



# PRONGHORN

Official Publication of the Arizona Antelope Foundation, Inc., a Non-Profit, Tax-Exempt Corporation ~ Volume 12, Number 4, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2006

## AAF'S RENEWED PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HORSESHOE RANCH

The AAF and Horseshoe Ranch became Aopt-A-Ranch partners again last summer. This is good news not only for the partners, but also for the pronghorn which will benefit in these mutual efforts! You'll read about our last project of 2006 inside which was held at the Ranch.



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**P.O. Box 15501  
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## Visit us on the World Wide Web

**www.azantelope.org  
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.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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What a busy year this has been for the Arizona Antelope Foundation. The board established a scholarship program, AAF conservation award, Adopt-a-Herd program to help monitor small populations of antelope and helped launch the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle. We also continued sponsoring and funding projects to improve antelope habitat, conducted our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual fundraising banquet, and 14<sup>th</sup> annual hunter clinic.

At the December 9<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting we will present our first two Conservation Awards. The deserving recipients are Richard Ockenfels and Jim DeVos. Both Richard and Jim have been

involved in pronghorn management and habitat improvement for many years.

I hope that, in the coming year, everyone will take the time to attend at least one board meeting, habitat project or fundraiser meeting. The projects are family and child friendly and fun. They are a great way to pass on your love of the outdoors to your children. The AAF needs your involvement to help us help antelope.

As the outgoing President I want to say a special thanks to the board for all the help I received this year. Without these dedicated volunteers the AAF would not be one of the premiere wildlife groups in



Arizona.

*Dave Laird*

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## CLINIC INFO ASSISTS HUNTER TO SUCCESS

BY JIM BROWN, MESA

My hunt took place in Ross, Wyoming, about 60 miles north of Douglas. The buck was taken at less than 75 yards with a Swiss K-31. My buddy and I had stalked a herd for an hour and a half and couldn't get any closer than 400 yards. We had reached the last hill that would offer cover and I had decided to take a shot at the big buck. As I sighted in, this buck came trotting across the open prairie. He stood between us and the herd. After a few minutes, a young buck chased him off and he ran right towards us. As he rounded the hill, he gave me a full broad side shot at less than 75 yards. An hour and a half into the hunt, and I was done! Not sure how it scored. I'll let the taxidermist give me the numbers



when I pick it up.

The second picture is a herd I surprised while fossil hunting. I came over a hill and the big buck was less than 10 yards from me. We both jumped when we saw each other and he charged a bit toward me before chasing off the herd. This was a quick snapshot I got before they ran too far.

The info I received from the clinic was a great help and Jim Unmacht was a great help with finding a taxidermist when I got back. Thanks!



# SONORAN PRONGHORN UPDATE



BY JILL BRIGHT AZ GAME & FISH  
NOVEMBER 27, 2006

**Captive Breeding:** It has been an exciting time at the captive breeding enclosure. On November 17-19, we released 2 of the yearling males from the north half of the pen. First, we darted them while they were feeding at the alfalfa feeder, then drove them to the release pen, which was near the Charlie Bell forage site. We recovered them from the drugs in a small pen, and then let them into the release pen. We held the first animal there for 2 nights while we were attempting to get a second yearling to release together. We got the second animal on Sunday morning, recovered him for about 2 hours, and then opened a gate in the release pen. Within a few minutes, both yearlings ran out, and headed west towards the Charlie Bell plot. We've been monitoring both animals from Pack Rat Hill, as both have radio collars and ear tags. We also did a telemetry flight on Sunday November 26. One yearling crossed over Charlie Bell pass, and was north of the pass in the Growler Valley, with an adult female. The other juvenile has been seen just north of the pen. Both appear to be in good condition.

We plan to move the other 2 yearling males out of the pen in January. We also plan to move the male fawns into a separate area in the pen to prevent them from harassing females and new fawns next spring.

All the pronghorn in the pen are doing well, foraging on both native food and alfalfa. We have been irrigating in the pen, as conditions are starting to dry out.

**Water Projects:** We built two new waters on the Marine side of BMGR in October. The Point of the Pinta's site was built on October 20-21. It rained heavily on October 24 and filled up. We are planning expansion of 4 waters on the Cabeza Prieta Refuge. We plan to do those this coming winter, with volunteer help.

**Forage Enhancements:** We have been irrigating at Charlie Bell and Lower Well forage plots. The Air Force has provided a new generator, and security container, to be placed on site at the Granite Mountains forage plot. This will reduce the amount of travel over rough roads, which has caused numerous mechanical problems with the generators.

**Other Projects:** We are planning a range wide survey for pronghorn in Arizona December 9 – December 16. We are also planning a capture operation after the survey to put GPS radio collars on five pronghorn. The capture will depend on the results of the survey and range conditions at the time.

**Wild Pronghorn:** We conducted several flights on October 8-9 to look for wild pronghorn and estimate recruitment for this year. We saw 35 total animals in 5 groups. It was a little hard to tell some fawns from adult does. We saw 7 adult bucks, between 14-16 does and between 10-13 fawns, depending on classification. Our estimate for recruitment was between 71 – 87 fawns per 100 does, with an average of 78 fawns per 100 does.

We have also done several telemetry flights, with the 2 adult females with radio collars commonly seen in the San Cristobal Valley, near the Fawn Hills, usually together with 6-8 other pronghorn.

The AF monitors had been seeing up to 20 pronghorn on the Tactical Ranges in early October, but have not been seeing any lately.

# HUNTING UP AN ANCIENT PRONGHORN CORRAL: A CHALLENGE TO ARCHEOLOGISTS

BY DAVID E. BROWN

I don't know who first sent me Robert Diggs's 20-year old article on "Stone Walls and Shafts: Evidence of a Communal Game Drive System on the Colorado Plateau," but it was probably AAF Director Thom Hulén.

This paper, written by an archeologist from Northern Arizona University, suggested that a walled site north of Springerville's Casa Malapai ruins was used by hunters to corral and kill pronghorn sometime around 1150 BC.

Skeptical, and suspecting that the site might have been used to corral jack-rabbits rather than pronghorn, three of us determined to take a look for ourselves.

Thom Hulén, Randy Turcotte, and I left our pronghorn fence work project at Basin Lake in the White Mountains early on a Sunday morning to see if we could find the site. The directions in the article came across as purposely vague as no roads were indicated on the map, only distances and topographical features. The key location appeared to be the historic Hall Ranch, and with



a little dead-reckoning we found our way to the Ranch to start our search. And that is where it ended. On our arrival at a small cabin guarding the property, a lady ordered us to stay in our vehicle as the site was "off

limits" without a written letter from the Hopi tribe. With a rather vicious looking dog to back up her claim, and me visualizing a shotgun leaning within an arm's length of her doorstep, we did just as we were ordered. No matter that our map showed the site on state land. The lady was adamant that we had to see the Hopis first.

What followed was more than a year of visits, phone calls, and correspondence to various Hopi elders in an attempt to get a letter of

clearance. AAF Past President Jim Unmacht, finally made the right contacts and we were able to get permission but not in a letter format. But that was enough, we had a verbal o.k., and an e-mail full of names and phone numbers to call should the lady and

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## PREHISTORIC PRONGHORN HUNTING IN ARIZONA

BY DAVID E. BROWN

Although today's pronghorn was on hand to greet the newly arrived big game hunters from Asia some 12,000 years ago, these animals were probably not as important to Pleistocene hunters as bison and other large mammals. Besides not being very large, pronghorn were less susceptible than bison to being herded off cliffs *en masse* and into arroyo traps. Such communal big game hunting locales as the Garnsey site near Roswell, New Mexico, while containing the remains of several pronghorn, were mostly composed of bison bones. Communal bison kill sites are unknown in Arizona, however, and individual pronghorn were not particularly susceptible to men armed with atlatls, spears, and nets. This situation appears to have changed between 1500 and 2500 years ago when the bow and arrow arrived in

the New World. Pronghorn now became an important game animal, so much so that nearly every archeological excavation dated after that time shows evidence of pronghorn use by Native Americans.

Among the oldest artifacts found from this period are split twig effigies of antelope-looking figures from northern Arizona. Later depictions of animals, definitely intended to be pronghorn, are represented as petroglyphs (rock etchings), pictographs (painted drawings), murals (wall paintings), ceramic fetishes (effigies), designs on ceramic bowls, and even as heralds on shields.

Even though their hides were decidedly inferior to buckskin, pronghorn rivaled deer as a source of meat and sinew for prehistoric Arizonans. Shamen or hunt leaders

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# HORSESHOE RANCH PROJECT REPORT

BY JIM UNMACHT



The culmination of a lot of planning and effort came to fruition over the first weekend in December as the Horseshoe Ranch hosted our last work project of the year by providing a "campground" of luxurious proportions compared with our past camping sites! Many thanks to our hosts, Dale Longbrake and Jimmie Peterson!

Our turnout overall was excellent, a count of 40 people, however our AAF representation was poor. The AAF was outnumbered by 15 ASU students from David Brown's class and a like number of folks that were affiliated with the Friends of the Agua Fria National Monument. Some good cross organizational teamwork, but disappointing from an Antelope Foundation participation standpoint.

As usual we "got er done", led by Game & Fish's Wildlife Manager Jake Fousek and Access Program Coordinator Troy Christensen, we teamed up with Tonto National Forest Ranger Carol Engle and the BLM rep on the Monument Rem Hawes. We converted a barbed wire to a smooth one on a mile of pasture fence and repaired a water tank and windmill enclosure too. We saw pronghorn sign, but no animals on the project.

Tracy Unmacht ramrodded the cooking detail this go round and did a great job with the assistance of Jessica Rogers from ASU. The cook house provided by the Horseshoe Ranch provided a great facility for readying the meal to feed 3 dozen people. The BBQ grill on site resulted in made to order steaks for all who ate.

We will likely return to the Ranch next spring for another project, don't miss the opportunity!

Thanks to the following volunteers: Ken Tluczek, Melanie Tluczek, Lauren Washington, Matt Ritter, Tim Flood, Andrea Pohlman, Melinda Ehrler, Sarah Lewis, Julee Risinger, Morgan Haweds, Emily Ash, Kevin Harding, Carlos Hernandez, Steve Sutton, Brent Smith, Jim Unmacht, Tracy Unmacht, Jimmy Unmacht, Jamie Hobbs, Amanda Michalek, Rick Michalek, Manuela Gonzalez, Bill Keebler, Mary Keebler, Rose Werner, Ron Werner, Josh Gamble, Andrew Oldak, Janet Millard-Oldak, Jim Vaaler, David Brown, Kathy Robertson,



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# ARIZONA SPECIAL TAGS

BY DAVID BROWN

One of the most successful habitat improvement programs has been those financed by raising money through the issuing of special pronghorn tags. After an intense lobbying effort by the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society, the Arizona legislature passed A. R. S. 17:346 in 1983 by which two big game tags would be issued for each big game species at a special auction and/or drawing. The proviso was that all of the monies obtained would be used solely for the management of the species for which the tag was issued. This statute was supported by Arizona Game and Fish Commission Rule R12-4-120, and in 1985 the first special tags were issued for pronghorn. At first only nominal amounts of money were raised with the first 14 tags bringing in only a total of \$86,521 for pronghorn management. Then, in 1994, the newly formed Arizona Antelope Foundation took an interest in promoting the tags, the first ones being issued to Robert Petersen and Sam S. Jaksick, Jr. Other auctions followed, and individuals such as Jerry Fletcher and Wayne Webber joined Jaksick and Petersen in bidding up the tags. Before long were bidding



\$40,000 and up for a special antelope tag.

These large money amounts were due to Arizona's reputation for large trophies and the provision that tag-holders could hunt in any area having a huntable pronghorn population during a special season. Outfitters vied for privilege of guiding those that successfully bid for tags at special fund-raising events put on by conservation organizations. Some of the heads taken were impressive. In 2001 Robert Petersen took a pronghorn in Unit 9 that scored 94.3 Boone and Crockett points. This was Petersen's 11<sup>th</sup> tag and it cost him \$65,000. That same year, Dr. David Meyer's bid of \$40,000 resulted in a 91 6/8 buck, and in 2002 his bid at the Arizona Antelope Foundation's Fundraising banquet produced a perfect 95 (17 2/8" by 17 2/8") point buck

that had been transplanted two years earlier from the Prescott area to the Arizona Strip. This animal, which tied one taken in Unit 9 by Dylan Woods, was proclaimed a new world record, the 101 6/8" point "Beck Buck" that had been taken on the Arizona Strip in 1878 having been disqualified when forensics showed that the horns had been "built up" at their base. In 2004, Wayne W. Webber successfully bid on both auction tags, taking a 90 6/8 point trophy in GMU 19A and a 94.0 point head in GMU 18A. Successful bidders came from as far away as Neenah, Wisconsin and Champaign, Illinois. As of 2005, these special tags had raised more than \$1,000,000 for pronghorn management—much of the money being spent rehabilitating pronghorn habitat on Anderson Mesa.

Most of the tags, which came with a generous season and allowed the recipient to hunt any game management unit open to hunting, were sold at auctions as the conservation organizations charged with selling the tags could not absorb the costs of conducting a raffle. This resulted in some criticizing the program for only issuing the special tags to wealthy bidders. In response, several sportsmen's organizations including the Arizona Antelope Foundation requested that the legislature and Commission expand the number of special permits for each species from two to three, the third permit to be raffled off in a "Super Raffle." To fund the program and solicit \$10 tickets each organization contributed \$500 to an operating fund and enlisted the support of volunteer groups. The Swarovski company donated a package of high quality optics to enhance interest in the raffle. Since all of the money raised for the 9 big game tags being offered would go to the Arizona Game and Fish Department, such contributions were essential.

By 2006, the Super Raffle website ([www.arizonabiggamesuperraffle.com](http://www.arizonabiggamesuperraffle.com)) was operational and a publicity campaign initiated. Support was high, both among the volunteer groups and from the Department. By the time of the 2006 Super Raffle deadline on July 5, \$514,000 had been taken in, \$48,650 of which was for the pronghorn tag. Income for the optics raffle alone was nearly \$50,000 and easily paid for the publicity effort. Similar raffles are anticipated to continue, and along with the auction tags, monies will be available to open up significant areas of junipers and other brush, remove and modify fences, and develop water sources and food plots in critical pronghorn. Hopefully too, key pronghorn habitats will also be acquired through a fund allocation process agreed upon by both the participating organizations and the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

# “BIG TITONKA”

BY JIM UNMACHT

I guess I've wanted to hunt buffalo ever since I was a youngster growing up in Iowa. Those thoughts more than likely precipitated from watching Western movies and reading Western novels, but were also spurred along as my family crisscrossed the country on several vacations 40 years ago. It was just hard to fathom the Great Plains "black with bison", something that now might only happen with other species in the Arctic or on the Plains of Africa. So with that stage set, I would occasionally think about a buffalo hunt driving past a few fenced buffalo in the Midwest, or when the local grocery store had some buffalo burger for sale. After a time, reality would set in and the buffalo hunt would seep back into memory after the last bite from the burger.

Moving to Arizona in the late 80's changed the playing field however. In reading the Game & Fish Hunt Regulations one day, the Buffalo reference caught my eye...suddenly there was some

opportunity! The price, the odds of getting drawn and even more difficult, convincing my wife I needed to begin fronting the fees for the annual draw, did not make this a slam dunk. We successfully worked through that though and eventually my Buffalo Bonus Point Quest was on!

I began acquainting myself with Arizona's buffalo history and it didn't take long to determine I wanted to actually hunt one of these beasts and not just shoot it. Of course I also wanted a "Big Titonka" (titonka = buffalo in Sioux), not a cow or yearling. So most of the time I was looking at a House Rock hunt on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon versus a Raymond Ranch hunt on the grasslands south of Flagstaff. The odds for this draw were astronomical however. Once in a Lifetime summed it up, but after 14 Bonus Points and the Game & Fish Commission's new stance towards the herd on the House Rock, I was thinking my chances for a hunt, let alone a successful one, were minimal. The National

Park Service no longer had the welcome mat out for wandering bison at the Grand Canyon NP, even though they'd been "visiting" there for decades. The Raymond Ranch alternative began to look more appealing.

So that's where my focus shifted, to simply have the opportunity to harvest one of these fine animals, fill the freezer and take one more step towards the Arizona Big Ten. I was stalled at 8 for 10, with only a bear also alluding me. As I pondered the applications for the Fall 2006 draw, I automatically put in my "Hunter Pool Application" again like I had religiously for years. They

were now called "management hunts" versus "depredation hunts"...oh the era of political correctness!

Well, in the middle of the Phoenix Summer, in the one hundred and teens temperature wise, I received a voice mail from Game & Fish. It was Thursday



afternoon July 6, 2006...I was drawn for a House Rock Buffalo hunt and had 24 hours to RSVP. After realizing this wasn't a prank call, I called Game & Fish and said yes! Then I was asked to listen to the spiel, think about it and call the next day. This was touted as one of the most difficult hunts in Arizona, likely to be in wilderness area, and buffalo are big! I also knew several people that hunted buffalo at the House Rock and weren't successful, some after 30 days without seeing an animal, so I listened attentively, made notes and thought about it. There would be 5 hunters and G & F personnel would assist. They wanted us to camp north of the headquarters, do no scouting, and I had to be at "Buffalo Class" Friday night at 8pm on the 14th. I was hunter # 5, which meant if we saw one animal, the plan was hunter # 1 would go first, and so on. Previous success ratios weren't good, and I could buy a lot of beef for \$750.

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*"Big Titonka" Continued from page 8*

I still wanted to accept the tag, even though I was in the middle of chairing the Arizona Antelope Foundation fundraiser, it was mid-July, way too hot to hunt, and the success ratio wasn't the greatest. But I told the employee I would think on it. I did and got the greenlight from my spouse. So I called the next morning at 8:15 am and said yes! ...and right after I said yes, my credit card number was requested...but then I learned I was hunter # 1! Things were looking up.

Now the adrenaline started to flow...I was going to hunt buffalo on the House Rock! We watched "Dances with Wolves" that evening and all I could envision was me belly crawling over the knoll, looking out over the grasslands and picking out my quarry...a Western Romantic, however it didn't quite turn out that way!

-I didn't have a Sharps, my Browning A-Bolt would suffice.

-I wasn't going to shoot lead either, copper was the order of the day for me, with due respect for the California condors!

-Two trips to the Ben Avery Shooting Range for accuracy, as secure scope mounts are critical.

-On the way north we blew a trailer tire and spent a couple hours in Flagstaff at the repair shop.

-By the time we reached the House Rock Wildlife Area, it was 107 degrees, only 5 degrees cooler than Phoenix.

-It was my son's birthday, and keeping a large birthday cake cool, intact and edible, was no easy thing! Our ice cream didn't stay firm long either.

-We were bringing our 10 week old birthday present puppy along for the fun.

-The bugs were horrendous.

-Fire restrictions had been lifted, but our firewood sat unburned on night one...we didn't have a problem staying warm!

-Buffalo Class didn't lower the temperature...We learned in the heat that G & F would be pleased with a 20% success ratio...let's see, 1 kill. Chances of killing a bull were slim, and G & F wanted cows killed. There were 250 suspected members in this herd and the target population was 125.

-The selected and recommended camping spot was north of the headquarters, one of our group ignored that and camped in the "restricted area", or the place the buffalo were supposed to be.

-It was also suggested we not do any preseason scouting. You guessed it, the guy that camped in the wrong place, also scouted for 3 days. He had "heard" some animals the night before.

-Game & Fish would "help" if you'd like, which would be OK on day 1, but we'd reevaluate on day 2. The catch, all the helpers were supposed to stay in camp. At 4:30 opening day, 2 of our 5 brought help, while my "scouts & skimmers" obeyed and stayed in camp.

With little sleep, I roused at 3:45 am to be at the Rendezvous by 4:30. I was ready. We loaded up the trucks for our short drive to the first glassing point and were anxious, as the sun was about to rise. How was this going to work?...it was 70 degrees.

One guy spotted an antelope, I never saw it and no one else did either. The sun was starting to paint the Vermillion Cliffs their characteristic colors, when someone else in our scouting party "quietly yelled" "...look over there...BUFFALO!

There broadside in the early dawn, staring at us, in single file amongst the sage, 350+/- yards away, four House Rock bison. Now what? Game & Fish's Wildlife Manager Tim Holt identified them...four bulls! So much for the prediction that bulls were unlikely.

He called out, it's light enough to shoot, first four hunters get ready...I inquired..."can we get closer?" "No, we try and they'll be gone" he candidly commented. "Shoot when ready"...I

looked around and decided instantly, I wasn't going to be left out of this opportunity! I called out the animal I was going to take and wasted no time targeting it.



At that point I didn't so much think I was belly crawling over the knoll steady to select and harvest my buffalo, as I wondered if this was how it felt to be on the Civil War firing lines, only with no bullets cascading back at us. Two animals were hit, mine and the gal next to me. Our animals seemed confused. Two others didn't seem to be hit and trotted away down a hill out of site, leaving our two trophies standing. The fella next to me didn't fire, and Hunter # 5 jumped ahead of Hunter # 4, shooting "out of order" and missing.

We worked our way cautiously closer, as many people told me, once the shooting starts, don't stop until the animal is down. The Cocks Combs and Saddle Mountain Wilderness Area loomed in the distance behind my bison. While I was prepared to go in to the wilderness area if necessary, I surely didn't want to if possible, and particularly did not want to be chasing a wounded animal with temperatures set to exceed 100 degrees again. I wanted to drive to the animal with my buffalo crew and coolers, not hike in and wait for mules to help me pack it out.

We kept firing and the animals went down, and then both were up again...running. How...I don't know, but I wasn't going to lose this animal. He finally went down again and stayed down. So too did the woman's trophy a couple hundred yards north of me. The rest of the crew found no blood from the other two animals and set off after them. As reality set in, the sun rose over the House Rock and I had a 1500 pound trophy at my feet. A

*Continued on page 10*

**“Big Titonka” Continued from page 9**

bull no less, and a tag filled!

The "hunt" was over quickly, and now we faced a monumental task, save the head, hide and all this meat from the heat. First the photo sessions commenced, we needed to preserve the event for the future. Dozens of photos were taken and some actually turned out great!

We set up a pop up shade over the animal and went to work skinning and butchering, ice chests ready. Veteran Buffalo Hunter Bill Keebler was to lament, how did the Indians do this with bone knives and flint? Sharpeners were being used constantly as the tough hide dulled even the finest blade quickly. Once we skinned the cape, we separated the head and Bill went to work there, not so much for the taxidermist as to get the skin off so it wouldn't spoil. He spent over 2 hours just on the head. The skin between the horns was over an inch thick!

The old Western movies always made the "buffalo skinner" job out to be a less than desirable occupation, my crew and I now understood that. Toss in the rising temperature and it made the task even more challenging. In the end, the hide alone filled one extra large ice chest by itself!

Quartered and trimmed by mid morning, we had now filled 8 large coolers, leaving only the rib cage and entrails for the coyotes and condors. We were back to camp forenoon and it was only 95 degrees, still "cool". Post lunch, our work continued as we deboned, cut and packaged the meat for the trip home, finishing that task

by mid-afternoon. As we wound down, WM Tim Holt stopped by with the fella that didn't pull the trigger next to me at first light. They had seen a couple more bulls, but couldn't get close. They were headed to the Wilderness Area. We were headed to our lawn chairs and celebratory libation!

Our day ended on a high note, buffalo tenderloin for dinner, all the coolers filled, firewood burned, and a toast to a trophy!

We headed out of the House Rock Sunday morning for the cool pines of Happy Jack. Our work would continue on Monday, cleaning, grinding, packaging and freezing an entire buffalo, a heckuva lot more bearable when it's 70 degrees. Mission accomplished and dream fulfilled my bull greenscored 106, so post drying period, it may even make the Arizona Record Book! A fitting end to a great time.

Many thanks to my "staff and crew"...Head Chef Mary Keebler (we ate extremely well!), Veteran Buffalo Hunter/Consultant Bill Keebler, Camp Manager Tracy Unmacht, Apprentice Hunter Jimmy Unmacht, Camp Titonka Staff...Jerry Guevin, Matt Massey & Georgia Massey and finally, Camp Mascot, "little dog" Maddie.



*May the road rise to meet you,  
and the wind be at your back.  
Should you ever hunt buffalo,  
hope you drive versus pack!*

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## **LIFE MEMBER #21 GEORGE WELSH**

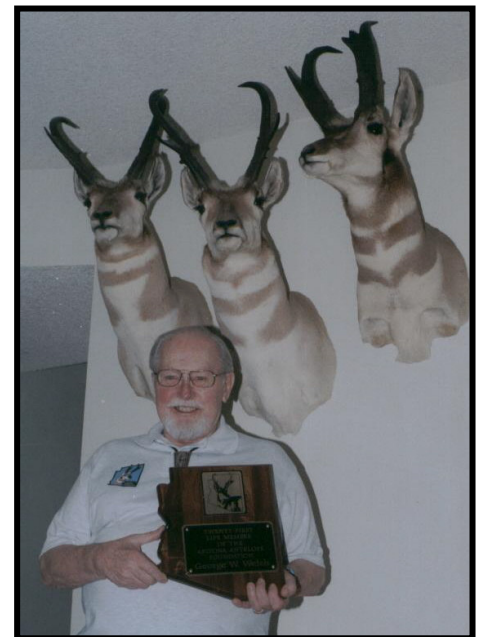
**BY DON MARTIN, OUTDOORS WRITER KINGMAN MINER**

Long time Kingman resident George Welsh was recently honored by the Arizona Antelope Foundation for being that organization's 21<sup>st</sup> life member. Welsh, who retired from the AZ Game & Fish Department in 1983, served in various capacities including statewide antelope biologist, game warden and wildlife manager for over 26 years. Welsh's duty station in his early years was in an area that was called the Prescott District. According to Welsh that area included "from the Grand Canyon to Phoenix, and from the Hualapais to the Verde River."

Later on, Welsh worked out of the Region III office until his retirement.

Due to Welsh's early efforts in wildlife management and as the state's antelope biologist, sportsmen now enjoy hunting antelope and desert bighorn sheep in northern Arizona. Locally, he is affectionately known as the "Father of Bighorn Sheep" in Mohave County. Welsh was also part of the 59 charter members of the AAF who in 1992-3 put up \$100 to start the AAF, according to AAF past President Jim Unmacht. "We are honored to recognize George as our 21<sup>st</sup> life member," said Unmacht. According to the AAF website, the AAF is dedicated to increasing the numbers of antelope in Arizona through active participation in, and advocacy of antelope management programs. Unmacht noted that the accomplishments of the AAF could be directly attributed to efforts of volunteer sportsmen and dedicated professionals like George Welsh.

Welsh who is retired and lives comfortably with his wife Margaret in Kingman, remains involved in wildlife issues.



# ARIZONA BIG GAME SUPER RAFFLE

BY CHRIS DENHAM

Can you imagine hunting antelope in Arizona any time you want for an entire year? How about desert bighorn sheep, elk, or mule deer? Nine lucky hunters are doing just that this year, as the winners of the inaugural Arizona Big Game Super Raffle. You will have another opportunity to win one of these hunts again in 2007.

The Super Raffle was launched in 2006 as a way to raise substantial money for wildlife habitat work in Arizona. After a decade of prolonged drought, exploding human population, and budget shortfalls at the Game & Fish Department, landscape wide project work is critical to the future of all big game species. A committee of dedicated sportsmen lobbied the state legislature and the game commission to establish a state wide tag for each big game species with a 365 day season. Their efforts were rewarded with over \$500,000 in ticket sales and on July 8<sup>th</sup> the “lucky nine” were drawn and notified.

The 2007 raffle is even more exciting! Along with the nine big game tags there will be a Swarovski optics package. This package garners as much excitement as any of the tags, as well it should. One person will win **all** of these items: 15x56 binoculars, 10x42 EL binoculars, STS-80 spotting scope, 4-12x50 riflescope, LG laser rangefinder, and an Outdoorsman’s tripod. This package retails for more than \$8,000. I can’t imagine another piece of optical equipment that a western hunter would ever need!

New for 2007 is a caribou hunt incentive raffle donated by Sportsman’s Warehouse. If you purchase one ticket for all the big game hunts and the Swarovski package then you will receive one ticket toward this hunt at no additional charge. You can purchase as many “all ten” packages as you like and you will receive one caribou hunt ticket with each package purchased. This 6-day hunt in Quebec for 2 animals includes a scoped firearms, air travel, and \$500 cash and is valued at \$6500.

All ticket forms must be received by June 25, 2007, with the drawing held in early July. You can read more about the Super Raffle and download ticket forms from their website: [www.arizonabiggamesuperraffle.com](http://www.arizonabiggamesuperraffle.com)

## MEMBER SHOTS



**2003 AAF PRESIDENT JERRY GUEVIN**



**LIFE MEMBER #19 DALE HISLOP**

**“Prehistoric Pronghorn Hunting” Cont. from page 5**

pecked the images of pronghorn and other big game animals on prominent boulders and rock faces, and painted them in caves and under overhangs. No one now knows the true function of these outdoor art galleries as most of these works of art predate written descriptions. Most archeologists, however, believe that the figures were intended to invoke the cooperation of the game animal’s spirit rather than celebrate recent hunts. Be as it may, examples of pronghorn depicted in rock art, while outnumbered by deer and sheep, are pervasive and widespread.

Prehistoric cultures such as the Anasazi, Hohokam, and Mimbres, also depicted pronghorns on kiva murals, on bowls, and as ceramic figures. Various pronghorn body parts were retained for headdresses and for ritualistic purposes. Murals of pronghorn were present in both prehistoric and contemporary kivas and Captain John Bourke, on visiting the Zuni Pueblo in 1883, copied a 6-foot pronghorn wall painting (Fig. 16) that he found inside a kiva, noting that he had been told that,

*“The line running down from the animal’s mouth and terminating at its heart may be described as a ‘prayer.’ It is a pictographic invocation to the antelope on earth to put themselves in the way of the Zunis that they may kill them for food.”*



The ancestors of nearly all of Arizona’s Indian cultures hunted pronghorn antelope. Several tribes including the Chemehuevi, Hopi, and Navajo had special songs and legends regarding pronghorn, both to relate the lore of the animal’s natural history and to enhance the hunting reputation of the teller. Although there are no eye-witness accounts of Native Americans firing grasslands to drive pronghorn toward waiting hunters, as is sometimes relayed, a site near Loa in southern Utah provides ample evidence of Southwest Indians placing stone lines to “direct” antelope along an often-used escape route where they would be ambushed by concealed bowmen. The purpose of prehistoric rock walls described by Robert D. Diggs at a site north of Springerville is more obscure, however, as are similar structures found by Cliff Hersted near Cordes Junction.

Arizona Indians did partake of communal hunts using trees and tree limbs as barriers more often than stones, however. An American ethnologist named Alexander M. Stephens, who spent much time among the Hopi, described such a site on one of the Hopi Mesas prior to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century:

*“The wall built long ago across the narrow mesa neck southwest from Kikü’chmo was a hunt corral. Before the Navajo came to this region, or before they were numerous, game especially antelope, were in*

*abundance. A hunt being organized, antelope were driven down the mesa toward this wall in which was a wide gateway. After they had passed through, this was closed with piñon and juniper boughs and the whole length of the wall was stockaded with these boughs. The younger lads remained outside of the wall shaking their blankets to scare the game away from jumping the wall. The grown men went inside the wall and shot the game down or in the mêlée that followed caused the antelope to leap over the cliffs and break their legs and necks...”*

Stephens then went on to provide a number of details regarding this and other “corral traps” stating that when a suitable site was selected, an area about 300’ x 600’ was enclosed with a strong stockade of trees woven to form a tight corral, usually in the form of an ellipse and with a 15 or 20 feet wide opening. When a band of pronghorn was seen feeding on the mesa or slope, the youths of the village were enlisted to assist in the hunt, with 8 sent to watch the antelope, and the remainder stationing themselves around the corral. The youths selected as herders would then sneak behind the pronghorn and drive them toward the corral by howling, waving cedar torches, and waving skins or blankets. As the pronghorn approached the corral or “Antelope House,” the other youths would close in from hidden blinds and encourage the animals to enter the stockade, where two men would close off the “gate” with heavy branches pre-selected for the purpose. The hunt chief and other men would then shoot the antelope. Stephens went on to point out that such hunts were not always successful, the pronghorn often times refusing to be herded or enter the corral.

This same technique was adopted by the Navajos as they expanded into Arizona, and John G. Bourke, General Crook’s adjutant in the U. S. Army, described a similar “corral” seen during the summer of 1883 immediately after leaving Ganado on his way to the Hopi Villages:

*“We passed close to an antelope “corral” of the Navajos: these are made of two converging lines of stone and brush. The Navajo warriors mounting their fleetest ponies, will scour the country for miles, driving before them the luckless game, which after a while reaches the narrowest point of the corral, and there falls a victim to the hunters in ambush. The Indians are careful not to kill all, but to allow a few to escape; this forbearance is partly based upon a desire to allow the game to reproduce and is partly religious in character.”*

In the 1950s, Edith Watson located the sites of about

*Continued on page 13*

**“Prehistoric Pronghorn Hunting” Cont. from page 12**  
30 of these “corral traps,” and provided an aerial photo of one of the sites showing the remains of both the old corrals and the wings leading into them. Using tree rings, she was able to date the construction of one of the better-preserved corral traps to just prior to 1800. And, after interviewing the grandchildren of hunters, she was able to recreate how the Navajo were able to secure pronghorn—a technique not unlike that used by game departments to capture and translocate pronghorn for restocking purposes today.

After weeks of preparation and a series of rituals, a communal hunt would be organized in an attempt to secure pronghorn using a particular area. Prior to the hunt, an aisle or “chute” of juniper and piñon boughs leading to an oval stockade or “corral” would have had been laid down and interwoven with live trees and natural obstacles. This chute would be located along a natural travel route that would take advantage of the terrain leading to the corral, which would usually be located behind a rise in the ground and out of sight of the arriving animals. This corral, to which the animals were to be guided, could be as much as 200 feet in diameter and up to 10 or 12 feet in height, and would be constructed of wooden stakes interlaced with boughs. Wings, some up to a mile or more, and constructed of the same natural material, would assist in the guiding process, encouraging the pronghorn to enter and follow the main chute leading to the corral.

Some 25 to 50 people might participate in a hunt. Some of the men would be stationed along the intended route, some of them in trees and others along prominent ridges in order to frighten hesitant animals on to the intended pathway. Women could assist in the construction of the wings and chute, and help drive the antelope, but they could not enter the trap. As the pronghorn neared the entrance to the corral, a semi-circle of people or horsemen would “corral” the pronghorn, using whistles and cedar bark torches to both communicate with the other hunters and herd the pronghorn along. Sometimes a medicine man, dressed as an antelope, was used as a “*Judas Goat*” to lure the pronghorn into the corral.

On entering the corral, hunters sequestered in foxholes near the trap’s entrance, leaped up to close the trap with brush, waving blankets and hides to keep the animals from leaving. The corralled pronghorn were then killed with arrows, and the pronghorn removed through the sides of the trap. Four or multiples of four were said to be left to remain as seed stock. Such trap sites were more or less permanent and the wood used in their construction was not to be taken and used for firewood. One ethnologist reported Navajo corral traps being present at localities near St. Johns, Tanner Springs, Keam Canyon, Jeddito, White Cone Dot Kiosh Canyon, Chambers, Thoreau, and Chaco Canyon.

Other Arizona Indians, hunting where pronghorn were not so numerous, stalked individual antelope on foot, either working singularly or in pairs, not unlike modern-day archery hunters. Getting close enough for a killing shot with an oak or mulberry wood bow and a cane-shafted arrow was no easy task, and having only flaked stone points as missiles meant that the hunter had to be as skilled in tracking a wounded quarry as he was in marksmanship. Great stealth and patience were required, and a common ruse was for the hunter to don an antelope headdress and drape himself in an antelope cape. A variation of this technique, related by Daniel Ellis Conner in the book, *Man and Wildlife in Arizona*, was for the hunter to attach a mounted head over his lower back and buttocks so that the antelope head would stand erect when the wearer stooped down in a crouching position. Such a guise, when coupled with the judicious use of a gourd call and a piece of cloth or other lure, exploited the pronghorn’s curiosity and allowed the hunter to approach within shooting range. In the most elaborate form, the hunter would daub himself in yellow pigment or wear a long cotton shirt stained in yellow mud. A ceremonial kilt might also be worn. . Sometimes sticks or a rifle and ramrod provided forelegs, the Indian walking much as an antelope would.

Most hunting was said to be in August and September, when the males were in rut, in late winter, when snow was on the ground, and in March and April when the does were giving birth to their fawns. As in corral hunts, certain procedures and rituals such as the sacrifice of a select number of pronghorn pellets, were said to precede a hunt. Needless to say, the numbers of pronghorn killed by such methods were hardly excessive, and animals removed from the population were quickly recouped during the next year’s fawning season. Those who hypothesize that early man hunted prehistoric animals to extinction never hunted big game with a primitive bow and arrow!

Prior to a hunt, prayer feathers might be taken to the *Mother of Animals* along with corn meal and prayers. Four days of preparations were then allocated to the hunt during which time sexual relations were abstained. Special hunt songs might be sung upon locating a herd. Most of the meat was boiled and then dried. The skins were used for both hunting and ceremonial costumes, while parts of the hides were saved for drumheads, sinew, bowstrings, sewing bags, etc. The brains were used for tanning, while the hooves were made into necklaces and rattles, the scrotum serving a similar purpose after being filled with sand and dried.

Some of the hunting techniques ascribed by ethnologists to Native American cultures are so preposterous as to be ludicrous. Accounts of Native Americans running pronghorn to exhaustion and capturing the animals by suffocation or other weaponless

*Continued on page 14*

**“Prehistoric Pronghorn Hunting” Cont. from page 13**  
means, while common in the anthropological literature, are not to be believed. Besides being virtually impossible to accomplish, these attributions are invariably based on an Indian “informant” and none involves someone actually seeing or participating in such an event. These feats, except when applied to the capture of baby antelope in spring, are due either to a misinterpretation of the teller’s description, which was in a different language, or are the result of the informant relating a myth rather than reality.

Of all the Indian tribes native to Arizona, the Hopi were probably the most involved with pronghorn. The pronghorn even plays a prominent role in their creation myth in which the Hopi emerged from the underworld in

search of a new home. At this time, a pregnant woman dropped behind to have her child, leaving the others to travel on and discover the mesa on which they would settle. When some of the men returned to check on her the next day, they found that she had turned into an antelope and had given birth to twin antelope fawns. The trio was then reluctantly taken to the mesa, where they unhappily remained. Finally, the mother was given prayer sticks and the trio was allowed to leave after she was proclaimed the mother of all animals.

This article is a portion of a book on the *Pronghorn Antelope in Arizona* to be published by the Arizona Antelope Foundation in 2007.

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**“Hunting Up...” Cont. from page 5**

her dog bar the way. More than a year passed, the price of gasoline skyrocketed, and somehow we could never find time to get up there again.


On August 12, 2006, we finally got our opportunity. AAF member, Henry Provencio, and his archeologist wife, Heather, had made the necessary contacts for a visit, and arranged for his father Jesse, his friend Ray, and me to accompany them to the Hall Ranch. A light rain was falling as we headed out for Holbrook with the Little Colorado River running bank to bank. From then on we were in pronghorn country the whole way, the countryside looking wonderfully green and lush from the summer rains. But one only had to look at how few yellow stalks of grass and weeds remained from last year to realize how barren the country must have been a month earlier.

The rock walls of the “pronghorn corral” were remarkably easy to find, being visible from the access road and located immediately south of the historic Hall Ranch. At first inspection, the main wall, composed of unshaped malpai boulders, varies in height from being about 3-foot tall on the ridges, down to nearly ground level in the depressions, appeared to be too new to have been built by prehistoric hunters. But then, Heather observed that the lichens were much more numerous on the north sides of the wall’s rocks. “That,” she said, “is a sure sign of prehistoric construction.” No longer fearful of anyone challenging us due to the swarms of mosquitos present, we investigated further, taking care not to disturb anything.

The walls, reported in the article to be nearly 6,000 yards in length are certainly interesting. A 300 yard segment of the main wall is especially prominent on the lava hills and ridges. One can, with a little imagination, visualize pronghorn running parallel with the wall to pass through selected gaps where the animals could be

communally shot or trapped. Further evidence of this is a series of stone-lined shafts, each reportedly more than 6-foot deep when excavated such sites could either conceal hunters or trap animals. Heather found a fossil pronghorn tooth, and Henry a broken arrow-head, both of which were left at the site. Altogether, the walls circumscribe a basin of about 1000 acres.

Are the walls the remains of a prehistoric hunting site? I am not enough of an archeologist to say. Except for the lichens, the walls appear similar to other rock walls found along the Agua Fria drainage in Game Management Unit 21 by Cliff Herstead of Arcosanti, and which may be of historic origin. The Hall’s Ranch site appears more promising, however, in that one can still visualize a herd of pronghorn being driven over the rise from the south, meeting the wall, and then paralleling it down to hunters crouched in the pits. Or, taking advantage of ancient habits, the hunters might have come in from the north, driving the pronghorn out of the cienega and through gaps in the wall where their comrades were laying in wait. Quien sabe?

The unique aspect about the Hall Ranch corrals, however, is that the utility of the communal hunt theory may yet be tested. Pronghorn still occur in the area (we saw one lone buck in the valley south of the corrals), and should the pronghorn population in the area again increase, an experiment might be designed to replicate a prehistoric hunt. Such an effort would require a “scout” to report pronghorn using the cienega, or feeding in the basin to the south. A modern day hunt shaman could then plan a “drive,” sending out beaters to drive the animals toward a few concealed hunters along the wall. Such a “hunt,” recreated with cameras instead of bows and arrows or atlatls, would be a first and elevate archeology to an applied science that incorporates repeatability as part of the scientific method. 



## SHORT SHOTS

### AAF FUNDRAISER SET

July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 is the date, El Zaribah Shrine the place. Look for more information soon in the next *Pronghorn* or our website [www.azantelope.org](http://www.azantelope.org).

### RIFLE RAFFLE

Coming soon – your chance to win a Ruger M77 stainless/synthetic 270 WSSM. Generously donated by Sportsman’s Warehouse, this rifle will include scope, case, sling and bipod. Tickets will be available soon. Watch your mail and our website for ticket information.

### MEMBERSHIP

AAF membership renewal notices have been mailed. Be sure to look for yours and send it in. Your membership dollars help fund the many activities the AAF participates in to help improve habitat for antelope.

**HELP US HELP ANTELOPE – RENEW TODAY!**

### AZ GAME & FISH SENDS KUDOS TO ALL VOLUNTEERS

The AZ Game & Fish department would like to thank you for the time and effort you contributed to AGFD projects and programs this year. Volunteers contributed over 106,000 hours and drove over 115,000 miles to assist with education programs and participate in Adopt-A-Ranch projects, desert tortoise research, owl surveys, rayfish studies, spotlighting for black-footed ferrets, fisheries projects, water development projects, wildlife rehabilitation, and much more. We could not have accomplished all of this without you. We appreciate your help and hope to work with you in 2007. Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

### 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.

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.

### SHOW LOW COUPLE ASSESSED \$16,000 FOR POACHING TROPHY ELK AND DEER *New law on the books allows Game and Fish Commission to employ stiffer penalties*

A Show Low couple convicted of multiple violations relating to the poaching of a trophy-class elk and a mule deer became the first violators to feel the effects of a new law on the books allowing the Arizona Game and Fish Commission to employ tougher penalties, especially for repeat or gross offenders.

John & Shelly Polzin were civilly assessed a total of \$16,000. In addition, the Game and Fish Commission revoked the hunting, fishing and trapping privileges of John and Shelly L. Polzin. The Polzins must also successfully complete an Arizona hunter education course prior to having privileges are restored in Arizona.

The action by the Game and Fish Commission in the Polzin case would not have been possible had it not been for the newly-bolstered wildlife law, sponsored by Rep. Jerry Weiers, R-Glendale, which was passed by the Arizona Legislature and signed by Gov. Janet Napolitano in May of 2006. This new law, which took effect in September, creates a system of civil assessments and license revocations based on the number of convictions an individual has for unlawfully taking or wounding wildlife.

The new law also allows the Game and Fish Commission to permanently revoke or suspend a person’s hunting privileges for various offenses, including unlawfully taking trophy or endangered species.

“In the past, the Game and Fish Commission could only revoke a violator’s hunting, fishing and trapping licenses for a maximum of five years, no matter how severe or egregious the case...not any more. Now when we have serious offenses, we can employ stiffer penalties,” says Commissioner Mike Golightly of Flagstaff.

Wildlife Manager Robert Birkland, the investigating officer in the case, says the Game and Fish Commission sent a strong message that Arizona’s wildlife is a valuable asset owned by the people of Arizona. “Hopefully the new law will serve as a deterrent to potential violators,” he says.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[WWW.AZANTELOPE.ORG](http://WWW.AZANTELOPE.ORG)**



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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	January 9 6:30 PM February 12 6:30 PM March 12 6:30 PM	The Phoenix Zoo 455 N. Galvin Parkway
AAF Work Projects	March 3 May 6 June 9	Horseshoe Ranch Yavapai Ranch Anderson Mesa
The Wildlife Conservation Council Board Meetings	January 23 6:30 PM February 27 6:30 PM March 27 6:30 PM	AZ Game & Fish Department 2221 W. Greenway Rd
AZ Desert Bighorn Sheep Banquet AZ Antelope Foundation Banquet	March 17 4:00 PM July 14 TBA	El Zaribah Shrine El Zaribah Shrine

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)