

*The
South Dakota*

January 2021



Bowhunter

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On the Front: Rob Knippling

On the Back: Dana Rogers



Editor's Note

Mike McKnight

Despite it all this has been a pretty good fall. My trip out west didn't end in a notched tag but I had some great times spotting and stalking mule deer. Saw some really good deer and got within fifty yards twice on a real nice buck but that's about twice as far as I am comfortable with my recurve. It was the same doe that busted me twice. Then on one of those days after spending over two hours on the stalk I nearly got run over by a big whitetail buck as I was enjoying a cup of coffee and resting next to a lone tree in a little gulley. Never saw him coming and he never saw me either until he was within ten feet or so. We were both quite surprised. I've done my best to wear out a pair of boots this year with the bow and shotgun. My dogs have done well and I've got no complaints. Of late have even managed to catch a few perch through the ice.

By the time you get this the legislature will be back in session or close to it. Keep an eye out for updates and a chance to respond. I'm told most of this session is going to be dealing with marijuana and it's regulation. I hear that Montana also legalized recreational use but saw fit to tie half of the revenue raised to wildlife and habitat - "weed for wildlife".

I can still use more materials for the newsletter. Is anyone interested in doing a regular column, maybe recipes or bow maintenance or tips? If so let me know.

Play hard and have fun!



Next deadline to submit articles or pictures is November 1

Email articles, photos, want ads, cartoons, and letters for newsletter submission to :
Mike McKnight
msmcknight2912@gmail.com



President's Notes

Jay Liebke

Well 2020 drew to a close. What a crazy year. It made me step back and look at the big picture and refocus on the important things. Also to look forward to what the new year has in store. Hopefully full of more time and memories made with family and friends. I know this last season was pretty special. I was fortunate enough to shoot a few deer. I was able to be standing next to a great friend as he shot his first spot and stalk archery deer. Then there was the first archery whitetail my oldest son was able to shoot just a few days before the season closed. Then there were some great waterfowl hunts with my boys, a few rifle hunts with good friends and helping out on a muzzleloader hunt with a great friend. Memories made, relationships strengthened. 2020 was a tough, crazy year in a lot of ways but also a good reminder of what's really important.

With that our 50th year anniversary banquet will be a great time to make some memories! We have some great seminars lined up and Mark Kayser as our keynote speaker! Should be a great time. We also have some great raffles and prizes lined up. Hope to see you all there!! Check out our website for more details on the banquet.





President's Notes (continued)

Jay Liebke





Vice-President's Voice

Wyatt Skelton

Well, if your reading this, Jumanji! You made it through 2020! Happy New Year all. It was a tough challenging season for me. Loss of family and friends from non -COVID ailments took my drive to push on way down. I did manage to take an antelope with bow and one with rifle. Hopefully 2021 will be a much better year for all of us with quality hunting opportunities and spirits renewed. If you were able to get out and tag some critters or get pictures and stories of hunting camp, sunrises and sunsets please share them with everyone. We call on you members to submit pics, stories, and content to keep this newsletter going! Gift card for newsletter submission entries at convention!

The 50th Anniversary Convention of SDBI in Rapid City Ramkota March 12-13 is approaching. Please tell friends and family to attend. Dana has lined up Mark Kayser as featured speaker. Friday evening social potluck and Saturday seminars and updates, silent and live auctions, and banquet meal. If you have some critters to show off well have a trophy wall to hang them on and likely folks who can score them for you if they have not been previously scored. We are working on donations yet and if you can craft things or talk to local businesses we welcome all sorts of donations. Thank you everyone who has obtained items.

Raffle tickets are also being sold for flagship bow or \$1000! Please check out the online SDBI store through Alpine graphics. Send in some pics of you sporting your swag! <https://alpineimpressions.net/product-category/south-dakota-bowhunters/>

Also, there are some 20 and 30 oz tumblers left for \$15.00 that can be purchased by contacting Dale Penning 605-360-8231.

As we start into 2021 may your luck be good, your happiness plentiful, your arrows true, and good memories bountiful.

Good shooting and God bless
Wyatt Skelton



Canis latrans (dog barker)

"Wile E." Coyote

Ronn McDaniel, O.D.

My father's first job with his wildlife degree was as a government trapper and we moved to Pierre shortly thereafter where he was in charge of all the area trappers. I remember the crazy stories and endless laughter while sitting around the campfires at the annual summer trapper meetings admiring these men, the guys that shot rifles as well as any sharpshooter, used shotguns out of airplanes and could outsmart even the wildest of these critters with a getter bait or the steel jaws of a Victor trap. From the grasslands and fields, the Missouri, Cheyenne, Moreau and Bad River breaks, Reservations, Badlands, Black Hills and north to the Buttes they had stories that kept me on the edge of my log. Most of the time I was the only kid there listening, but these guys were my heroes and I soaked it all in, hoping one day to be a predator of predators just like them.

South Dakota gives us an amazing opportunity to hunt and trap our state animal. I called in my first coyote when I was 14, shot him with my Remington model 700, .243 when he was still running at me, tongue hanging out at 15 feet. I still don't know where the call went but I'm sure I threw it in the "yote fever" when he came in running. Over the years I trapped, called and stalked coyotes and actually made some decent money while at it. I have tried and failed to connect with bow and arrow for over 40 years but this year it finally happened.

While hunting mule deer I popped out of a creek bottom and saw a coyote about 150 yards away sniffing and hunting the grass clumps. I snuck into a cattle trail that was in a low pocket and began to squeak the back of my hand with my lips. It didn't take long, it was a matter of seconds and I could see the top of the coyotes head running down straight towards me at 40 yds. I drew back my Mathews Switchback and took aim. At the very second I got the sight pins locked into my peep, the coyote hit the breaks at 23 steps and he was staring right at me. My 20 pin locked on his neck under the chin and in that split second I let the arrow fly. Well, there was no blood trail to follow and Mr. Wile E. didn't even twitch as the arrow was still stuck, fletch stopping the arrow from going out the back of his head...I let out shout, did a little happy dance and laughed for finally connecting on my first cagey Wile E. Canis latrans.

After shooting the coyote, I snuck over a couple hills and found a sleeping muley buck which was only shot with the camera. I'm hoping he'll live a couple more years!

See you all at the 50th Annual Convention!





South Dakota Bowhunters Banquet! March 12/13

Rapid City Ramkota
If you plan on attending please contact
Dana Rogers
with the number attending/meals needed

****If you have any donation items, mounts or gear to add to the swap table, don't forget those either****



Stickers

Blaine Brakke

“

My buddy Jon and I first started hunting this deer during the 2019 archery season. That year, it seems like I tried it all - there were many stalks, an ambush attempt, and at one point thought I could out walk him to the spot (you can see how well that worked out). I was really close a couple times but never had a shot and never drew my bow. However, I did start to become a little obsessed with him.

Towards the tail end of 2019 archery season, we weren't finding him. I ended up setting my sights on a big split main beam whitetail, which by all rights probably deserves it's own long winded story. I stalked that whitetail with my bow quite a few times, and ultimately dropped him on the opening morning of rifle season.

From there, I went out with my brother and his wife on separate occasions during rifle season, and helped them to a couple real nice deer. I never saw Stickers after archery season, and the waiting game would begin. Jon and I talked some about what he might be like in a year, and hoped he would make it through rifle season. It would be a lot to ask, but we were thinking his home was on our place, as long as the rut wouldn't take him too far.

For the rest of rifle season, I hawked every SD muley picture I saw, hoping it wasn't him. "What part of SD? Does he have a split brow? Any stickers?" I laid awake at night on several occasions, wondering where he might be and if he made it. He became the lock screen on my phone. No pictures came across the internet, and winter settled in.

When spring came along, I wanted to go look for his sheds - Jon had a good idea of where he was wintering. I never made it. I put up a trail cam at the head of the draw he was always in the fall before, and by the end of August, no pictures.

When archery season came along, was busy enough (with another hunt trip, of course) and life, that I only made a couple short trips to look for him. I thought I got a picture through my spotting scope one evening, but with the distance and all the clover, it was anybody's guess. I studied the picture pretty hard any way.

Fast forward to last Friday, Jon and I were talking about going up to have a look. He asked if I minded if he tagged along, which of course not. Jon and I always have great times, and if there was anyone to have on the end of glass, it would be him. Surprisingly enough, the only times I laid eyes on Stickers, Jon was in the passenger seat. So, on Friday I texted him back, "Not at all. We'll probably find him!"

We saw a few deer that morning, but nothing special. As we were pulling out of a pasture, I saw I had a text from my brother - the state trapper was up there, and had just seen a big deer up the same draw we'd seen Stickers in most of 2019. As you can imagine, we started to get a little excited.

We pulled up to the high gates, and started looking. Nothing. I called the state trapper, he said he was close and would swing by. While he was on the way over, a bachelor group came out of the draw. We put glass on him, and were trying to make out what he was. He was big, but a long way away. Jon studied for awhile as I talked to the trapper.

"It's him," Jon says. "It's Stickers". (Poking a little fun at me, from a video you'll see posted here.)

"Huh?"

"Yep. It's him."

Let the games begin.

We watched him go over a ridge, then drove to the other side to get another look. They bumped, and ran back over the ridge, in a little bit different direction. Jon dropped me off, and I started my walk up the ridge. We had a good idea where he was, I just need to see him first.



Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke

I poked around draws for awhile, and finally caught a piece of his antler, and got a good look where he was. As I started my walk around to get on the stalk, I knew I was going to get close. The wind was in my face, and he was laying in the bottom of a draw.

After I dropped my boots, I started the crawl. The clover was 3-4 foot high in spots, which helped tremendously. Next thing you know, I'm at 20 yards, and trying to figure out my next move. About the time I figured I was going to wait him out to stand up, the other buck he was with picked me off. I saw Stickers head swivel hard, and he started to stand. I drew. As soon as his front feet hit the ground, he trotted off. I let down, and he stopped. I grabbed a range at 60, as he stood broadside, straight into the wind. I took a deep breath to gather myself, and let it fly. It caught him just ahead of the flank, and my heart sank. He walked up another 40 yards, stopped, did the wobble, but kept walking. At this point I know he's hurt, just not sure how good.

He walked about couple hundred yards and stopped in the bottom of the same draw, this time in some tall grass. I was able to keep my eye on him until Jon got to me. We talked about how good the hit was, how hurt he was, and if I needed to get another one in him or wait him out. We decided that he'll probably die, but it could be awhile. So, I was going to get another one in him if I could.

Again, he was in a perfect spot into the wind and in the bottom. As I crawled down, I ran into a cattle trail through the tall clover, headed right to where I wanted to get to above him. I moved only when the wind blew. As I got to 50, I could see his head drop and snap back up and look around. When I got to 30, his head dropped and rose again. He was hurting. I took a quick look - he was standing quartering away. I went to a knee, drew, and drove one in just above his back quarter, down into his vitals. He went 50 yards, and tumbled into the bottom of the draw. Boom!

I found him in the bottom of a 4 foot deep cut, took a look and let quite a few good hollers go. I went back to my boots, found Jon, and we went down. Neither of us could believe how unreal the whole deal was. After hunting him hard in 2019, thinking about him all winter, spring, and summer, here he was. And he was a toad. We each took our turns looking him over, each thinking about all the time spent looking at him, hunting him, and talking about him. As I started gutting him, Jon said, "Brakke, I'm pretty sure this deer means about as much to me as it does to you." I chuckled, but what I really thought was "Hell yes. That's what this is all about." Moments like this are why we do what we do.

For those that stuck through this story, thanks for reading. He's a special deer, of which I'll probably never see the likes of again. As much fun as he was to hunt, it's just as much fun to relive the story. I wanted to tell a short story and get to the point, but, you know, that's not going to happen.

Big thanks to Jon for putting all that time in with me. There's nothing better than having a good buddy along on a hunt. And an extra set of good eyes! Awesome times.

Also thanks to Cody Palmer for coming over to help put a tape on him.

Not sure pictures do justice, but here you go!



Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke





Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke





Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke





Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke





Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke





Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke





Stickers (continued)

Blaine Brakke





Pictures from the Hunt





Pictures from the Hunt

(continued)





Pictures from the Hunt!





Pictures from the Hunt!





Pictures from the Hunt!





Pictures from the Hunt!





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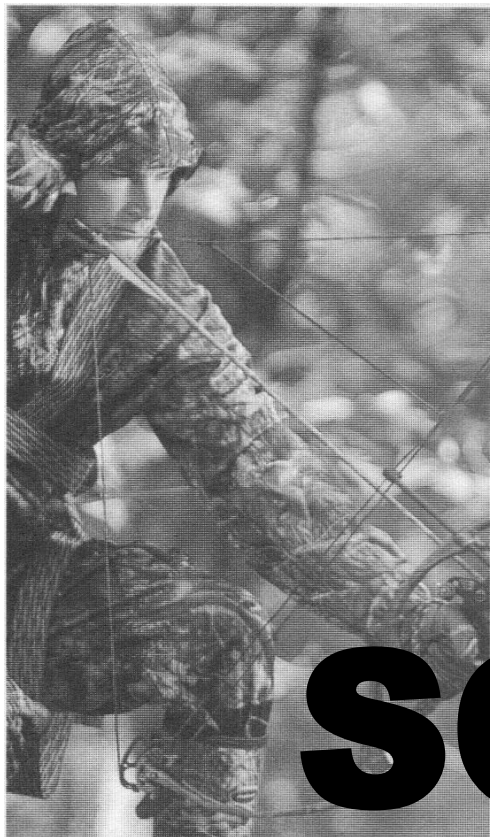
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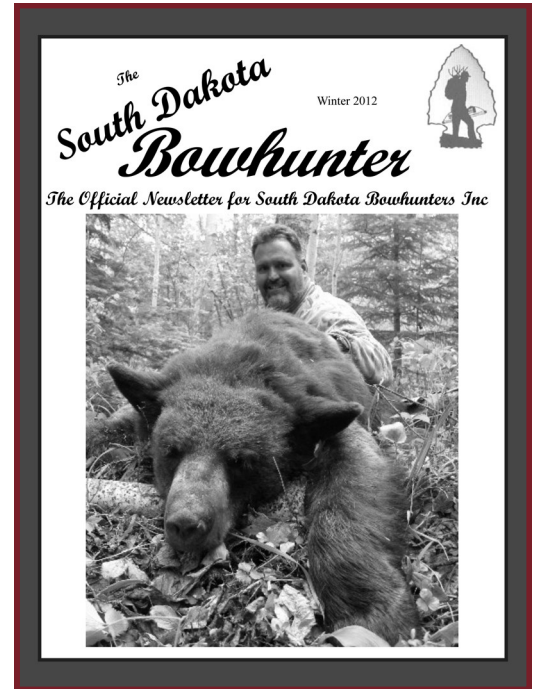
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