



SUBMITTED BY HENRY J. SCHULTZ

The author's early hunting party.

We live about eight miles east of the Mississippi River in the heart of Buffalo County — today, the best deer hunting land around. The steep hillsides and long, deep valleys of agricultural land have fresh spring water running through them. It's a deer herd paradise. Our Buffalo County agricultural agent, Archie Brovold, even once called the agricultural land of Cream and Waumandee, some of the best land in the world — not just in Wisconsin, in the world.



THOMAS J. SENATORI

Sixty-plus years of deer hunting

THE RESULTS ARE STORIES AND LOTS OF SAUSAGE FROM THE BEST DEER HUNTING LAND IN THE WORLD.

Henry J. Schultz

I said to my wife the other day that someone should write about the stories of deer hunting on our farm and that it should be soon since there are only three of the old hunting gang members left from our first deer hunting party, which started back in the late 1940s — Brother Russ, Sidney Moham and me. So, that's what I've done.

But it wasn't always such a deer herd paradise. In an old history book on Buffalo County given to me by Jane Noll, it's noted that in 1862, the snow stood 4-feet deep and we lost all of our deer. People also died because of the extreme snow and cold, but the Schultz family — my family — survived the winter. But then in the spring, the area got pelted again. This time, by flooding.

It took some time, but eventually the deer found their way back to Buffalo County, mostly coming from northern parts. I remember my brother, Stub, saying that the first deer he saw in the county was in 1938. He was working for William Balk who lived 4 miles south of Cream. My brother had four horses on a gang plow when he saw a deer run across the valley. He wasn't the only one who noticed. All four horses raised their

heads to witness the sight as well.

With the return of deer, we decided to hunt. In the early 1940s when we started hunting, we didn't have automatic shotguns. We had

single shot 16-gauge guns and double-barrel guns.

The guys who hunted with me included Howard Loesel; Otto Bollinger; Chet Wiczorek; my brothers Christian (Suck), Russ, Gaylord (Stub) and Milan; and Richard Plank, a World War I veteran who was tall and slim and earned the name "Ridge Runner" because he had long legs and could really walk those steep hills. Our group also included Bill Smith, Buzz Grob and Wilmer Schmidtknecht, who told me dozens of times that the most fun he had in life was hunting with our gang, butchering deer and playing cards.

My nephews bought close to 400 acres next to our 500 acres so we had a good amount of land to hunt on.

The first years, each hunter would take his deer home and make his own sausage. Then we would have a deer party at the Ponderosa Bar in Cream,



ROBERT QUEEN

A lifetime of hunting stories and sausage making.

at the Burlington Hotel in Alma, or at someone's house so that we could recap our hunting tales and taste everyone's sausage.

In the 1950s, though, I offered to have the gang over to my garage and make the sausage together. Everyone took me up on my offer. The first years of butchering in the garage, we also butchered our own hogs so that we had pork to make cook sausage and summer sausage.

One time Wilmer Schmidtknecht; my brother, Stub;

Buzz Grob; Bill Smith and Richard Plank did the butchering. Plank bought himself a case of beer to take home before he came butchering, but we drank the whole case before he left the garage.

My brother, Stub, would sometimes bring his parish priest along to hunt with us and when he did, we kidded him that he was to bless the beer that we drank. When the priest went into the woods to hunt, he would never carry a knife. That way, if he shot a deer, he couldn't gut it out and someone else would have to do it instead. He did bring a knife, though, when we did the butchering and sausage making in the garage.

The cook sausage and summer sausage were made from old recipes that my mother and dad had on the farm. Eventually, I turned all the butchering duties over to my son, Chuck, and I'm proud to say that he's got the responsibility down pat. The guys also now own a lot of equipment for butchering — two sausage stuffers, a big meat grinder and stainless steel tables.

I gave up hunting a few years ago. I feel that at my age I shouldn't be in the woods anymore with a gun. It also made my wife real happy that I quit hunting.

But I still like to see the guys come and hunt and listen to their stories about what they saw and what they missed. At times we have four generations of hunters hunting together — Milan's son, Paul; Paul's daughter, Kati; and Kati's sons. My son, Chuck, took his son, Jason, hunting the first time and saw him shoot his first deer, an experience that Chuck says he will never forget. My son-in-law Bruce Auseth took his daughter, Taylor, hunting and saw her shoot her first deer and she even won the prize money at the Ponderosa Bar in Cream for registering the first deer there.

While I no longer join the hunt, I still take care of the smoke fire when there is no one else around and, best of all, I still get a share of the meat.

Recently, while we were butchering in the garage we were commenting

about how many deer have been shot by our hunting parties over the last 60 years. With an average of 14 deer harvested on the land each year for 60 years, that means 840 deer, which translates into about 36,000 cook and summer sausages.

One memorable year, outdoor TV legend Dave Carlson (who worked for WEAU-TV at the time) hunted with us. He followed us from the weekend before the regular gun deer season opened when the hunters came and cut the green hickory wood for smoking the sausage, to hauling the wood, to hunting. He made an hour-long tape of our hunting party adventures and aired it on TV.

That brings me to today. The land does not belong to me anymore. My wife and I have turned it over to the three kids and they all have built houses on the farm. My wife and I, though, can work the land and live here as long as we want to.



FRANK WOLFE

L.B. Johnson inspired the author.

I've gotten to see the best of both worlds and no one knows that better than me, and not any of this good life would be made possible without the love of my good wife. I got to live on the land where my heart belongs. I know very well that this good life could change overnight. But I'm reminded of a quote from President L.B. Johnson, "The best fertilizer for a piece of the land is the footprints of its owner." 

Henry J. Schultz is 92 years old and writes from Alma.

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