All chametz, including utensils used to cook chametz, must either be disposed of or sold to a non-Jew (they can be repurchased after the holiday). Pets' diets must be changed for the holiday, or the pets must be sold to a non-Jew (like the food and utensils, the pets can be repurchased after the holiday ends).

The process of cleaning the home of all chametz in preparation for Pesach is an enormous task. To do it right, you must prepare for several weeks and spend several days scrubbing everything down, covering all surfaces that come in contact with food with foil or shelf-liner, etc. After the cleaning is completed, the morning before the seder, a formal search of the house for chametz is undertaken, and any remaining chametz is burned. This is actually where the traditional "Spring Cleaning" originated that so many of us perform this time of year!

The grain product Jews eat during Pesach is called matzah. Matzah is unleavened bread, made simply from flour and water and cooked very quickly. This is the bread that the Jews made for their flight from Egypt.

The day before Pesach is the Fast of the Firstborn, a minor fast for all firstborn males, commemorating the fact that the firstborn Jewish males in Egypt were not killed during the final plague.

On the first night of Pesach (sundown on April 12th this year), observant Jews have a special family meal filled with ritual to remind them of the significance of the holiday. This meal is called a seder.

Pesach lasts for eight days. The first two and last two days of the holiday are days on which no work is permitted. Work is permitted on the intermediate days.

And if your son asks you in the future, saying, What are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, that the Lord our God commanded you? You will say to your son, We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. The Lord gave signs and wonders, great and harmful, against Egypt, against Pharaoh, and against all his household, before our eyes: And he brought us out of there to bring us in, to give us the land that he promised our fathers.
-Deuteronomy 6:20-23.

I realize this article will come out in the COFA newsletter after Passover, but still I wanted to pass along this food for thought throughout the year, not just during the Easter season. As believers, we should daily be aware and thankful for the awesome price that was paid for our souls.





Tips for Our Readers

Great Cooking Gear for the Field

Camp Chef began as an idea - a belief that good food doesn't have to be sacrificed when cooking outdoors. Outdoor enthusiasts demand high performance for optimum cooking speed with maximum versatility. For more than 15 years, Camp Chef products have outperformed other outdoor cooking products. Camp Chef industry-leading philosophy has helped develop the finest equipment on the market. They are committed to quality, performance, versatility and durability. Camp Chef patented systems allow you to mix and match cookware and accessories to create the perfect Modular Kitchen. So, whether you're planning on a trip to the beach, a hike in the mountains or just lounging on the patio -- Camp Chef has the power you need to prepare healthy meals FAST!

I have personally used Camp Chef; I was amazed by its ability to handle several types of cooking requirements during the elk hunt. It's a simplistic set up, but oh boy does it deliver when needed. The set up is very simple - we used the three burner stove and set up time was less than 5 minutes, including unpacking and setting up the propane tank.

When cooking for 25 people, burners are important, cook time is important. In all the camps we have offered, I have never heard one complaint about Camp Chef cooking stoves. While I have to admit there has been plenty about other cook stoves, this company delivers what they promised, a great product!

It's easy to clean and put away. We literally have had over a hundred different cooks on the three burner stove over a period of three years. I would say it's done its job, and without any problems. That is an amazing track record. Camp Chef offers several types of cooking stoves for each need in the field. I would check them out. Best cooking equipment in the outdoors!

Contact Camp Chef at: Camp Chef customer service is available from 8am to 5pm MST Monday - Friday Customers call 1.800.650.2433



What are Your Top 10 Items in Your Daypack?

We are looking for your top ten items that you carry in your day pack when you go outdoors. What are your must haves when you go fishing, hunting or hiking? COFA is looking for your ideas as we start writing articles for "Survival in the wilderness".

Is your top item water, or food? What is it that you will not leave home without? You may be surprised what some folks will leave at home, and what they will take. Tell us why you take the items and why.

Send your ideas to Mike Brooks at:
mbrooks33@aol.com





Cooking Classics

Roast Leg of Lamb with Rosemary

Submitted by: *Cathy Channing*

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons prepared Dijon-style mustard
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 pounds whole leg of lamb
- 1 teaspoon coarse sea salt

DIRECTIONS:

In a small bowl, combine the honey, mustard, rosemary, ground black pepper, lemon zest and garlic. Mix well and apply to the lamb. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator overnight.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C). Place lamb on a rack in a roasting pan and sprinkle with salt to taste.

Bake at 450 degrees F (230 degrees C) for 20 minutes, then reduce heat to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C) and roast for 55 to 60 more minutes for medium rare. The internal temperature should be at least 145 degrees F (63 degrees C) when taken with a meat thermometer. Let the roast rest for about 10 minutes before carving.

Ambrosia

Submitted by: *Cathy Channing*

- 1 20-oz. Can Pineapple Chunks, drained
- 1 20-oz. Can Mandarin Oranges, drained
- 3 Bananas, sliced (optional)
- 1 sm. Jar Maraschino Cherries, drained (optional)
- 2 Cups Miniature Marshmallows
- 1 Cup Shredded Coconut
- 2 Cups Sour Cream

Combine all ingredients and stir until well blended. Serve cold.

Asparagus Mornay Casserole

Submitted by: *Cathy Channing*

- 1 lb. Fresh Asparagus
- 1 Tbsp. Butter
- 1 Tbsp. Flour
- ½ tsp. Chicken-flavored Instant Bouillon
- Dash Nutmeg
- 1 Cup ½ & ½ or Milk
- ½ Cup Grated Swiss Cheese
- 2 Tbsp. Crushed Ritz Crackers

Cook asparagus in boiling water until crisp-tender, about 5 to 10 minutes; drain (do not overcook). Arrange cooked asparagus in 12x8" baking dish.

Melt butter in small saucepan. Stir in flour, bouillon and nutmeg; cook 1 minute until smooth and bubbly, stirring constantly. Gradually stir in ½ & ½ and cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; add cheese and stir until melted. Pour evenly over asparagus; sprinkle with cracker crumbs. Broil about 6 inches from heat for 3 to 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Serve immediately.





Calendar of Upcoming Events

Ohio Deer Hunt

April (exact date to be determined)

Limited to 8 hunters, this is COFA's second deer hunt in Ohio. This is a shotgun and handgun hunt. There is a \$125 non-refundable deposit required.

Wilbur (Grizz) McCormick—740.286.5522

leejoy@adelphia.net

Fishing at Arvada Reservoir

Sat., 4/29/06—7:00 AM

Meet in the parking lot at the entrance

Great place to catch walleye, trout, small mouth bass and musky's. This is a great lake to take children to, lots of trout for kids to catch. Bring beverages and snacks and enjoy a great time of fellowship and fun. There is an entrance fee per car.

Ron Burley—720.494.7675

rburleyfishdude@yahoo.com

Mike Brooks—303.456.0555

George Reinbold—303.880.3800

Fishing at Chatfield Reservoir

Sat., 5/27/06—7:00 AM

Meet- at north boat ramp in parking lot near restrooms.

Great walleye and small mouth bass in lake. There is a cost to get into state park. Bring beverage and snacks.

Ron Burley—720.494.7675

rburleyfishdude@yahoo.com

Mike Brooks—303.456.0555

George Reinbold—303.880.3800

Shooting (Bailey, CO)

Sat., 6/10/06—8:00 AM

Meet in Subway in Conifer, CO

This is a great time to shoot and enjoy pistol and rifle target shooting.

Mike Brooks—303.456.0555

mbrooks33@aol.com

George Reinbold—303.880.3800

ATVing, Dirt Bikes, Hiking & Photography

Sat., 6/24/06—8:00 AM

Meet at Ranger Station in Idaho Springs, CO

Take I-70 West to exit at Mt. Evans Ranger Station on right side of the road. Bring snacks, beverages, and camera. This is a great time to explore the trails.

Mike Brooks—303.456.0555

mbrooks33@aol.com

George Reinbold—303.880.3800

Women's Hike (Mt. Falcon in Morrison, CO)

Sun., 6/25/06—9:00 AM

From 285, take Parmalee Gulch Rd. (Indian Hills). Turn right on Pictis Rd., turn left to Comanche Rd. Stay to the left and follow Nambee Rd. to Mt. Falcon Rd. Parking at top (follow Mt. Falcon Trail signs).

Sandy Tippins—303.467.0289

Call Sandy for additional information or directions.

COFA Leadership Training Boot Camp of the Rockies

8660 Fairall Road, Morrison, Colorado

Date: June 3rd, 2006

Time: 8:00 AM-4:00 PM

303.456.0555

COFA is often asked, "How do you guys put these hunting and fishing camps on?" Believe me, over several years of learning from mistakes and good common sense, COFA does a good job at making its camps safe in operation and a place to learn about the Lord Jesus Christ.

If you're someone who wants to learn how to share your faith with people in your hunting or fishing camp or learn about the nuts and bolts that makes a safe and productive camp, this leadership training class is just for you. What makes a good clean camp? COFA will show you with hands on, all day classes. Topics covered in this seminar are listed on Page 1 in Mike's "Greetings Friends" section.

This training will be open to the public, there will be a \$75 fee for non-COFA staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mike Brooks at 303.456.0555.





COFA's Elk hunting Camps, hunts of a lifetime! 2006



Dates for rifle hunt:
Oct 19-25 Colorado
Nov 2-7 Colorado

Dates for Archery
"watch for dates to
be posted in March.



This years COFA elk hunting camps, will be bigger, better and we will have more camps to offer. We are in the process of putting together bow hunting camps. We are excited to add additional volunteers to help run these camps. Here is the hunting information.

When: October 19-25 2006, this includes camp set up on Thursday and scouting on Friday and hunting beginning on Saturday 21st, Second camp will be November 2nd-7th 2006.

Where: Uncompahgre National forest unit #65

Cost: There is a \$150 dollar non-refundable donation fee to hold your place in camp. We are limited to 15 per camp, so sign up early. Elk hunting tags can be checked on the DOW-Division Of Wildlife website at <http://wildlife.state.co.us/> for prices on elk tags, you can buy bull tags over the counter, but you must do this before the season begins. We highly recommend that you try to purchase cow tags, lots of cows in area!

Tents and eating arrangements: You will be assigned to a group of people who are responsible for taking turns cooking evening meals during the week. That group will plan and cook meals for the entire group. You will only have to cook one evening meal. Your group will provide everything from main course, breads, desserts, and beverages. Each person is responsible for their own breakfast and lunch. Tents will be provided and they are large, warm and have plenty of room to walk around in. No pup tents in this camp!

Gear and such: You will need your hunter safety card, no exceptions for lost cards. As far as tent gear, a sleeping cot, with a foam pad under your sleeping bag, two extra blankets. A pillow, a carpet square to go under your cot. Hunting gear and rifle recommendations, call Mike Brooks at 303.456.0555 for COFA suggestions. ATV's need a current state sticker.

Spiritual context: We encourage Christians to bring non-believing friends or family members to this camp. We will share the gospel around the campfire in a clear and concise manner, from a fellow hunter or peer. This is an incredible hunt, sign up soon, before the camps fill up. Call 303.456.0555 to reserve your spot! Or e-mail mike at mbrooks33@aol.com, see you in on the trail.

