



# PRONGHORN

*Official Publication of the Arizona Antelope Foundation, Inc., a Non-Profit, Tax-Exempt Corporation ~ Volume 9, Number 3, Summer 2003*

**[www.azantelope.org](http://www.azantelope.org)**

If you haven't visited our website lately, you ought to check it out. In addition to sporting a new look, our site is expanding and updating continuously. Here is a sampling of what you will find:

▶ AAF Home	Our Home Page, the place to come for Newsflash Alerts and Website Updates.
▶ About Us	Who we are, our Mission, our History, and Where we meet.
▶ Goals	Our overall Objectives and What we are about.
▶ Results	Read about our Project Successes, Tag Fund and Other Activities.
▶ Events Calendar	Find out what's Coming Up next for us and other organizations.
▶ Trophy Gallery	See some Member Shots as well as the new Boone & Crockett World Record from AZ.
▶ Wildlife Links	Links to AZ Game & Fish, Wildlife, Media, Resources, Government, & others.
▶ Pronghorn Facts	Pronghorn Facts, Information, and Research
▶ Shoot Back At Us	Your chance to tell us what you think!



## **2003 HUNTER'S CLINICS**

Tucson Safari Club International - Tuesday, Aug. 12  
Phoenix, Fraternal Order of Police Lodge - Wednesday August 13  
Flagstaff, Elks Lodge - Thursday, August 14  
5:00 PM Registration



Antelope hunting can be immensely enjoyable if you know what you're doing, otherwise it can be immensely frustrating! This clinic will provide excellent up-to-date information about everything you need to know for a successful hunt. We'll cover the following subjects:

- Antelope Behavior
- Practical Optics
- Field Judging
- Practical Field Care
- Hunting Tactics for Firearms and Archery
- Question and Answer Session
- Discussions with Game & Fish Wildlife Managers for your Unit

You will also have an opportunity to meet the AAF Board. We will have a Trophy Buck Display, door prizes, and tickets will go on sale for our next Rifle Raffle. The Clinic is FREE to all AAF members, non-members will be charged a nominal fee which can be applied toward membership. Improve your chances for success and enjoyment on your 2003 Arizona Antelope Hunt by attending! For registration information, contact any of the Board members listed on page 2, or email us at [azantelope@cox.net](mailto:azantelope@cox.net).

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## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

### **THE HEAT IS ON...**

For those of us who live in Arizona's deserts, we dream and wait for the possibility of receiving a tag for a trophy pronghorn hunt. Congratulations to the lucky few who will draw an Arizona antelope tag!

Our 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Hunter Clinics are just around the corner. These clinics are designed for tag holders and anyone else interested in learning about hunting pronghorn. Clinics will be held in Tucson, Phoenix and Flagstaff. Check out the details on Page 1 of this newsletter. Hope to see you there.

We have had several successful projects so far in 2003. These projects included fence work, water tank construction and tree removal. Many thanks to all the folks who have come out to spend a hard day at work so that the pronghorn may have a chance to roam. Also, thanks to the Board members who have helped organize the projects and the various tasks associated with them. We are planning some more projects yet this year, so please consider joining us. You will have a chance to meet some like-minded people who not only enjoy the outdoors but also enjoy working to help Arizona's pronghorn. Conservation is the work of ALL of us.

Our organization is involved with the Adaptive Management Plan for Anderson Mesa. As you may be aware, the pronghorn population has been declining on the Mesa, and we believe it is necessary to do all we can to help keep this herd viable. I will be representing the AAF at the upcoming Coconino National Forest's Landscape Scale Assessment, Citizen's Working Group meeting. I will keep you updated on the status of our progress through 2004.

*See you all at the next project!*

*Jerry Guevin*

***Pronghorn is a quarterly newsletter for the members of AAF. Letters, comments, news items, articles, pictures and stories are all welcome and will be considered for publication. Address all such items to: Jim Unmacht, at Pronghorn Editor, PO Drawer 15501, Phoenix, AZ 85060, or by email at [hunttheworld@cox.net](mailto:hunttheworld@cox.net).***

# THE IRONY OF ANDERSON MESA



This story is more than a synopsis of a successful AAF work project the weekend of May 17, 2003. It will review the work and efforts of some dedicated sportsmen and sportswomen, but also touch on the complexities of the problems surrounding the Mesa. If you ask someone who's been around awhile for their thoughts on Anderson Mesa, you're likely to get an answer, but it will just as likely relate to only one segment of the entire issue. Therein lies the problem.

The recent AAF work project centered on the elimination of juniper trees in the grassland ecosystem. By all accounts we were successful, cutting down hundreds of trees in various sizes, over many acres! As it turns out, our overall success was only limited by the volunteer turnout we had which could be described as "Disappointing" at best! A LOT of people and groups are complaining about what's happening on Anderson Mesa, but take an account of who showed up to do something about it...11 AAF

members, 4 Game & Fish personnel, 2 Diablo Trust people (the rancher & his son who's managing the land), and 1 volunteer (sportsman) looking for community service work, who saw the project notice in the AZ Daily Sun. Many Thanks to the Volunteers!

When it comes to pronghorn and the Mesa, most people will state the obvious, the population has plummeted. It's a complex matter however, that has evolved over several decades. The last few years have opened the door on the problem, and exposed one of the big issues out of our control...DROUGHT...we haven't had a good year of timely rainfall in the last 5+ years. Soil moisture has been non-existent, and grass and forbs growth matched the moisture. No food, no animals. Some of the junipers cut were 15 years old, and stood only 2 feet high! The tree ring count was just as interesting, the last 5-6 years were represented in a ring approximately 1/8 " wide. Some of the single rings in earlier years were that wide.

Speaking of JUNIPER ENCROACHMENT, the trees are growing all over the Mesa, why, and what does it matter? Natural fires used to take care of the young junipers and keep them in check. The lack of those fires and fire suppression over the last 100 years have led to the massive juniper invasion. The junipers take moisture away from the grass and forbs, and as a consequence reduce the forage available for cattle, elk, and pronghorn. They also provide cover for predators. Sight and Flight are the pronghorns safety mechanisms, if they can't see them, they don't run.

We saw no pronghorn over the course of the project, but we did find the relatively fresh remains of a pronghorn fawn's rear leg. Well chewed, with only the hoof and bones left. It was found next to a stand of junipers.

The other observation around the junipers was the ever-present, pungent odor of ELK! There were elk beds everywhere, with fresh droppings and wet urine in abundance. From the looks of it, we had moved them off the beds. The elk love the juniper stands, seeking shade and cover. One amongst our group of volunteers, found no less than 4 shed elk antlers, from a 2 point, all the way up to a 6 point. We found no other sign of pronghorn however.

The pronghorn surveys from January 2003, show a herd count of 314 animals in 5B, and 286 animals in 5A. Another survey will take place in July to give us some data on fawn recruitment. In the meantime, the Game and Fish Department is also going to radio collar 12 animals with GPS collars, which will give them some excellent data on migration and movement.

It was green on the Mesa, the grass, forbs and weeds were making a comeback. Amazing what some rain will do! The cover was about a foot high in most places, good, but could be better. Maybe this year's overall fawn crop will have a chance? That brings up AERIAL GUNNING...the reports this year were 1.5 coyotes removed per hour of flying, 32 coyotes in total taken out. Was that successful, I'd suggest yes, some would say no, some would and did, simply object. The measure of success could probably be summed up by the report that the flyers saw a doe chasing a coyote. They flew back and took the coyote out, and saw the doe return to the area she was first sighted. The doe picked up her twin fawns and ran off! What else can you say? There was a last minute move by an animal rights group to stop the aerial gunning, fortunately they didn't succeed this time.

Intense grazing by CATTLE has created problems over the last several decades. Some people believe cattle are the sole reason the pronghorn population has diminished. While they have had a dramatic impact on the forage on the Mesa, they aren't they only reason for the decline in numbers. Some of the ranchers are trying to do a better job of managing the range. In the area we were working, the Flying M Ranch pulled their cattle off the ground voluntarily last year because there wasn't any grass.

Some have opined the TYPE OF WATER now available has been altered to the detriment of pronghorn. That could be an issue, although if it's in earthen tanks, and in open areas, pronghorn wouldn't stay away. The water might be cleaner absent cattle, and with marsh areas surrounding the source, (and waterfowl may find it more to their liking) but we're not aware of any research that indicates the former is detrimental to pronghorn. There might be more cover in the marsh, hiding more predators, but you could take the other tack, more cover would hide the fawns. Then you're making the assumption the fawn will be born near the water source. If there's grass on the prairie, that maybe wouldn't be the case.

There's no easy fix for the Mesa, and many factors are being played out. We (the AAF) have aligned ourselves with the Diablo Trust, to address the many issues involved. As we continue to do that, we'll also continue to chip away at some of the factors at work, like the juniper project this past weekend, and the fencing projects last summer. One day, we anticipate all our collective efforts will alter the population decline, and reverse the pronghorn population trend in a positive direction. So with that said, we'll continue to walk the talk, and get the job done, while others will continue to complain and do nothing constructive to help impact the problems at hand.

*Jim Unmacht*

**Thanks to our Volunteers:** David Brown, David Butkay, Larry Cullen, Dennis Darr, Sue Foote, Larry Green, Jerry Guevin, Bill and Mary Keebler, Dave Laird, Carl Lutch, Jim Mehen, Jack Metzger, Robert Metzger, Rick Miller, Mike Morgenthal, Ron Seig.

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## SIX MILES OF FENCE, A LOT OF PRONGHORN, AND EVEN SOME RAINDROPS...

We had a good turnout for our Chevelon Work Project. A total of 32 people joined us for the fencing alterations on the 26 Bar ranch, now owned by the Hopis. We made short work of these lines, eliminating the bottom barbed wire, and adjusting the next strand up or down to the 18" mark as necessary. With the numerous pronghorn sitings, abundant tracks, and many droppings, these alterations should go a long way in helping this herd!

We had fun in camp too, hearing some tall tales around the lanterns! Yes, unfortunately it was dry up there, and fire restrictions were in place, so if there was a downside to the trip, that was it. As usual, the food was delicious, and many thanks go to Chefs Mary & Bill Keebler, and Marlene Oland! We also had the usual Canine Corps to guard the camp, and the only dog battles were contained in family squabbles between Meg & Sam. Every other Corps member got along grandly.

We had only a couple non-AAF members join us, and those two gentlemen were from Pine Top. Otherwise, our group came from Casa Grade to Flagstaff, and from Peoria to Pinetop, with a number of Phoenix folk in between. We had some young help, Trevor, Dylan, Paul (how did you keep that horned toad on your head for 4 hours?), Jimmy, and Grace, (sorry, no phone service!) and of course our wise & witty veterans.

Finally, special thanks to Game & Fish wildlife magagers Dave Cagle and Ken Clay III for coordinating the project with Dave Hartman, the Hopi ranch manager. Until next time, think rain and fawn survival!

*Jim Unmacht*



### Volunteer List

Brian Taylor, Virginia Ferland, Jerry Guevin, Connie Taylor, Joe Bill Pickrell, Bill & Mary Keebler, Sue Foote, David Laird, Bill Hook, Trevor Hook, Bruce Johnson, Dave Verhelst, Jim & Tracy Unmacht, Grace Unmacht, Jimmy Unmacht, Terry Steinke, Dylan Steinke, Oscar & Marlene Oland, Jimmy Landrew, Rick Michalek, Paul J. Pavlich, Paul I. Pavlich, Michael Morgenthal, Ken & Kathy Cook, Ken Clay III, Bob Blassingame, Ken Kerr, and Dave Cagle



# WHY NOT WYOMING?

BY DAVID E. BROWN

## PART 2



By the time we arrived at the grasslands, the wind had slowed to a breeze, and the rain was an intermittent trickle. Our technique for hunting pronghorn was simple. Don let us out of the truck in a likely location, and we each went out on our own, hiking and glassing until a band of pronghorn were spotted. Watching them from afar, we would then individually work up a strategy for a stalk. But more often than not, at least one sharp-eyed doe would be watching every move, and rarely could I get within 400 yards before the animals spooked. But no matter, another herd would invariably be seen while stalking the first, and eventually a buck would be spotted in a situation offering some

cover due to Thunder Basin's gentling rolling terrain. Twice I got to within 200 yards of a decent buck only to have my stalk blown by a new freshet of rain or a steam-stained scope. On another occasion, I betrayed my crawling approach by startling a flock of sage-hens, frightening me even more than the always skittish pronghorn.

But I was having fun. Using my pronghorn call to no advantage, I was surprised to see, what to an Arizonan, was a very large coyote come galloping up to within 15 yards of me before realizing his mistake and departing. Only a few minutes later I saw an equally huge hare—a Townsend jack-rabbit—that was as large and as light colored as our antelope jack back home. Sometime, around 11:00 a.m., after failing yet another stalk, I was surprised to see a lone buck running past me at a good clip but only about 180 yards away. Knowing better than to shoot at a fleeing pronghorn, but also knowing that there was no chance of hitting an unintended target, and with no one to see me, I gave in to temptation. Leading the buck by 6 ½ lengths, I fired twice with my .264 Winchester magnum. No effect whatsoever. Feeling sheepish and foolish, I remembered Richard Ockenfels's presentation at the Arizona Antelope Foundation's hunt clinics showing a required lead of about 12 lengths for a buck running at 40 m.p.h.—far outside the scope's field of view. As penance, I followed the buck's tracks for two miles before assuring myself that I had not wounded the animal, vowing all the time to evermore heed Richard's advice.

Watching the buck feeding across the next valley, I was surprised to also see Thom off in the distance. I headed over his way, thinking that we might have another go at the buck that I had been following. No other red jackets or caps were in sight. Few hunters appeared willing to abandon their vehicles, and it didn't matter that our hunting locale was only a few miles from town. A half mile off of the road and the prairie was ours and ours alone. On meeting up with Thom, I found out that he had blown several stalks just as I had done, and that he too had shot twice at a buck but missed. No sooner had he told me this, when another buck appeared in front of us. Turning to the left, and running straight away from us, the young buck presented a doable shot. Thom managed to bring him down on the fourth shot even though the buck was now a good 400 yards off. But the shot was good, and the buck dropped with nary a kick.

While walking up to Thom's buck, I was surprised to see the black horns of a large buck laying on the ground about 100 yards to our right. Could this be a buck that we had inadvertently wounded? Thom said no, that he had already been over to look at it, that the buck had been dead for at least 24 hours, and that even though the hide made the animal look intact, coyotes had already dined on most of the meat. Still, I had to go over and look at him if for no other reason than to look at his horns which were quite nice. Thom was right, the animal had only been dead for a day or so, but all of the hindquarters had been eaten. Picking up the head, I was surprised to see that the animal's neck and left carotid artery had been slashed as if with a knife. This buck had died fighting, not for his life, but for his turf.



The next hour was spent cleaning and skinning Thom's buck. We had brought along canvas game bags to act as both drop cloths and carrying cases. Having a cloth to put the animal on not only kept the buck out of the mud, it prevented grass and dirt from contaminating the carcass while helping to keep the brittle hairs from breaking off and getting on the meat. Noticing that the anterior stomach paunch contained the vetch seen earlier, we made a reasonable if not timely job of dressing the animal. Now for the hard part. After hiking only a few yards, we decided to leave the bagged carcass in the

field, and headed in the direction of Don's truck with the head and hide. We never even considered marking the spot on the open prairie with flagging. We should have.

For some reason, whenever we got out of the truck and into the field, the weather would let up and take pity on us. Sometimes the sun even came out. But no sooner had we got back to the truck and a ham sandwich, than it began to rain again. Fearful of the ground getting soggy, we headed off in Don's truck on a road that would take us to within a quarter mile of where we had left the antelope carcass. On approaching what we thought was the site, however, the white bag remained hidden from view. A half hour search in all directions proved futile, and I was really becoming afraid that we might have lost our quarry after all of the work was done. But after lining up a small peak with where we knew Don's truck had been, and climbing the highest ridge in the area, I spied what looked like two dead pronghorns in the sage. One was the coyote chewed carcass of the big buck, and the other was the white cloth bag containing Thom's.

I had forgotten how enjoyable tromping around on foot in the open prairie could be. What was more, I had never before experienced the thrill of having so many pronghorn to stalk. Being tagged with a red-orange cap didn't help my stalking ability, and the species of sage providing the most cover was nowhere more than three feet high. Still, it seemed to make the game more fair, and I eagerly anticipated another day of the same. But such was not to be. On driving out to where we had hunted on opening day, we spotted a small herd of does with a herd buck feeding on a low ridge leading into a small valley between two ridges. If I played it right, this would be my last stalk. And I did. No matter that the animals spooked as I sat up with cradled rifle in hand.. The buck presented a clear shot as he three-quartered away from me and I knew from the thump of the bullet that it had been good. He dropped like a stone from a perfect key-hole shot. As we took out the other drop cloth / game bag, I couldn't help but think, that two pronghorn bucks in two days was a damn nice hunt anywhere!

We stopped by the game department's check station on both afternoons--both times in driving rain. Even though our tags were properly signed and dated, I couldn't get used to the idea of keeping them on our person, and not on the animal as befits Wyoming regulations. I didn't really want to go back in the field that rainy afternoon, and more on whim than intent, I asked the operator of the check station if it would be o.k. to get the horns off of the big buck that had died in the field. I should have known better. Having worked for the Arizona Game and Fish Department for 27 years, I knew the answer. "Well....you had probably better not--at least not until all of the meat is off the skull," was the expected response.

My only complaint with Wyoming was the weather and the near need to stay in a motel. I much prefer camping out on my hunting trips, but that is in Arizona, where a nighttime drizzle is usually regarded as inclement weather. Not so Wyoming. The whole time I was there, I was thankful *not* to be camping out. It takes a big tent and a big fire to fight off a night of pounding rain that turns to sleet come dawn. And that doesn't even consider the wind and cold. No, the motel was worth every penny--especially since the prices were extremely reasonable by Arizona standards. The Russian plutocrat aside, the most we paid for a double room was \$35.00! But then we didn't stay in any Holiday Inns either.

Having taken our goats to the game processor's, we found ourselves with an afternoon to kill. The choice wasn't easy. We could go to Mount Rushmore, the frontier town of Sundance, or any of a dozen interesting side trips. We elected to go to Devil's Tower National Monument. Nor were we disappointed in either the natural wonder of the monument nor in the amount of game seen while driving through the Black Hills' glades of ponderosa pine and burr oak clad hills. Not only did we see pronghorn bands galore, we saw dozens of wild turkeys--a recent translocation success story--, and equal numbers of white-tailed and mule deer. We even saw a red fox and a porcupine.

Probably the thing that most impressed us about Wyoming, however, was the people and the culture. Hunting was obviously not only an important part of the local economy, it was an integral part of Wyoming life. As hunters, we were met with friendly greetings and treated with respect. The game department's check stations, while busy, were professionally courteous. Not the least symbolic of the uniqueness of the local color was the game processing plant where we took our pronghorn. Here hundreds of antelope and deer were being skinned and processed by a cadre of women who were as attractive as they were skilled. One, a six-foot blue-eyed blonde, who should have been named Inga, easily and single-handedly slung buck deer and pronghorns from tail-gate to work table with neither a huff nor a puff. My



biggest epiphany, however, one that made me realize that I was in a different world, was when we returned to the motel to find hunters using the little cypress trees, which were meant to shade the entrance to the rooms, to skin their game. Imagine if you will, someone skinning an antelope in front of a motel in Phoenix or even Prescott! The police would be

on you in a minute. Here, the lady who checked us instead busy coupling on an extension of garden hose to help one of her clients get the job done.

The return trip, while not leisurely, was definitely pleasant. Traveling southward along the western border of Wyoming toward Logan, we saw much grassland and many pronghorn. In fact, we never got out of pronghorn until reaching Show Low and the cover of darkness on the second evening. The rut was on everywhere, and every buck seemed to have a harem that ranged from one to 13 does with about 6 being the mean. Our pronghorn safely stored on dry ice in ice chests allowed us to take a few side trips and enjoy some spectacular New Mexican scenery along the upper Pecos River, the North Plains, and in Malpai National Monument. We also partook of one of the best Chinese food lunches we had ever eaten in Cheyenne and a so-so hamburger in Quemado. But then, nobody ever said that avoiding chain restaurants guaranteed four star fare.

Taking young bucks and then dressing and skinning them in the field really paid off when it came to table fare. Not only did these procedures facilitate hauling the carcasses back to the truck a lot easier, the resulting meat was the tastiest I have ever eaten. The capes too, were nice in fluffy, and, in addition to these animals possessing measurably shorter ears, both bucks appeared to be more colorful than Arizona specimens. Although both of our yearling skulls were made into European mounts, I decided that I would hold out for a bigger animal next time as it would make a nice mounted trophy to compare with my two Arizona specimens.

Now that we know our way around, and that it takes two full days to get there, I think that we will go to Wyoming again next year. This time, however, we will plan on more time to hunt—at least four days, and hold out for bigger bucks. There are certainly plenty of nice ones out there. That way too we won't have to sweat the weather so much. And, in case one of us kills a buck early, I will bring along my Model 12 for sagehens and sharptails. I will also make the motel reservations a lot earlier. And even though we will continue to clean our animals in the field, knowing that the lady proprietor doesn't mind skinning one in the front yard means that I will go to the same motel, the Stardust. That lady has got her priorities right.

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## **SAVING THE SONORAN PRONGHORN**

A water tank construction project took place this past May in the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge to give the remaining Sonoran pronghorn population a reliable water source. In 1998 there were approximately 140 animals, but today the population is estimated to be around 20. The lack of water and food is believed to be the primary reason for the plummeting population.

We joined forces with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the Yuma Rod & Gun Club, and AZ Game & Fish Department to install a ground level drinker with enough storage capacity to hold 10,000 gallons of water.

AAF participants in the project included Brian & Dorothy Dolan, Bill Luffy Sr., Bill Luffy Jr., Don Johnson, Richard Ockenfels, and Jerry Guevin.

## **RIFLE RAFFLE**

Weatherby Ultra Lightweight 257 Mag  
Synthetic Gray Stock with Stainless Steel  
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# HUNTING WITH YOUNGSTERS (DON'T FORGET THE MARSHMALLOWS!)

BY PAUL J. PAVLICH NOVEMBER 2001

I have enjoyed many challenges of hunting and the outdoors in my days. Just by the title of this story, I am admitting age chasing me. In the past couple of years I have had the wonderful opportunity of taking my daughter big game hunting. She started hunting elk and deer at age 11. My son is next. He is ten and in December we are going elk hunting in New Mexico. In doing so, I have realized that as adults, we take many things for granted after spending many years in the sport. To have to see it through a kid's perspective has taught me a lot. I guess this is true of any sport, but hunting with kids is a unique challenge.

Besides working with my own kids, I've had the privilege of working with many young hunters in the hunter education program. Their reasons for taking the course vary. Many are very excited to hunt after watching from the sidelines for years. Others are there because their parents make them take it. That's okay, because most all of them come away learning something, and the firearms safety lessons will serve them well, even in they never hunt or own a firearm. Today we teach our kids the dangers of kitchen chemicals, autos, drugs, and many other things, but, in general, society is hesitant to teach kids about safe handling of firearms. But that's a story for another time. Teaching the class to adults is fun, although it's another challenge. Many of their minds have long been made up about most things.

When we choose to take a young person hunting, there are many new things to consider. Priorities change. How you spend the day and strategies you employ will usually be different. In taking to the field with a small, inexperienced hunter, we should consider what's going to work for them, not what works for us as adults. These considerations include: hunting methods, proper caliber, shot selection, setup, shooting distance, maintaining interest, education, enjoyment, and ethical lessons.

In my opinion, one of the top priorities is to see game, even if it is not the game being hunted. It is exciting and educational for kids to see ground hogs, turkeys, eagles, hawks, and other animals. Caliber choice can be a tricky one. We must match the caliber to the game hunted, but we hardly want to stick a .300 magnum into the hands of a first-time 10-year-old hunter. We also owe it to the game, as well as our children, to get them a reasonably close, clean shot, and make sure they know enough about anatomy to put shots in the right place. If we do this, then caliber choice is of less importance.

Kids have a shorter attention span, and, if we are going to keep them interested and motivated, we need to mix it up, to add variety. We can achieve this by seeing different places, sitting in blinds for shorter periods of time, looking for sign, glassing, walking, and talking about the outdoors. Take time to teach them about equipment, methods, and ethics. Go to lookout points and enjoy the scenery. Let them help around camp, cooking and building fires. Take fun food, and don't forget the marshmallows.

In Arizona, junior hunts are a great place to start. They are usually in good areas where game is plentiful. This provides opportunity to see animals and increases the odds of getting a clean shot. Practice prior to the hunt is critical. Take them out often and let them shoot a lot of rounds through smaller caliber rifles. If they will be hunting with a scope, make sure they are shooting through a scope. Getting on a target quickly and confidently (target acquisition) is often overlooked and can be very difficult and frustrating for a beginner. Have them shoot sitting kneeling, and standing, until they are comfortable with all these positions. Shooting offhand can be aided by you with a walking stick to stabilize things. In any of these positions a rifle that fits the kids is a big plus. Big, long rifles just make everything more difficult for them.

Parents naturally want success for their kids in a sport they enjoy, but we cannot forget the importance of lessons they will take into the field with them for the future. Shot selection, placement, and ethics should be a constant at any age. But, after talking with some parents helping their kids in the field, it becomes evident that some are willing to let their new hunters cheat a bit on a shot, or even encourage it, in order to succeed. Violation statistics and experience in the field tell us this happens much too often. Adult status doesn't give us a license to cheat.

One parent I met this year with his son on the Kaibab had just come from a junior elk hunt. The father told me that the day before, his son had a shot at a cow elk, but all he could see was the upper half of the body. The heart and lung area was partially blocked by bushes. "Shoot! Just shoot!" the dad whispered. "It will go through the bushes." Congratulations to the young hunter who refused, knowing that he couldn't be sure. The lessons of his hunter education class were fresh in his mind, and he had listened. The way you teach your kids to hunt may be the way they always do it. Please don't just put your young hunter into the back of a truck all day and have them jump out and fire away at game.

Many believe that hunt is not successful unless game is killed. I do not subscribe to that way of thinking. Consider the setup and the things kids need to learn to respect the game, the laws, and themselves as part of the sport. Pass on lessons about the enjoyment of the hunt, and put the kill into perspective. Above all, cherish the time and opportunity to hunt with your children, for the time will quickly pass. I look forward to December.





### **"OFFICER ANDY"**



We've got a lot of great law enforcement officers in the State of Arizona, but how many of them have a 98% success rate?

Here's one working for the Game and Fish Department...Officer Andy! You've seen the Hunter Ed videos, remember some of the violators breaking our game laws? Officer Andy and his cohorts are seeing to it that these criminals don't get away with it!

So don't feel so lucky the next time you see that nice buck just off the road...think about what the law says you can and can't do, and if you've done everything right, and the scenario still seems too good to be true, take a second look, and cut Andy a break, he's got enough holes in his hide!

### **GOVERNOR SAVES HERITAGE FUND!**

On June 17, 2003 Governor Napolitano used the line-item veto to eliminate the transfer of Heritage Fund dollars to the general fund. She also vetoed the \$1.8 million transfer of the Heritage Fund money to the Commission on the Arts (This will be funded from the general fund).

First of all, thank you! Your calls, letters and e-mails made a huge difference! Please take the time to write, call, or e-mail the governor and thank her for respecting the voters' wishes and for protecting Arizona's natural heritage by keeping the Heritage Fund intact.

You can contact the governor at:

Governor Napolitano	Phone: 602-542-4331
1700 W. Washington	800-253-0883
Phoenix, AZ 85007	Fax: 602-542-1381
E-mail: <a href="http://www.governor.state.az.us/post/feedback.htm">www.governor.state.az.us/post/feedback.htm</a>	

### **AAF AFFILIATES WITH THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP (TRCP)**

The TRCP is a national network of hunters and anglers, consisting of individuals, organizations, and businesses that care about the future of fish and wildlife across the United States. For more info, visit [www.trcp.org](http://www.trcp.org).

### **CITY OF PHOENIX TO PROTECT BEN AVERY SHOOTING FACILITY**

Under the leadership and recommendation of District 1 Councilman Dave Siebert, the Phoenix City Council recently passed a general plan amendment to ensure the future development around Ben Avery Shooting Facility would have a 1 mile buffer from detrimental uses. Siebert has also received support for this measure from Governor Napolitano. The battle to keep this range in its entirety at this location will require the support of the sportsmen and users of this facility in order to be successful.

If you have questions or comments on the future of the range, please contact Councilman Siebert's office at 602-262-7444 or email him at [cdist1@phoenix.gov](mailto:cdist1@phoenix.gov).

### **MAD COW DISEASE COULD IMPACT YOUR CANADIAN HUNT!**

The US Government temporarily banned the importation of ALL ruminants on 5/20/03...domestic and wild. The ban remains in effect, and at this point no one knows when it will be lifted. One cow tested positive for the disease in Alberta this past May. Thirteen herds in Alberta, Saskatchewan and B.C. have now been quarantined. The US National Farmers Union is demanding more tests at the border prior to the lifting of the ban. ALL ruminant meat is banned from importing, and the Agriculture Secretary also referred to "ruminant products" in the 5/20/03 announcement.

A National Center for Import/Export representative has stated "wildlife antlers, hides, and skulls are OK to import, as long as they are cleaned, fleshed out, free of blood, and the skull is empty."

If you want to call and get more details, the telephone # for the NCIE is 301-734-3277.

The USDA Statement outlining the ban can be found at [www.usda.gov/news/releases/2003/05/0166.htm](http://www.usda.gov/news/releases/2003/05/0166.htm)

If you have a Canadian hunt booked, we would suggest you contact your outfitter to discuss how this may affect your hunt.

### **WINSLOW HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WORK FOR ANTELOPE**

Six members of the Winslow High School Junior Class recently took time out from their busy Saturday schedules and did a good deed for the local antelope herd. Dustin Cole, Jeremiah Johnson, John Sullivan, Adam Reeves, and Spencer & Warren Prosser, raised the bottom wire of 4 miles of barbed wire fence on the Bar T Bar Ranch south of Meteor Crater. Since antelope won't jump over fences, raising the existing wire 18" from the ground allows them to move freely from pasture to pasture to escape predators. Antelope herds have been declining in many areas of the state and this is one of ways we are trying to improve their survivability. For the students' effort, the Bar T Bar Ranch donated \$500 to the Junior Class prom. Thanks to these students and the Bar T Bar Ranch!