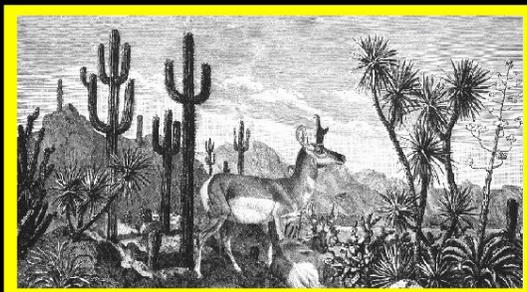




# PRONGHORN

Official Publication of the Arizona Antelope Foundation, Inc., a Non-Profit, Tax-Exempt Corporation ~ Volume 12, Number 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2006

## ARIZONA ANTELOPE FOUNDATION 3RD Annual Fundraising Banquet



## AAF'S THIRD ANNUAL FUNDRAISING BANQUET BOLSTERS TREASURY!

We didn't have people lined up at the door to help make the 3rd annual event a success, but we "got er done" in spite of the sparse number of volunteers...quality, not quantity was the word of the day!

I'll suggest it's a tough time for fundraising in the non-profit conservation world right now. While people will readily buy a raffle ticket about anytime, for anything, generally folks seem to be tapped out on banquets. There is about one or two per week from January to August! So in spite of best laid plans, we had two other large events impacting our numbers again this year. That issue, coupled with folks that are "through" with banquets, those that only want to attend one per year, those that simply do not want to help, and the time of the year, made our event "challenging" to say the least. So there's the back drop...what happened?

See the details on page 12.

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## Visit us on the World Wide Web

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

## **MEETINGS**

**Board meetings are held at 6:30 P.M on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at the Phoenix Zoo. Visitors welcome!**

*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:*

*Pronghorn Editor, PO Box 15501, Phoenix, AZ 85060, or by email at [info@azantelope.org](mailto:info@azantelope.org).*

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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The AAF has established a new record for Antelope tag funds. This year we sold an auction tag at the Sheep Society banquet for \$65,000, an auction tag at the AAF Banquet for \$61,000 and we raffled a tag as part of the Arizona Big Game Supper Raffle which raised \$48,650. That makes the total raised to \$174,650 for antelope projects. In future months the board will be looking at ways to maximize these funds with matching grants to benefit antelope.

It has been a very busy summer for the AAF. July 8<sup>th</sup> was the drawing for the Arizona Big Game Supper Raffle tag drawing at The National Bank Center in Phoenix. Our 3rd annual banquet was July 22<sup>nd</sup> at El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium and our annual hunter's clinic was August 15<sup>th</sup> at the Sportsman's Warehouse on I-17. I would like to thank all the

board members and volunteers who made these three events very successful for the AAF. A special thanks to our banquet chairman Jim Unmacht and his wife Tracy for going the extra mile to make our 3rd Annual Fundraiser such a success.

An early reminder to everyone that the drawing deadline for a 2007 antelope tag will take place in the middle of February in 2007. Hunt books will be available in early January. Draw results will be mailed out in March. This will give all of us who are successful in the draw plenty of time to scout and plan for our hunt. The early draw also gives us a chance to plan other hunts around our antelope hunt.

A reminder to all that our website is updated on a regular basis with new and important information regarding the AAF



and the Arizona Game & Fish Department. Log in and have a look on a regular basis.

May you all have enjoyable and successful hunts this fall. We can always use hunting stories, on any species, in the Pronghorn.

*Dave Laird*

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## SLATE OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS NOMINATED FOR 2007

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Elections will take place at our Annual Meeting on November 13 at the Phoenix Zoo.



# SONORAN PRONGHORN

## UPDATE



BY JILL BRIGHT AZ GAME & FISH  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2006

### *Captive Breeding:*

**North Half:** All the animals in the north ½ of the pen are doing well.

**South Half:** All the animals in the south ½ of the pen are doing well.

There have been several heavy rains at the pen in the last 2 months. ¼ inch of rain fell on July 18, one inch on August 22, ½ inch on September 5 and 2 inches overnight on September 6. Most of these rains caused the washes to run and required minor fence repair work.

The rain on August 22 caused a tree to fall on the fence between the north and south halves of the pen. This caused the fence to be lowered and the Yellow buck from the south side of the pen crossed over into the north half, where he still is. This was not a problem since all the breeding for this year was finished, and we were planning to move him into the north half for breeding next year anyway.

The 2-inch rain overnight on September 6 caused major damage at the pen. The pen monitors were aware there might be problems and were out at the pen before first light on the morning of September 7. All the major washes had run large amounts of water and carried lots of debris including trees and bushes. The floodgates at the washes on the east, north, and west sides of the pen were torn to shreds. Over 300 feet of both electric and hog wire fence were down in one spot, and the electric fence was washed away in several locations. Fortunately, all the pronghorn were still in the pen! The monitors quickly put up a temporary fence where it was down, and bandaged up all the fences and gates to prevent any pronghorn from escaping. Over the next few days, they got the pen back into good repair. We are re-designing the floodgates and will build structures upstream of the gates designed to catch debris in the future.

All the rains have caused good green up in the forage in the pen. The pronghorn are feeding heavily on forage and have reduced their alfalfa hay consumption to near zero. The rains have also made irrigating in the pen unnecessary for now.

The pen monitors have also been working on building a temporary release pen near the Charlie Bell forage plot. We are planning to release the extra juvenile males, first into this pen, and then into the wild when it cools down. We are hoping that by placing the release pen near Charlie Bell forage plot, the released animals will be able to easily find food and water, and should also be able to join up with the wild pronghorn using the Charlie Bell plot. We are investigating which immobilization drugs and techniques to use to move the pronghorn.

Our summer intern, Jenny Eckel, has finished working and gone back to school. We hired the third pen monitor, Loeta Clifford. Loeta worked with us at the pen on a volunteer basis for several projects, including releasing the new animals from Mexico into the pen in January. She lives in Ajo with her Border Patrol husband, and will be an excellent addition to the team.

**Water Projects:** We are currently working on the AGFD EA checklist in order to begin construction on the two waters to be built on the Marine side of BMGR. We are also planning expansion of 4 waters on the Cabeza Prieta Refuge. We plan to do those this coming winter, with volunteer help.

**Forage Enhancements:** All the forage enhancement plots have been irrigated off and on, depending on rainfall and forage conditions. Right now, irrigation has stopped as we have had a lot of rain. The Air Force is providing a new generator, and security container, to be placed on site at the Granite Mountains forage plot. This will reduce the amount of transporting the portable generators over rough roads, which has caused numerous mechanical problems with the generators.

**Other Projects:**

**Wild Pronghorn:** On a recent telemetry flight, 10 pronghorn, including one fawn were seen in four different groups. These were all seen in the southern San Cristobal valley, on the Cabeza Prieta Refuge. We plan to do more flights in October to try to estimate fawn recruitment for this year.

## 2006 REGION II PRONGHORN SURVEY RESULTS

9/2/06

	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Unclassified	Total	Ratio
<b>Region II Total</b>	240	594	142	2	978	40 Bucks : 100 Does : 24 Fawns
<b>Anderson Mesa (5A &amp; 5B combined)</b>	42	131	21	2	196	39 Bucks : 100 Does : 16 Fawns
<b>Unit 5A</b>	9	22	1	0	32	41 Bucks : 100 Does : 5 Fawns
<b>Unit 5B</b>	33	109	20	2	164	30 Bucks : 100 Does : 18 Fawns
<b>Unit 6A</b>	6	14	11	0	31	43 Bucks : 100 Does : 79 Fawns
<b>Unit 6B</b>	4	20	4	0	28	20 Bucks : 100 Does : 20 Fawns
<b>Unit 7</b>	73	93	22	0	188	78 Bucks : 100 Does : 24 Fawns
<b>Unit 8</b>	26	55	30	0	111	47 Bucks : 100 Does : 54 Fawns
<b>Unit 9</b>	12	62	8	0	82	19 Bucks : 100 Does : 13 Fawns
<b>Unit 12A/B</b>	12	37	4	0	53	32 Bucks : 100 Does : 11 Fawns
<b>Unit 13A</b>	44	148	29	0	221	30 Bucks : 100 Does : 20 Fawns
<b>Unit 13B</b>	21	34	13	0	68	62 Bucks : 100 Does : 38 Fawns

# Hunting in the Land of the Pita Part 2



Foreword by David E. Brown

**B**ack in the mid-1920s, conservationists, despairing over low pronghorn numbers, rightfully feared that the animal's future in the wild might be in jeopardy. Antelope numbers were then at a nadir, with only about 650 antelope estimated to survive in Arizona. The status in Mexico was nearly as dire, and only about 600 pronghorn were thought to remain in the Mexican state of Coahuila. These numbers were probably overly conservative, however, and good numbers of antelope were still to be found on Rancho Encantada, an 87,000 acre spread then managed by an American company.

"*Hunting in the Land of Pita*" (the *pita* is a large yucca, *Yucca carnerosana*) details the exploits of five Americans hunting in Coahuila's Valle de Encantada (Delightful Valley) in the fall of 1930. The story is an interesting look back, not only at the conditions of the time, but at the attitudes then prevalent regarding pronghorn. Pronghorn hunting had only been reauthorized in Wyoming in 1929, and after a hiatus of from 20 to 30 years, hunters thought that pronghorn could not be successfully hunted on foot or horseback.

Given a "special" hunting permit to take five pronghorn (a fairly common practice in pre-World War II Mexico), the hunters and their companions proceed to Rancho Encantada to hunt whitetails, bear, and pronghorn, stopping to shoot quail and fish for black bass en route. The hunt is a success by any standard. More than 100 pronghorn are seen and four bucks are bagged - one of them having horns greater than 16 inches. This buck, taken by Harry McGuire is listed in the 1939 Boone & Crockett record book. Although the hunters never kill any does or violate the terms of their permits, their hunting behavior would never pass muster today. Such were the standards of the day that the author, an associate editor of *Outdoor Life*, freely describes chasing pronghorn in Ford motor cars, driving cross-country in wet weather, flock shooting at running animals, failing to follow-up on fusillades at departing antelope, and continuing to hunt until well after dark. All of which shows how far we have come.

Unlike the situation in the U. S., Mexico's pronghorn continued to dwindle through the 1930s and 40's. Land reform, overgrazing, and subsistence hunting took an increasing toll, and pronghorn had virtually disappeared from Coahuila by the 1970s. Then, in 1996 and 1998, more than 150 pronghorn from the vicinity of Carrizozo, New Mexico, were released in Valle Columbia and El Novillo, Coahuila—locations not too distant from Valle Encantada. After a couple of dry years and some poor fawn recruitment, these *nuevos berrendos* appear to be making a comeback. With any luck, and the continued good work of Mexican biologists such as Manuel Valdez and Alejandro Espinosa, pronghorn will again roam the "land of pita" and congregate on Antelope Hill.



**T**he mysterious charm of all desert wilderness is on this Mexican pita land, like a subtle, powerful spell. Yet the land is not real desert. The valleys are covered with fairly long grass. Hills border each lowland and on the hills grow cactus and yucca plants. The pita grows from 2 or 3 to 10 or 12 feet tall. The Mexicans make varied use of its leaves for thatching roofs, for tying beams, etc. Someone has said, "If the pita were to vanish in one instant, all Mexico would fall apart." Then

there is the pita' cousin, stool, a lower palm-like plant. And sometimes one sees another cousin, the palmetto, with thin, soft leaves. Growing high, like the pita, on a heavy, thick stalk. Then, particularly in rocky places, the short, sharp pointed plant, *lechigia*; which, as Doc never wearied of pointing out as we drove pell-mell over the prairies, "is very bad for tires. Look out!"

And occasionally century plants, with their tall dead stalks standing high in the air forlornly. It is from the heart of this plant that the Mexicans make three of their strongest (did I hear somebody say "worst"? ) liquors; mescal, tequila, and aguardiente. A few grandfather's beard cactus, long and white. And the prickly pear cactus, producing that queer plum-like fruit which, surprisingly, is not bad eating. *Cont. on page 7*

*Cont. from page 6*

Further north, in Texas, are the mesquite trees, but not down where we were in Coahuila.

In hunting antelope we would drive slowly along the edges of the plains, where the pita and other bushes had encroached somewhat, but below where they were very thick. On this level we found most of the antelope. As they ran out onto the plain we could get a start in the firmer hillside ground, then go into second gear and, running out onto the softer grasslands, try to get close enough for us to jump out and shoot.

The first morning of the antelope hunting in cars we took the open Ford. Pollay driving. All five of us were crowded in. We drove back along the road on which we had come in. Startlingly three antelope, two bucks and a doe, appeared in the hazy, early-morning light, off to our left. We jumped out and a number of shots were fired, all without effect. I suggested that too many of us were shooting at once, that two of us had better drop out until a couple of the others had had some good shots. Five men cannot shoot at once in haste without blowing one another's ears out, and completely wrecking each other's concentration. And if you don't believe concentration is necessary in order to bag these fleet phantoms of the plains, take a hunt in Mexico and try it sometime – and incidentally, take five times as many shells as you think you'll need.

Kaliski and I dropped out. We stationed ourselves at the foot of Antelope Butte, behind pita bushes, in case the car should run any antelope our way. The others drove off to make a circle back to us. Doc said, as they moved off, "We'll drive one to you."

I watched the car through my binoculars. They circled away, then back along the edge of the hills. When they were at the other edge of Antelope Butte, perhaps 1 ½ miles distant, I could see something running diagonally in front of them. They turned toward the animal. It cut back and so did the car. The antelope came toward me, and the car followed, seemingly very slowly. Of course they could not overtake the antelope if it kept to a straight line, as in that country antelope easily outrun any automobile, due to the soft ground. The antelope kept coming, straight for where Kaliski and I hid. If he continued on his present course one or the other of us was sure of a good shot.

But when he was about 1 mile from us he veered uphill, apparently determined to turn back and outflank the automobile. I saw the antelope was a buck. He cut back, though the car tried to turn him off. I saw the men in the car jump out and shoot. The buck continued, unhurt. The shots sounded no longer. One man stood out from the rest, Doc Jackson. I heard one final shot. The buck stumbled, went down. I shouted to Kaliski,

"Doc got him!" and he shouted back. The car went over to the kill. Another shot sounded, the finishing one.

In a few minutes they drove up to us, a happy party. Doc, shooting my Remington 30 Express, with 150-grain ammunition, had hit him in the right shoulder, when the animal was almost out of reasonable range, and after the others had ceased firing. The animal was in fine condition, though he had only a moderately good heard.

We left Doc there by Antelope Butte (His Romance Hole, we called it), skinning out the head. The rest of us drove south over a little divide, and down into the Encantada Valley. Many miles we covered, seeing nothing but pita and cactus, cactus and pita. Though we carried all the water we could with us, for the engine, the sun was out and we had soon boiled it all away. About 10 miles up in the head of the Encantada we found a water hole, known to Pollay, and filled the radiator and two 5-gallon cans.

Coming back we saw a big bunch of antelope out on the plain, but running after them proved futile. Finally we ran into four, with one buck amongst them, on the edge of the pita. We gave chase. The dashed out on the plain. We followed, traveling perhaps 25 miles an hour in second gear. After a minute or two they turned, as we hoped. The closer in to them we cut, the harder they tried to run a half circle around us. This is the exciting moment of the chase, for if they only persist in their add desire to round the car and turn back, one will get a broadside shot at them.

Everybody was shouting. "Get ready – get ready-be ready to jump out!" Pollay was yelling as he bounced us over the rough prairie. The gorgeous animals – how beautiful, how slim and graceful in this tempestuous moment of life-or-death flight – were rounding us, in line, the big buck in the rear. Suddenly Pollay threw on the brakes. We all jumped out. Critch jumped long before the car had come to a stop, and such was his momentum that his legs wouldn't hold him and he sprawled on his face. Whipple, who jumped from the car right behind him, stumbled over Critch and they both were down. But quickly they were up and shouting. The din was terrible. The antelope, which had been perhaps 100 yards away when we stopped, continued on their



fleet way, not unperturbed, perhaps, but safe. When it was all over each of us had emptied his magazine. And of course each had his special theory about why he had failed. Before the hunt was over, however, we became inured to such failures. Shooting those flying spirits is, indeed, like winging an airplane with an anti-aircraft gun. It looks easy- until you've tried it. *Cont. on page 8*

*Cont. from page 7*

Another bunch containing two bucks treated us to the same does. But late in the afternoon, fortune favored us again. A lone buck ran out of the pita about 150 yards ahead. We went after him, and he turned back, rounding half circle around us. When he was about 150 yards away a shot from Kaliski caught him in the stomach. He stumbled and slowed up, but continued perhaps another 100 yards before Kalisi finished him with a long, clean shot. The buck had a remarkable pair of horns, symmetrical and about as large as I had ever seen any place. They were approximately 15 inches, outside measurement. Kaliski was using his scope-mounted Winchester 54, with 172-grain ammunition.

The next morning the two successful hunters were left behind, Critch, Whipple, and I with Pollay, again driving, took the same open Ford, and traveled down south of Antelope Butte. Soon we sighted a buck and a doe in the middle of the plain and gave chase. They kept ahead of us easily, on a straight line down the wide flat. In second gear, our engine boiling, we followed, but they maintained a safe distance of perhaps 300 yards between us. For exactly 3 miles we pursued them. The best speed we could make was 25 miles an hour, and at the end of 3 miles they had run away from us completely.

About an hour later we had the chance of a lifetime. A bunch of ten, with one monstrous buck in it, cut out of the pita ahead of us. We, too immediately cut out on the plain, paralleling them. They began to circle us, we approaching closer every instant. When the car skidded to a stop they were exactly 70 yards from us. I was experimenting with Kaliski's rifle, which was short for me. The proximity of the telescope to my eye made me flinch. And being accustomed to open sights, it was hard for me, in the scope's limited field, to select out of that speeding brown and white line the particular bug buck we were all aiming for. From which alibi you can guess the result – once again we all missed, though that bunch of ten antelope ran a three-quarters circle around us, most of the time less than 100 yards distant. When it was all over I sat down on the running board and let out of my system every unholy expletive I had learned from the age of three upwards. Whipple, who was using a Winchester '95. .30-06 lever actions, simply gazed speechless at the poor, blameless gun, as if he didn't know which – he or the rifle – ought to commit *hari kari* first.

In the afternoon we saw more animals, but at a distance. The first day we had seen nineteen antelope; this day we saw upwards of thirty. What the three of us

stood for from the two killers and Pollay around the adobe shack's little table that night, you can guess.

Next morning early found the same three hunters again out with Pollay. But the antelope seemed either to have cleared out for parts unknown or to have bunched up in some secluded spot. We covered 45 miles, which took us all morning without sighting a moving thing. Then we came across the unusual sight of a buck running with a fawn. We let them get away undisturbed. Shortly afterwards Pollay saw, far in the distance, five moving specks. We cut across the flat to intercept them. They tried to cut across us, but by forcing the car we were able to run up parallel to them. We had taken them for four does and one very large buck.

Imagine our surprise to find they were four fawns and a doe. All told, we saw seven fawns that day, out of a total of twenty-six antelope.

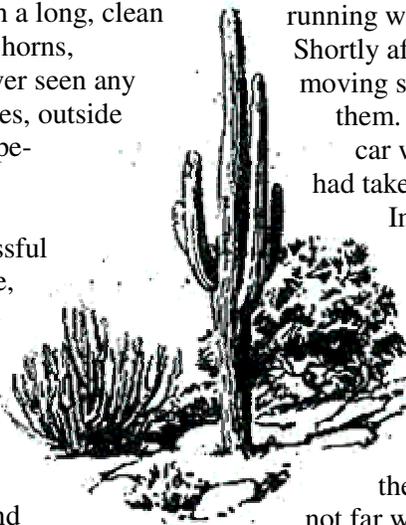
But we weren't getting shots, and this was next to the last day of the hunting. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon we jumped four does and a buck in the edge of the pita. We got very close to them, as they were not far when we jumped them. We stopped the car as they started a half circle around us. All fired for the buck of course. On his third shot Critch broke the buck's haunches and he went down. Critch ran up and finished him. This day he was using Kaliski's Winchester 54, instead of his on .35 Remington automatic. The head was a good one, only slightly smaller than Kaliski's

Whipple and I stood the razzing alone that night. Next day was our last chance, for we had to pull out the day after. We slept little, and were up long before the crack of dawn. We took the Ford sedan, Doc accompanying us – "to show us how to do it," as he said, dodging a cup of coffee that barely missed him.

I drove. And that's the truth. I drove and drove and drove. Mile upon mile of barren pita land we scanned assiduously, until our eyes blurred. Late in the morning we jumped one animal, only to discover, after running it up into the pita where we could have had a shot, that it was a doe. We sighted one more doe far out on the Encantada flat, where to pursue would be hopeless. At noon we gulped down a lunch of bread, antelope steak, and water, and were on our way – after killing the one rattlesnake we saw on the trip, a little fellow with five rattles who crawled from beneath the car as we ate lunch.

Indeed the antelope had finally been frightened out of the immediate country, or they were bunched up where we couldn't find them. In the hope that the latter supposition was true we climbed into new country where the going was hard. We jumped one animal – whether doe or buck we never did find out –

*Cont. on page 9*



*Cont. from page 8*

who managed to elude us by running up high on the side of a hill, into the thick pita where we could not follow. The afternoon waned. We had not got a shot. Deep in disappointment, we finally drove our banged-up car into camp just before sundown, acknowledging defeat.

Supper awaited us, and a couple drinks of tequila. The hunt was over; everything was ready for an early departure next morning. At supper the razzing at my expense was considerable. Doc waxed mightily with his taunts as supper drew to a close. He said there was one spot in the whole country we hadn't hit that day, his Romance Hole, right down by Antelope Butte. He dared me to go back there with him. Even with a couple of slugs of tequila inside me, I knew his dare was ridiculous. The sun had already set, and it was 10 miles back to Antelope Butte. I refused. Doc offered to bet \$5 we would see antelope if we went back there. I refused to listen. Doc grew more extravagant. Finally he bet \$10 that is we went back there we'd see antelope, and not only that but that he'd shoot Keckler's .38-40 single-action Colt and come closer to them than I would with my Remington 30. I had borne enough. I couldn't let the blankety-blank Texan get away with that. I took him up. We collared Kaliski to be the judge of our wager and climbed into the Ford sedan. The rest of the camp was oblivious to our departure, being engrossed in the pistol championship match which had long been scheduled for the last afternoon in camp and which was finally won by Whipple after some difficulty in elimination Critcha and the two guides.

Truly only fools – and tequila fools at that – would have set out on such a wild goose chase. Dusk was settling down rapidly, as the sunset waned. I drove like mad. About 4 miles from Antelope Butte I cut over toward the hills, to follow them on the higher land so we could get a run out onto the plain in case we jumped anything. Getting to the hills, I tried to keep as high up their lower slopes as possible, but rocks and frequent gullies made it wild, dangerous going. Presently we had a flat tire. Both spares were low, and next to useless. But bang-bangity-bang, we changed the tire anyway, and were on. Kaliski sat in the front with me, holding his door open to jump when the accident occurred, as he was sure it would. I damned him for a sissy and drove faster, with only one object in mind – to get to Doc's Romance Hole before it was too dark to see. None of us will forget that ride soon, I imagine. At least one – possibly two of the tires were flat, of that we felt pretty sure; but moments were precious and there was no time for more changing.

We were about 1 mile from Antelope Butte, when I heard a shout I could scarcely believe. Doc was yelling, "There they are! Straight ahead, to the right!" I took my eyes from the terrain to look – and I will never

forget that sight. In the half-light of descending night I could see twelve antelope running off the hillside ahead, making for the flat. I threw the car in second and cut off diagonally after them. It was a great run, the most spectacular run of the entire hunt. The car gained speed due to our being on a slope when we started, and when we ran out onto the plain we must have been doing 35 an hour. We gained on the speeding herd.

"Oh, God, if they'll only turn!" I heard Doc groan.

They were running for the middle of the flat, but we were coming up on them from their right side. Then they did it – they turned, to circle us in front and get back to the hills.

I jammed on the brakes and jumped out. Kaliski handed me my gun through the car window. Doc fired several shots from the revolver; deliberately wild just to fulfill the conditions of his bet. But it was my high moment, and a serious moment – my very last chance, and no doubt about it.



There were three bucks in the herd. The light was very bad. I fired one shot at a distance of about 125 yards, one at about 140, one at about 160. All with no effect. My magazine held five shots. My fourth shot never sounded. Just a dull "click". I tried again. Another "click". The truth dawned on me slowly as the herd pointed away, now out of range, and my last chance gone. Only three shells, instead of the customary five, had been put in the magazine.

It was a disappointing ending to a climactic, frenzied chase. I said nothing, neither did Kaliski, but I heard Doc utter a sad and forlorn "Damn!" I walked back to the car...

But look! Up on the hill behind us was a lone animal trotting off toward the herd, which was out of sight. He was a big buck. I shouted to the others – we all shouted. There was a chance we could cut him off before he got down on the flat, where we now were. I jumped in the car and we were off.

The buck kept to the high ground. At first he had been trotting slowly. Now, as we approached, he grew alarmed and ran like lightning. But we were successfully cutting off his approach to the flat. I was driving, higher, higher, getting closer, closer, knowing that if I kept forcing him to angle upward he would eventually try to gain the plain by making a final dash in front of us and thus give me a shot. Doc shouted, "He's the big fellow we saw day before yesterday! The granddaddy of them all!"

The buck went up over a little knoll. On the other side was a depression, and I

*Cont. on page 10*

*Cont. from page 9*

felt that there he would attempt to cross to the flat. I gave the car every bit of gas.

Suddenly, like eery voices in a nightmare, I heard two frenzied shout: "LOOK OUT!" At the very same instant I saw the enormous gully, at least 25 feet deep, that yawned directly in front of the speeding car. Automatically I had jammed on all the brakes. Visions of the scrambled wreck crossed my mind – someone yelled frantically – but it was all over in the fraction of a second. The car skidded and slid to a stop on the very brink of the deep ditch, the front tires actually breaking over its jagged edge.

I jumped out, oddly calm. This time, as we had stated out, Kaliski had been careful to fill my magazine with shells from the car floor. Luck was with us. We could go no farther, but as I had hoped, the buck had decided to cut in front of us in this depression, and he was even now rounding us, directly in front.. By the time I got my first shot he was about 150 yards away, quartering. It was a miss. It was now actually almost dark. The circle of my rear sight blurred dismally. At 200 yards, at which distance I had my second shot, the buck was little more than a dark splotch against a gray background. My second shot had no effect, but we could see the light dust fly right behind him. The buck was actually circling back, giving me a broadside shot. Surely the breaks of the game were favoring me. I couldn't fail forever. Through some psychological quirk I was calmer, steadier than I had yet been in the antelope

shooting. Perhaps it was because there were no other guns banging in my ears.

At the third shot the antelope was approximately 250 yards away, for it was now so dark that aiming was a slow procedure. At the sound of the gun the buck stumbled. He gained his feet again but did not run. "A hit! A hit!" Kaliski shouted. We drove to the animal and found him with a broken hind leg. I finished him and we put on the auto light to have a good look. He proved to be indeed the big buck we had shot at two days before. One horn measured 16 ½ inches, the other 16 ¾ - to the best of our knowledge a record head for Mexico, and without doubt one of the largest taken in North America in many years.

We drove back to camp on two flat tires, in total darkness. Halfway back we met a car from camp which had been sent out to search for us. There is really no need to tell more. It was the most astonishing and dramatic climax to a hunting trip I had ever experienced. The celebration in camp lasted till late in the night.

And next morning as the sun rose wanly, and the mists and rain again settled on the land of pita, our cavalcade of cars drove off toward Muzquiz. And even the ensuing hardships of that day (we had to abandon all three cars in the mud and trudge by foot, most of a day and a night, to the nearest settlement) could not wash out the delightful memories we will carry forever of fast shooting, heart-breaking misses, and final success in the waste-land paradise down south of San Antonio.



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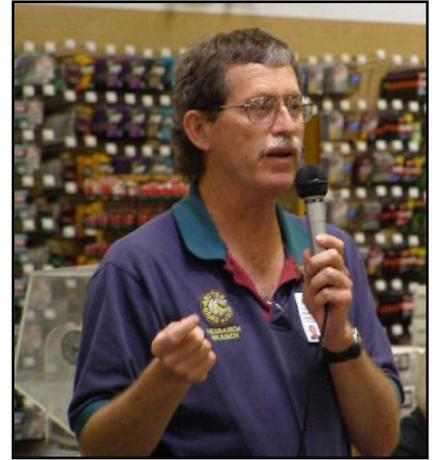


*Quality-sized pronghorn bucks continued to be taken in Coahuila through the 1950s. Finally, after being extirpated, pronghorn were reintroduced into Coahuila and will hopefully increase. Photo by Alejandro Espinosa"*

## 2006 HUNTER CLINIC RECAP

The 14th annual Antelope Hunters' Clinic was held on Tuesday, August 15th, at Sportsman's Warehouse, 19205 North 27th Avenue in Phoenix. With over 100 people in the audience, the clinic was very well attended, and hunters and their guests were treated to a wide variety of presentations on subjects important to the outcome of their upcoming hunts. Included in the presentations were:

- Arizona pronghorn history and behavior, by Richard Ockenfels, Arizona Game and Fish Department research biologist.
- Optics, by Western Hunter magazine editor Chris Denham.
- Archery hunting tactics, by Corky Richardson.
- Rifle hunting tactics and trophy evaluation, by AAF past president Jim McCasland.
- Field care, taxidermy issues, and photography, by Greg McBride, Trail's End Wildlife Artistry.



In addition to the formal presentations, representatives of the five AG&FD regions with antelope hunts this fall were on hand to discuss the specific hotspots in the game management units drawn by the hunters in the audience. The regional representatives were:

Region 1 (Pinetop) – Mike Sumner  
Region 2 (Flagstaff) – Clint Adams  
Region 3 (Kingman) – Bill Ough

Region 5 (Tucson) – Jim Heffelfinger  
Region 6 (Mesa) – Jake Fousek



We would like to take this opportunity to thank Sportsman's Warehouse store manager Bruce Gibson and his folks for the outstanding support they provided in helping us plan, set up, and conduct the clinic. Sportsman's Warehouse generously donated a Ruger model 77 rifle to the Foundation, which was raffled off during the clinic to help offset our costs. The rifle was won by Shon Vaughn from Taylor, AZ. We also had a new members' raffle, in which the winner had his choice of a Garmin Etrex Vista CX GPS, Bushnell YardagePro laser rangefinder, Nikon Monarch 10X42 binoculars, or a Bushnell Elite 15 - 45 X60 mm spotting scope, all made available to the AAF at a reduced rate by

Sportsman's Warehouse. Winner David Frampton of Gilbert chose the GPS.



# AAF'S THIRD ANNUAL FUNDRAISING BANQUET

(CONT. FROM PAGE 1 )

...what happened?

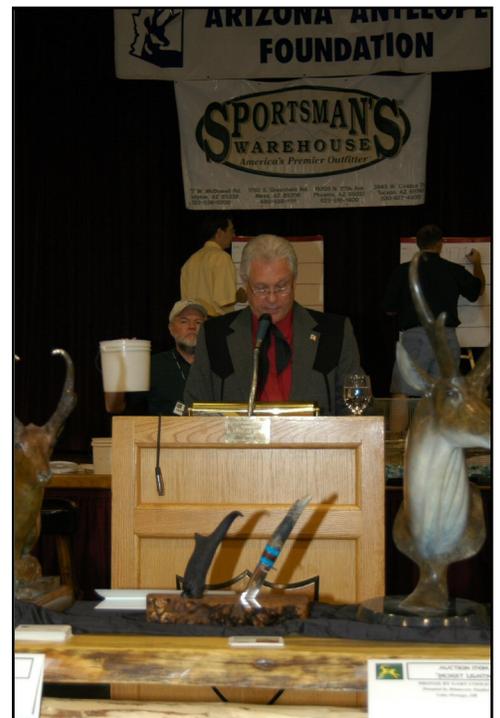
- The El Zaribah Shrine, aka Shirley Howard, put on probably the finest buffet dinner most folks have ever had there! Kudos to Shirley and her staff!
- We sold more tickets this year compared to last year, and made money on the banquet tickets in the process.
- We doubled our Balloon money.
- The Ladies Raffle was once again a hit.
- The Tent Package and Hussey "500" did well too.
- The Silent Auction was successful.



- The Live Auction was a hit, and Brad Smith again did a great job!
  - The Bucket and General Raffles, while popular, could again be considered loss leaders.
  - The Hat "Blitz" and Pick A Prize again generated a lot of excitement. (we have a lot of hats left!)
  - The Commission's Special Antelope Tag went for \$61,000!
  - Master of Ceremonies Doug Stancill was in fine form!
- While we fell short by about 40 people in comparing the number of banquet attendees at the 1st one, we moved up again in the all important "income/attendee" category compared to what happened at the 2nd one. On a net basis, we should exceed \$220 per person, adding well over \$50K to our AAF Treasury for 2006...by any measure, making our 3rd Annual Fundraising Banquet a Success!

Thank you very much for the dedicated volunteers who helped make it happen, and to all the folks that found time and some extra cash in their wallet to come out, have some fun and help out Arizona's antelope in the process!

Jim Unmacht, 2006 AAF Banquet Chair



# THANKS TO OUR 2006 BANQUET DONORS

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# PRONGHORN SYMPOSIUM A TEXAS SUCCESS

BY DAVID E. BROWN

This last August I was invited to present a paper on pronghorn horn growth at a *Pronghorn Symposium* at Sul Ross University in Alpine, Texas. One look at the roster of invited papers and the lineup of presenters, and I wanted to be there. In essence, the symposium would be a clinic for pronghorn managers. The targeted audience would be ranchers, outfitters, biologists, and others involved in pronghorn husbandry.

The organizers especially Ken Cearley of the Texas Cooperative Extension Service, Steve Nelle of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Billy Tarrant of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, did an outstanding job. Although West Texas was the focus of the symposium, there were also papers by people from Arizona and New Mexico. All were power-point presentations containing valuable information and of excellent quality.

Anyone involved with pronghorn in the Southwest was bound to learn something. And, for the first time in my career, the symposium proceedings were published *prior* to the symposium, thus allowing more pertinent questions from the audience.

Most of the papers dealt with factors determining the presence and abundance of pronghorn in Texas and covered such topics as the animal's basic life history and ecology, habitat requirements, food habits, the effects of precipitation, home range, causes of mortality, how to interpret the physical evidence of predation, habitat management, overcoming highway barriers, and the importance of practicing *conservative* range management. In short, the symposium covered nearly all of the problems facing pronghorn in Arizona. My presentation on the importance of environmental factors on horn growth was also well received, and prompted more than a few questions from the audience.

Later in the afternoon, a panel of five pronghorn managers, mostly ranchers, presented their viewpoints on allocating permits, marketing pronghorn, and how to better manage the species. Selected participants were then given a copy of the 2006 Pronghorn Management

Guides. Of the 130 people who attended, almost all were present throughout the day, and many joined in the communal feed and discussions that followed.

The second day was the highlight of the symposium and an event wonderfully peculiar to Texas. A 550 pound heifer and an adult male pronghorn with a deformed horn had been dispatched the night before, and available for necropsies by veterinarians Dr. Dan McBride, and his colleague, "Dr. Bill." The comparisons were highly interesting. The heifer's and pronghorn's hearts were nearly the same size, yet the trachea of the cow fit neatly within the pronghorn's. The much smaller rumen of the pronghorn was filled with salad greens, while the cow's held mostly grass stems. The more than 50 attendees remaining also learned how to age both animals and where to look for fat deposits,

how to locate the pronghorn's several scent glands, and how to identify the pronghorn's gall bladder and spleen. Not a single soul left early.

This exercise was then followed by a search for more than 50 forbs in the same pasture as where the pronghorn had been shot. Steve Nelle and a host of Texas A&M students were there to



identify the plants and before long we were learning a whole new suite of pronghorn foods. Nor could I help but notice that although the forbs were in great supply due to the summer rains, some of the browse plants had been hard hit during the previous drought. The pasture was not in as good a condition as it first appeared. I had indeed learned much from this symposium—that pronghorn have glands containing an anti-bacterial agent between their toes, that Texas pronghorn suffer from drought, brush invasion, and nearly all of the same maladies that Arizona pronghorn do, and, thanks to Wildlife Manager Misty Sumner, that Hudspeth County contains some real bruiser-sized bucks.

Editor's note: The paper Dr. Brown presented at this symposium entitled "Factors Affecting Variation on Pronghorn Horn Growth" can be found on our website.



## SHORT SHOTS

### ARIZONA BIG GAME SUPER RAFFLE

The first-ever Arizona Big Game Super Raffle was a rousing success! Ticket orders were received from all 50 states and Canada, and raised a total of \$514,000+ for wildlife in Arizona! The antelope share of that amount was \$48,680, which represented 4868 tickets sold!

The 2007 campaign has now begun and is expected to far exceed the 2006 results. Tickets are reasonably priced, and the Swarovski optics package is once again included. New this year is an incentive package for a caribou hunt in Quebec, which includes a scoped rifle, air travel, cash and fishing.

The drawing for this raffle will occur **July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2007**. Visit the Super Raffle website more information.  
[www.arizonabiggamesuperraffle.com](http://www.arizonabiggamesuperraffle.com)

### HOLIDAY GIFT

You know the holidays are right around the corner. Here's a great gift idea to add to your list...an AAF Life Membership! We've got an adequate supply, flexible terms, and it would be a great addition to your list! Check out the details on our website. [WWW.AZANTELOPE.ORG](http://WWW.AZANTELOPE.ORG)

### TOOTH AGING STUDY

We will be teaming up with the Armendaris Ranch in New Mexico once again this year to conduct a study to age harvested pronghorn antelope and compare their respective horn size and B & C score. In most antlered big game species, the older the animal, the larger the antlers and the bigger the B & C score. As we previously reported, that's proving to **not** to hold true with pronghorn, hence the study. If you are fortunate enough to hunt antelope this fall, you can help us with this study by sending us a tooth from your animal. Look for more information on our website.

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

### RIFLE RAFFLE

AAF Member Ken Alexander was the lucky winner of the Ruger 25-06 in our annual rifle raffle. His was the winning ticket drawn at our Fundraising Banquet on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. Thanks again to Sportsman's Warehouse for donating this beautiful rifle! Stay tuned for information on next year's raffle

### LIFE MEMBERSHIP INCREASES AGAIN!

Matt Massey of Gilbert has added his name to the esteemed Life Members list. Matt was the winning bidder during the live Auction at our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual fundraising banquet in July to become Life Member #22. He is currently serving as a director on the AAF Board of Directors. Thanks Matt for your continued support of the Foundation! If you are interested in becoming a Life Member, visit on our website to find out more.

[WWW.AZANTELOPE.ORG](http://WWW.AZANTELOPE.ORG)



### ADOPT-A-HERD

As previously reported, the Arizona Antelope Foundation has entered into an agreement with the Arizona Game and Fish Department to try and locate and evaluate several pronghorn populations too small for the Department to survey on a regular basis.

Chris Keellihier volunteered to participate and reported seeing a herd near Pat Nole in unit 1 out of Water Canyon which included 2 bucks and approximately 8 does. He also spotted a second group consisting of 2 bucks and 2 does by Crosby Crossing in unit 1 going easterly. Chris also reported a group was spotted 1-2 miles towards Sierra Blanca Lake. A large buck and 3 does were in this group.

Thanks Chris and we hope to hear more. If you, or anyone you know, is interested in participating in these surveys, please contact Dave Brown at [bosco069@aol.com](mailto:bosco069@aol.com) and he will put you in contact with the proper Game and Fish officer in your area of interest.



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## **SPORTSMAN'S CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS!**

<b><i>WHAT?</i></b>	<b><i>WHEN?</i></b>	<b><i>WHERE?</i></b>
The Arizona Antelope Foundation Board Meetings	October 9 6:30 PM November 13 6:30 PM December 11 6:30 PM	The Phoenix Zoo 455 N. Galvin Parkway
AAF Work Projects	November	Watch for details on our website
The Wildlife Conservation Council Board Meetings	October 24 6:30 PM November 28 6:30 PM	AZ Game & Fish Department 2221 W. Greenway Rd

Would you like the Pronghorn via email....let us know! Or if you have an upcoming event, send us the information at [info@azantelope.org](mailto:info@azantelope.org).