

TEXAS SPORTSMAN'S NEWS

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The Newsletter of The Texas Sportsman's Association

"Dedicated to educating the public about the need for protection, conservation and improvement of fish, game and other wildlife, grasslands, and forests and to safeguard the freedoms that enable these pursuits."

A note from the President



Greetings Members:

Well, it has been a while since I have written this message and hope you all are doing well. My four-year term expired back in March and due to work schedule and hopes of being able to announce a new president, time has slipped by. Just letting you know that your last few issues were not lost. We have had one successful meeting with enough board members to be official on June 10 and we have the Fall Fundraiser set for Sept. 28, 2014 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. We will have the catered meal and ask members to bring a door prize and dessert as usual. We will have a silent auction as well, so please look around for something to add to that as well. The prize list for the raffle has been completed and the tickets were mailed out in August. Please contact our past sponsors and let us know of their support so that we may recognize them. We will be at the KC hall in Columbus again and hope to have all of you present as this is our only fundraiser for the year and thank you for your support.

It was a stormy day on Sunday, March 2, 2014 when we had our annual business meeting and stew lunch. We only had 35 members present, but those in attendance enjoyed a very informative presentation By Jim

Willis from the Wildlife Habitat Federation. The quail restoration project has gained some ground, but has a long uphill battle ahead. Interested landowners should contact Jim for more information.

A tasty stew lunch was prepared by RH, Buck, Louis and others and we thank you for your hard work. The 2014 Scholarships were named in honor of Charter member Otto Loessin. We only had one applicant this year. The scholarship will be

awarded to Victoria Maertz and we will congratulate her for her hard work at the September gathering. We sold 46 cards for 10 dollars each and the lucky draw went to Louis Sodolak, winning the Ruger American rifle in the caliber of his choice. Delton Wunderlich won the Savage 110 17HMR rifle in the coyote drawing and we congratulate him on the numbers he harvested.

As mentioned earlier, the presi-

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LAVACA COUNTY TURKEYS — After only 45 minutes of calling, Mike Slinkard (left) shot his gobbler at eight yards, and Brad Gohlke took his at 58 yards. The turkeys were taken April 24 of this year in Lavaca County.

TEXAS SPORTSMAN'S ASSOCIATION

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Visit TSA On Line!

The TSA web site is up and running, and members are encouraged to visit:

<http://www.texassportsmansassociation.org>

The website is maintained by
TSA Director Leslie Heinsohn.

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Ronnie the Rude Rhino

BY KENDAL HEMPHILL

I was unable to personally attend the Dallas Safari Club's annual convention in January, but I have it on good authority the event was a huge success. Besides the usual festivities, a special auction was held to help bring the black rhino back from the brink of extinction. You would think an animal as big as a rhinoceros would know better than to go around teetering on brinks, but there you go. One of the most endangered species on the planet, the black rhino has dwindled from a population of around 70,000 during the 1960s to about 4,000 at present, worldwide.

The auction was expected to bring up to a million simoleons, but the winning bid topped out at \$350,000. Not peanuts, but not the really big bucks, either. But then, there was a lot of negative publicity brought to bear on the DSC because of the item being auctioned – a Namibian black rhino hunt.

The animal rights crowd began making loud, whiny, protestor type noises as soon as they learned of the auction. The anti-hunters were incensed that DSC would propose killing a black rhino to save black rhinos. It makes perfect sense to me, but then, I'm a hunter.

Hunters, quite simply, pay the bill to care for wildlife. Animal rights organizations claim to care about animals, but spend next to nothing to actually help any of them. Without the revenue hunting provides for wildlife resource services, habitat management, and game law enforcement, far more animals would be on the verge of joining the Dodo. Altruism is fine and good in theory, but in practice people don't actually turn loose of large sectors of money to save a species they will never see in the wild. It just doesn't happen.

So, from that standpoint, auctioning off one black rhino to save the rest seems a little more acceptable to the reasonable non-hunter. Unfortunately we aren't dealing with reasonable non-hunters. Fortunately, there's yet more to the story.

About 1,800 of the world's approximately 4,000 black rhinos live in Namibia, the African country where the hunt is to take place. There are so few of them that wildlife managers keep tabs on them, and sometimes actually name individual rhinos. The hunt auctioned off by DSC was not a pass to shoot just any black rhino that happened along. It was a permit to kill a particular older bull, named Ronnie. Ronnie is past breeding age, and has become aggressive toward the other animals.

Dan Solomon never mentioned any of that in the October 30 column he wrote for *Texas Monthly* about the auction. Solomon blasted DSC, titling his piece "The Dallas Safari Club Is Trying To Preserve The Black Rhino By Killing A Black Rhino." That happens to be true, but of course it sounds bad when you say it like that. Which is what Solomon intended.

Of course, Solomon probably speaks for many who don't know the whole story. On the surface it sounds, at best, counterproductive to kill an animal to help save the species. Sometimes, however, that's what is necessary. Any biologist will tell you that individual animals often must be weeded out for the benefit of the rest. That seems to be the case with Ronnie the Rhino.

Ronnie has become a problem. According to DSC spokesman and former president Steve Wagner, if the hunt had not been donated to DSC by the Namibian government, and auctioned

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Looking Down From the Saddle

By HERMAN W. BRUNE

Seeing ghosts and finding hope

My horse's steps were steady and even. The animal carried me across ground that I'd traveled countless times. The coastal Bermuda bent and swayed in the breeze and the spring sunshine was a blessing from the endless damp gray of winter.

My search for a black steer had purpose. If the critter wandered too far from the home pasture it would wind up on the highway. Luck was all that prevented the wayward bovine from already being road kill. It had run through the fence the previous night during a buckout for high school wannabe rodeo stars, and was found standing at the STOP sign one mile down the paved farm-to-market road.

Phil and Chase, two of the perpetrators of the event, agreed that the old steer was sick and tired of being the main source of amusement for young wranglers with junior-sized bull ropes.

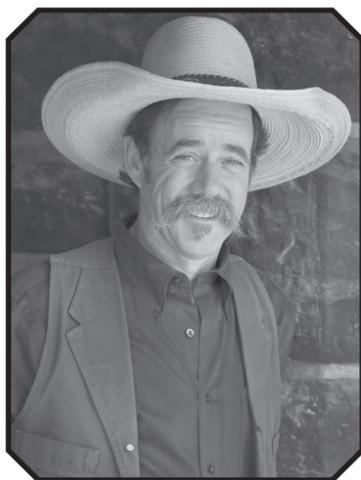
"Yeah, it was standing at the STOP sign looking both ways," said Chase. "It didn't know if it wanted to go north or south on Highway 71 but it sure was wanting to change country!"

At this juncture Phil and Chase persuaded the startup hobo to either detour, or put off its journeys and pushed it into the neighbor's pasture. The problem now was that the far end of the neighbor's pasture was opened into a pipe yard during the same time the Eagle Ford Shale lit up, and there was no fence along the highway. We were hoping it had gone through the first mot of yaupon brush and then hung close to its native territory.

In the light of a new day Phil and Chase rode south towards the Colorado River and I drifted east crossing several ridged-humps in the ground where old fences had once drawn boundaries. Pulling up under a giant live oak I stopped and watched 50 head of two-year-old Brahman bulls grazing through the fresh grass and play-fighting each other. Every Sunday local farmers and ranchers shop for new herd bulls. It was my job to promote the brand and quote prices. Then turning, the small tin house was off my left shoulder. It was plain, ugly, and suspicious in a high wind. But it seemed alive. My wife stood in the door and waved. She was beautiful and called out a ribald joke that was secret to only us, and I smiled, waved back, and couldn't wait to get home again. But that was 36 years ago.

My horse swung its head and carried me away at its own volition, and I was thankful. There were no errant cattle, or any cattle, to find on these premises. This was the ranch where my job was to cut, rake, bale, and haul all the hay. All the powwows that birthed ideas in the ramshackle house were dreams from a different era and lifetime.

Now, my search circled around the next hill and past the landowner's house. There was nothing left but a yard fence and bare dirt. The entire two-story brick house was gone as if it never existed. And I remembered drinking coffee in the kitchen and watching the matriarch prepare the fish she had caught for lunch. Every winter the old man asked me to run up the steep pitch of his roof and tie sacks over the whirly-gig



louvers that let heat dissipate from the attic. He would yell encouragement and warnings as I ran tip-toeing across the high ridged peak, and I'd laugh and pretend to lose my balance.

Those folks were characters. He started in business as a butcher in Houston. Then he owned grocery stores, became a partner in a Studebaker dealership, and ultimately a developer and home builder. One aspect of his life that impressed me was his volunteering into the Marines during World War II. He fought at Iwo Jima even though he was past 30 years old, had two grocery stores, the car dealership, and a family with two children.

His telling of the matter merely consisted of saying, "he was overwhelmed with the sense of duty to serve and protect his country."

Riding down the hill and across the creek I passed another old property boundary. This was the creek fence that I always fixed for the next neighbor, Harvey Lee. The two neighbors haggled over who was to keep up this stretch of wire. And since Mr. Harvey was my long-time idol and mentor, to alleviate arguments – I ignored orders and discussions and managed this section of the border myself.

Then as my pony trotted across cotton and corn fields that were plowed by men with mules – the cell phone in my pocket buzzed. I cursed and reentered the present. While I patrolled the hinterlands, Phil and Chase found the steer chewing his cud and enjoying freedom exactly where we'd hoped. Phil pitched a loop on it and made some mean promises before tying it to a tree. Then the boys rode off to fetch the truck and trailer.

My worry was that as the world changes, is the appreciation for quiet efficiency, duty, manners, loyalty, or common decency also gone? The electronic media age has delivered noisy rude interference to the places for silent meditation and reverent introspection.

Two days later the time was right to re-set shoes on my roping horse. The bone-head can be cantankerous but a tiny nine-year old girl perched on the hitch rail petting its head and whispering sweet words. Then as I hulled out the feet an 11-year old boy walked near and began querying me about my actions. The big horse shifted and I struggled. The boy watched my system for trimming and without command picked up my tools, stepped nearer, and handed over tools in the proper order as needed.

No cell phones buzzed, nobody texted, no trite conversing. It was just me, two kids, and a horse. Maybe there's hope for the world.

Join TSA today!

Not a member yet? Well, it's high time you joined. Fill out the membership application on page 4, send it in and get involved in Texas Sportsman's Association!

President's Message

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dent's as well as the secretary's terms have expired and we hope to fill them as soon as possible. We adjourned at approximately 2 p.m.

March 15, at the Colorado County WMA annual meeting, the winner of the TP&W Annual Check Station Lifetime Hunting license winner was drawn by Mark Lang and Brody Gall from Weimar won. He will be invited to the fundraiser for the award.

In May TP&W held a deer study group for two days that I attended and there were over 100 people there, along with many talented and respected wildlife authorities and biologists.

This was held at the KC Hall all day and into the night on Thursday and did necropsies on deer the next day on a ranch along the Colorado River. A whole lot of information was shared as well as some fine presentations.

We had a great turkey season and hatch and the fawn crop is good as well. The antlers should be very good this year as well as the number of mature bucks based on the harvest data presented at the deer study as well as my own observations in my area. We will have another bountiful acorn crop again in my area.

Please support our sponsors and I will get the newsletter back on schedule. In March I wanted to talk about teaching our youth the importance of appreciating the opportunity of being able to hunt in the outdoors and equally the importance of appreciating and respecting the game animal that is harvested.

See you September 28!

David Gohlke

Ronnie the Rude Rhino

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off for the good of the group, wildlife managers would likely have had to kill the rhino, anyway. The Convention on International Trade gives Namibia five black rhino permits a year, for the purpose of culling those that contribute the least, and pose the greatest threat, to the others.

No meat is wasted when any African big game animal is killed. It goes to feed the starving villagers in the area, and every part of the creature is used for whatever purposes apply. That will be the case with the black rhino, with the added benefit of \$350,000 to help the rest of the species. The auction is a win-win.

Still, Hanns-Louis Lamprecht, a safari operator in Namibia, was disappointed in the amount of money raised. "It annoys me to tears," Lamprecht told 'Dallas Morning News.' "A million dollars would have lasted years, years in the conservation efforts. The fact is it could have been more." Lamprecht referred to the anti-hunters who picketed the event, and were thought responsible for affecting the bidding.

If the antis had not gotten involved, Namibia might be taking a million bucks home to help the black rhinos, instead of only \$350,000. Most of the animal rights activists probably mean well, but they generally end up doing more harm than good.

The fellow who bought the rhino hunt, whose name I will not mention here, has

reportedly received death threats from some anti-hunter types. You know, the folks who hold life in such high regard they don't want any animals killed. Yeah, them. They're threatening to kill a man.

If I were the winning bidder I wouldn't be all that worried about that, since people opposed to hunting probably pose a minimal threat to life and limb.

Unless, of course, you happen to be a species of wildlife facing extinction. Nothing is more detrimental to wildlife than anti-hunters ...

Kendal Hemphill is an outdoor humor columnist and public speaker who likes to be referred to as "Bwana." Write to him at PO Box 1600, Mason, TX 76856 or jeep@verizon.net.

Make plans to attend the

Annual TSA FALL FUNDRAISER

SUNDAY, SEPT. 28, 2014

KC Hall - Columbus

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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