

\*\*\* Montana \*\*\*  
**WILD SHEEP**  
FOUNDATION  
KEEPING SHEEP ON THE MOUNTAIN

# Wild Sheep

Winter 2018 | Volume 26, Issue 1

*4+ Pages of Short  
Stories*

Check out the

*Photo Gallery*

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All contributed material will be published at the discretion of the Editorial Board of the Montana Wild Sheep Foundation (MTWSF). The Editorial Board consists of the editor of the newsletter, the executive director of the chapter, and the president of the chapter.

Cover picture photo credit see story, Petty Creek Capture.

## CONNECT with Montana WSF

Visit us online at [www.montanawsf.org](http://www.montanawsf.org)!

While there, visit the **Photo Gallery** page. If you would like to have a picture posted, email ([photos@montanawsf.org](mailto:photos@montanawsf.org)) your name, the photo (jpeg format preferred) along with a brief one to two sentence description of the hunt.



The Montana Wild Sheep Foundation will give a reward of up to \$1000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of cases involving the illegal taking of bighorn sheep in the State of Montana. If you have information of any illegal act, contact 1-800-TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668).

## HAVE YOU LIKED US ON FACEBOOK?



Besides our newsletter, you can stay up to date on news, activities & current events by visiting our Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/MontanaWildSheepFoundation](http://www.facebook.com/MontanaWildSheepFoundation)

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Montana Wild Sheep Foundation  
PO Box 17731  
Missoula, MT 59808

Visit us at [montanawsf.org](http://montanawsf.org).

# President's Message

2017 was a very challenging and rewarding year. On the rewarding side I was able to hunt more than a dozen times and was able to bag a rag-horn bull elk. On the challenging side, my family had to deal with two separate fires in Montana the Lodgepole Complex fire and the Lolo Peak fire. 30,000 acres of my sister's ranch was burned in Garfield County and my crew went over to help them fix nearly 30 miles of fence. After four days of fence fixing I was called back home to Florence as my own home had been placed under mandatory evacuation. The fires were spectacular and devastating. Ultimately my home and my family were fine after the fires died out. It is enlightening to see the strength of the human spirit and the caring of Montana communities when hard times come around. Those fires are not unlike the challenges we face in the Montana Wild Sheep Foundation (MTWSF).

Our chapter is continually being asked to help out other organizations, weigh in on legislative actions, or put feet on the ground to help with sheep captures. Fires, whether literal or figurative will always face those of us that fight for those who cannot fight for themselves.

I was honored that the board elected me president of the MTWSF Chapter. Brian Solan left some big shoes to fill and thankfully he's agreed to stay on as Volunteer Executive Director. My first couple of months have been very informative, challenging and fulfilling. Our chapter has weighed in on some federal and state wild sheep issues. We are looking at a possible land acquisition near Plains, Montana and are helping fund a multi-faceted, ten-year project in the Petty Creek area of Western Montana.

We have totally remodeled our website and continue to improve it for our members. Many of our board recently attended the National WSF Sheep Show where we saw our Montana Governor's Wild Sheep tag sell for \$335,000! Now our board is feverishly preparing for our **2018 MTWSF** fundraiser and banquet in **Bozeman on March 9th and 10th**. There is more seating at this year's MTWSF banquet, but don't wait to purchase your tickets as we fully expect to sell out. Please attend for camaraderie, education, networking, and most of all to help "keep sheep on the mountain".

*Shane Clouse*

Montana Wild Sheep Foundation President  
[shane@shaneclouse.com](mailto:shane@shaneclouse.com) • (406) 370-4487





**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**MONTANA WILD SHEEP FOUNDATION**  
**March 9-10, 2018 FUNDRAISER BANQUET**  
**Best Western Plus GranTree Inn, Bozeman, MT**  
 For Room Reservations call 406-587-5261  
 (Reference WSF2018 for the group rate of \$94/night plus tax or use  
 booking link @ montanawsf.org)

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I am also registering the following guests:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please list any additional names & addresses on an attachment)

**FRIDAY MEMBERSHIP MEETING SOCIAL - No Tickets Needed**  
*Film Festival and Spirits Tasting with Bozeman Spirits Distillery. Sheep hunt & transplant films will be featured.*

<b>SATURDAY BANQUET</b>	<b>Prior to February 20th</b>	<b>After February 20th</b>	
Adult Dinner	_____ Tickets @ \$70 each	_____ Tickets @ \$80 each	\$ _____
Youth Dinner	_____ Tickets @ \$40 each	_____ Tickets @ \$50 each	\$ _____
Table Sponsor*	_____ Tables @ \$1,000 each	_____ Tables @ \$1,200 each	\$ _____

\*(8) dinner tickets and a YETI Hopper Two 20 Cooler with MTWSF Logo included with Table Sponsor purchase  
 (All tickets will be held for pickup at the registration table.)

<b>OPTIONAL TICKETS</b>	<b>Prize</b>	<b>Cost</b>	
Custom Rifle Tickets	Cooper Firearms Backcountry 7mm w/ Swarovski scope	_____ Tickets @ \$20 each	\$ _____
Sheep Camp Tickets	Tent, stove, sleeping bag, etc.	_____ Tickets @ \$10 each or 12 for \$100	\$ _____

<b>ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Cost</b>	
Regular Membership	1 Year	_____ Members @ \$30	\$ _____
	3 Year	_____ Members @ \$80	\$ _____
Youth Membership	1 Year	_____ Members @ \$15	\$ _____
	3 Year	_____ Members @ \$35	\$ _____
Family Membership	1 Year	_____ Members @ \$50	\$ _____
	3 Year	_____ Members @ \$120	\$ _____
Life Membership	Lifetime	_____ Members @ \$500	\$ _____
<b>Total</b>			\$ _____

**Major Fundraiser Items:**

- Whitewater Rafting Trip - 5 Days/4 Nights on Salmon River
- Life Member Raffle - A fully guided Alaska sheep hunt!
- Guns, guns, and more guns to be given away in raffles!
- Leupold Optics Package
- Women's raffles
- Coastal Oregon Hunt for Roosevelt Elk or Blacktail Deer
- Original artwork
- Silent and live auction items

How are you Paying? Check  Credit Card  Master Card  Visa   
 Name on Credit Card \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 Digit Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ (mo/yr)  
 Signature of Card Holder \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTER ONLINE Starting February 5th. We will sell out so please reserve your table ASAP.**  
**It is highly recommended that you register online.**  
**All mailed forms will be processed as they are received and are subject to availability.**  
 - or - Mail this form with check or credit card information to:  
 Montana Wild Sheep Foundation, PO Box 17731, Missoula, MT 59808  
 For questions contact Brian Solan 406-461-7432 or bsolan.bs@gmail.com

## Billings, MT Volunteers for 2019 Banquet

*Volunteers Needed to Make The Montana WSF Billings Banquet Great!!* We are making a call to all our members to help us plan and develop next years' banquet in Billings. We need a local presence in the Billings area to make it happen! Please consider helping out with this effort if you are around the Billings area.

## Sponsor/Underwriting Request

**\$20 Bottomless Pints of Beer:** Our group likes to consume beer and annually we drink 7 to 8 kegs of craft beer through this effort. We sell roughly 150 pints (\$3,000) every year but the beer and pint glass costs typically exceed \$5,000. If we can underwrite this quickly, we can get logos printed on all of the pint glasses for the donor (along with MTWSF logo).

*Promotional exposure on website, facebook, instagram for the entire 2018 year as Bottomless Pint Sponsor. Logo printed on all pint glasses. Banquet night recognition of sponsorship. **Cost of Beer: \$5,000***

**Life Member Alaska Dall's Sheep Hunt with Lazy J Bar O Outfitters:** Must be present at banquet to win. This member benefit has increased our life memberships by over 40%. Each life membership is \$500. Our chapter works to underwrite the cost of this member benefit so that our main fundraising efforts continue to go to our mission.

*Promotional exposure on website, facebook, instagram for the entire 2018 year as a Life Member Hunt sponsor. Includes photos, posts and potential video productions of the hunt. Banquet night recognition of sponsorship. **Cost of Hunt: \$15,000.***

**Premium Auction item: Kimber rifle package with Leupold scope:** Rifle is customized with WSF Logo, and a hard carrying case.

*Promotional exposure on website, facebook, instagram for the entire 2018 year as our Premium Auction item sponsor. Banquet night recognition of sponsorship. **Kimber Rifle package value: \$3,500***

**Custom Rifle Raffle:** Cooper Firearms Backcountry 7mm with Swarovski Optik scope: This item will be raffled off.

*Promotional exposure on website, facebook, instagram for the entire 2018 year as our Custom Rifle sponsor. Banquet night recognition of sponsorship. **Rifle raffle value: \$8,000***

**Patron Sponsors:** We are making a call to all our members to help us underwrite the cost of our banquet. Multiple opportunities available. Funds are put toward the banquet and event.

*Promotional exposure on website, facebook, instagram for the entire 2018 year as one of our Patron Sponsors. Banquet night recognition of sponsorship. For every (10) major sponsors (Patron, Pint Glass, Life Member, Premium, Custom Sponsors all eligible) we will enter them into a raffle for a gun. 1 in 10 chance of winning. **Value: \$1,000 per patron sponsor***

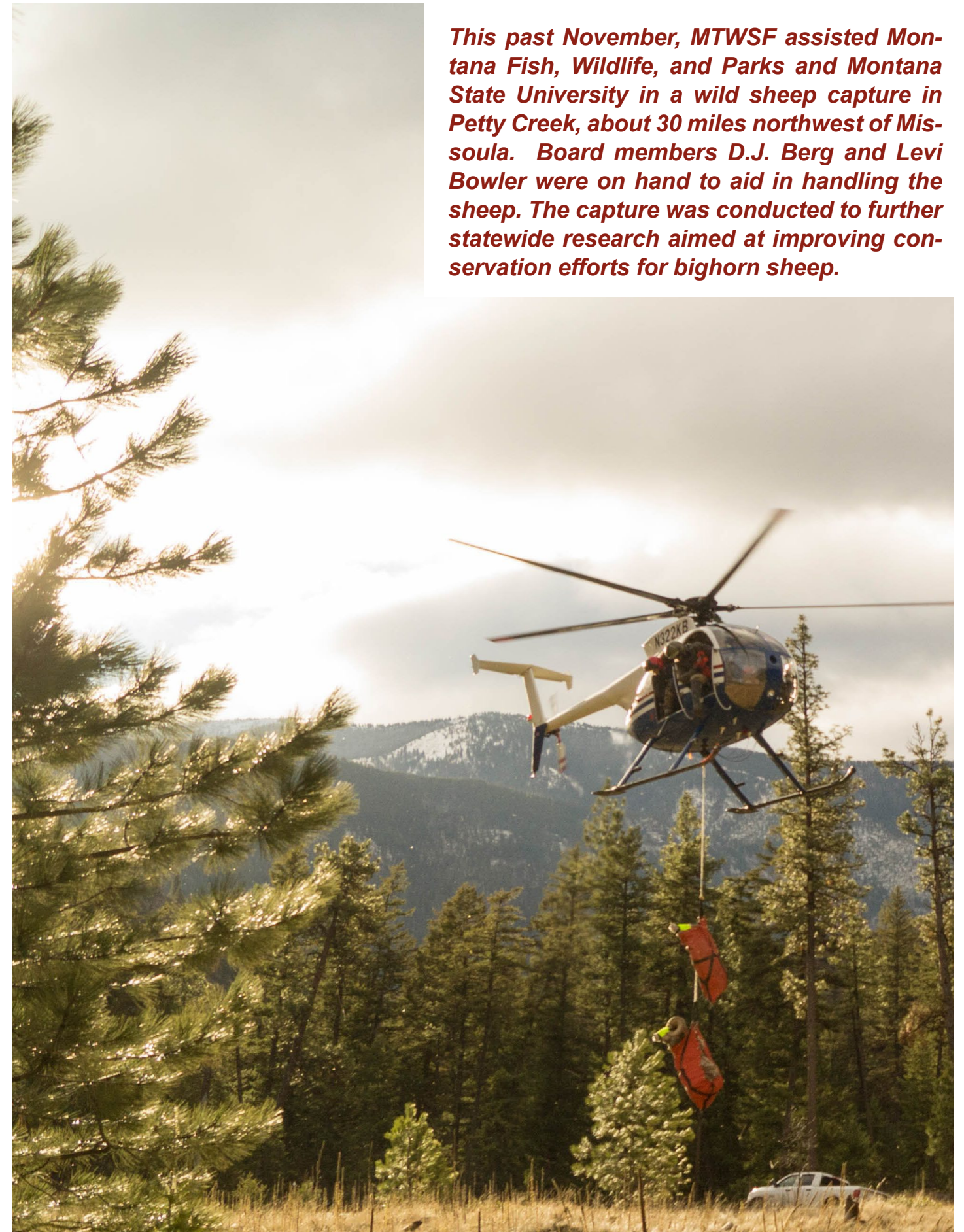
# Petty Creek Capture

Short Story by Dj Berg

Photo Credits: Dj Berg and Levi Bowler



*This past November, MTWSF assisted Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and Montana State University in a wild sheep capture in Petty Creek, about 30 miles northwest of Missoula. Board members D.J. Berg and Levi Bowler were on hand to aid in handling the sheep. The capture was conducted to further statewide research aimed at improving conservation efforts for bighorn sheep.*





The bighorns were netted from a helicopter and airlifted to a staging area. When the sheep were safely on the ground, staff and volunteers quickly went to work to complete a health workup for every bighorn, which included body temperature, blood samples, nasal swabs, throat swabs, and weight. Ewes were also collared with GPS and VHF trackers. The data collected will be used by researchers to better understand bighorn genetics, pathogens, and disease.

MTWSF has contributed funding to this and related research projects over the years. The funding will help researchers formulate better management practices for bighorn sheep. Our continued support for these research initiatives are vitally important to accomplishing our mission of increasing wild sheep populations in Montana. 🍂



# My Twice-in-a-Lifetime Bighorn Sheep Hunt

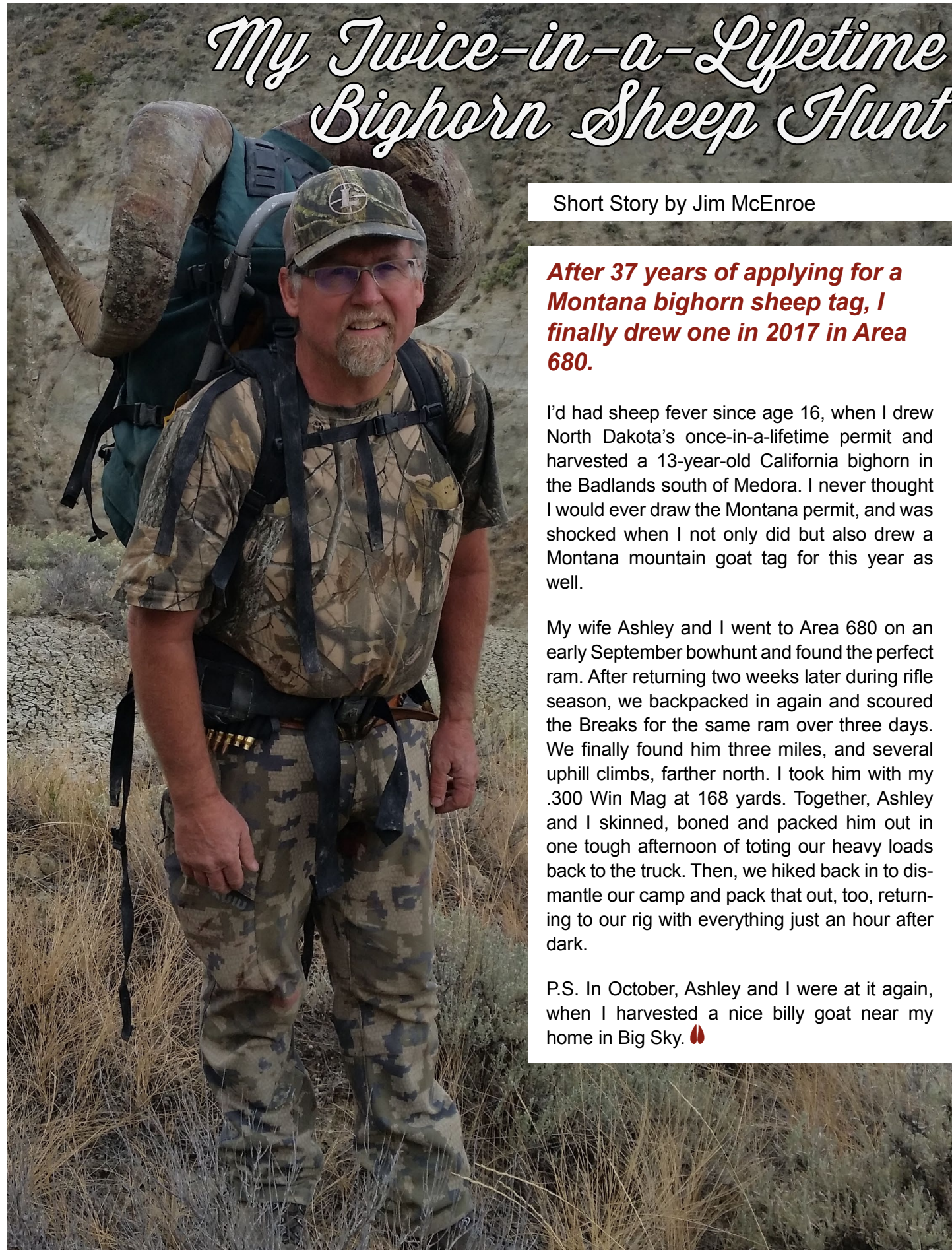
Short Story by Jim McEnroe

**After 37 years of applying for a Montana bighorn sheep tag, I finally drew one in 2017 in Area 680.**

I'd had sheep fever since age 16, when I drew North Dakota's once-in-a-lifetime permit and harvested a 13-year-old California bighorn in the Badlands south of Medora. I never thought I would ever draw the Montana permit, and was shocked when I not only did but also drew a Montana mountain goat tag for this year as well.

My wife Ashley and I went to Area 680 on an early September bowhunt and found the perfect ram. After returning two weeks later during rifle season, we backpacked in again and scoured the Breaks for the same ram over three days. We finally found him three miles, and several uphill climbs, farther north. I took him with my .300 Win Mag at 168 yards. Together, Ashley and I skinned, boned and packed him out in one tough afternoon of toting our heavy loads back to the truck. Then, we hiked back in to dismantle our camp and pack that out, too, returning to our rig with everything just an hour after dark.

P.S. In October, Ashley and I were at it again, when I harvested a nice billy goat near my home in Big Sky. 🍖



# A Frigid Day in November

Short Story by Lena Phelps



*It was a frigid early November morning on the last day of my sheep hunt. The temperature was hovering just above zero with almost a foot of snow on the ground. My husband and I made our way up to the Front Range and planned on hiking back into the mountains on a trail we had been on earlier in the season. We hiked for a few hours in the deep snow and drifts making a fresh path on the trail that was below a hard crusted layer. We spotted a plump little cinnamon bear on our way up who looked like he was getting ready to find his den. We continued the laboring hike for a while and finally got back to the spot that we wanted to check out. We went up a very steep hillside in the wet snow and wind searching for a higher vantage. It was so difficult that we decided to turn back. We searched for any sign of sheep, rested our legs and then headed back down to the trail.*

We started back down our busted trail and walked for about ten minutes when suddenly my husband turned around and waved me forward. I thought he may be pointing out the bear again but when I looked over his shoulder it was a bighorn ram walking towards us on our trail! He was all alone and was only about 100 yards away and I made a split second decision that I wanted to take a shot. I got down but couldn't see well

through my scope and my husband had me reposition. The ram never slowed or stopped his ascent. At this point he was only about 20 yards away and I quickly pulled the trigger. After I shot him he ran towards us at a dead sprint, finally veering to our right within ten yards. He died mid stride falling off about a 60 foot cliff down to the middle of the ravine on a very steep snow covered scree slope.



Now the hard work started. We climbed down to him and what an amazing animal he was. His horns were beautiful and his body was huge. Luckily, we were able to get some pictures with him as our phones were dying on and off due to how cold it was. We gutted him and then hiked out as it was getting late and very cold. We came back the next day with a group of family and friends to pack him out. I feel so fortunate to have had the chance to hunt for, and harvest such a beautiful animal as well as to have been able to do it with my husband. 🍷

# No Disappointment Here

Short Story by Jim Brammer



***It was different than anything I've ever done. With only 2 tags given, so much of the tension we feel hunting these days - that someone will beat you to a place or luck into being where you should have been—just isn't there. It has to be like going back 40 years! I spent 10 days hunting and saw sheep every day and rams most of those days. One day I saw over 40 sheep.....and not one other soul hunting them!***



This guy will score around 175". Hutchinson and others told me not to get too wrapped up in the score. That's easier said than done because it's the standard for field judging and comparing trophies. My goal was to find one that would make the book (180") and I'm sure that was reasonable for my hunting district. This one's short of that, so Jordan, my son-in-law, asked if I was disappointed. It's weird for someone as competitive as me to be able to honestly say "no".

I'm sitting here staring at this thing and it's crazy how big it is! And...as everything sinks in, the thing I find myself smiling about most, is that circumstances allowed my daughter Alex and wife Sue to be there. Sue isn't a hunter and never will be, but she was completely "taken" by the whole thing. She got up the next morning and wanted to talk about it all over again. What kind of twilight experience is that?!

Out of the blue last year, Alex called me from Kansas City and (at 23 years old) said "will you take me hunting". I thought "who are you and where'd you come from?" She shot her first deer last fall and is hooked.

She said while I was shooting this sheep, she was shaking uncontrollably; then said this was probably the coolest experience she's ever had. My brother Dave drove over from Helena and got there in time to watch through the spotting scope, and was giving a "second by second" account of the hunt over the phone to our friend John who we've hunted with for many, many years. Then he hiked up and helped me cape and break him down. And...to top it all off.. Cameron R-sor brought a horse up and packed most of it out for me. Good for my weary bones! Thanks again, Cam.

How could I be disappointed. First I won the lottery. Then I saw this sheep over a month ago and, for whatever reason, became obsessed with it. I passed on a number of good rams hoping I'd see it again and finally did. He's 11 years old! So in answering Jordan, I wasn't lying when I said no. Envy has no place in the gift of this experience. I'm sure there are bigger sheep on the mountain, but this one's mine; and that makes it special! I hope those who haven't had the chance, get to do it sometime. It's truly remarkable. I can't help but be humbled and blessed by it all! 🙏





# My First (and only) Sheep

Short Story by Chad Gunlikson



**This sheep was taken in November in unit 422-20. It is my first (and only) sheep I have ever gotten, and as a life-long Montana resident it is the first time I have drawn the tag in approximately 21 years of applying. I had max points, and the odds finally worked out for me!**

I put about 4 days of hunting in during September, another 5 days in October, and was able to get my sheep on the third day of my November trip. On the day I shot my ram my brother, and hunting partner, happened to be with me. We were actually on the way "out" of the area so that he could travel back home to Bozeman for work. I had spotted one ram earlier in morning while conversing with another tag holder, and went up into the high ground chasing after it. By the time we got close enough to get a really decent look at it something spooked him and the two other rams that had appeared and a few ewes. They all ran off before I had an opportunity.

On the hike up to that ram, we had observed 10 other rams in an area about 3/4 a mile away that we had seen the previous day, but had been unable to close the deal due to daylight and high winds. Once the first band of sheep ran off, we worked toward that group we had watched the previous day. We managed to get

within about 200 yards of the rams, but they stood up and bunched up so tight that a shot was not possible on the ram I was interested in before they headed off up the hills. Due to the time of day and my brother having to return to Bozeman for work at a reasonable hour, we headed out of the area and were hiking out when I spotted 'my ram' about half mile BELOW where we had parked the 4 wheeler to begin our hike that morning. After working our way through several small bands of sheep and mule deer bedded in the area, I finally spotted my ram asleep under some trees. We stayed and watched him sleep for probably 45 minutes before he got up and started milling about.

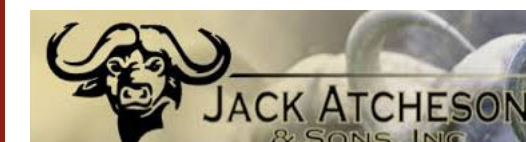
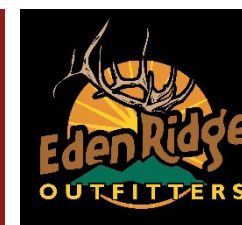
It took probably another 45 minutes for him to clear from the trees and the other ewes in the area and finally present me with a 200 yard broadside shot. I took the opportunity, and then the work began! It was a terrific experience and a great hunt! 🍷



## Thank You 2017 Montana WSF Sponsors



Scott & Barbara DeMars  
Earl Griffith  
B.C. Trophy Mountain Outfitters  
Tom Grimes  
Fred Boyer - Artist  
Randy Melvin - Bull Mountain Rifles  
Dan Lilja - Lilja Barrells  
Cynthia Fisher - Artist  
Out of Africa in Montana Gallery





Troy and Tara Spradley and her 8 yrs old ram taken from HD 622.



Fred King teaching students, hunters, and other interested persons about how to score a bighorn sheep ram using the Boone and Crockett measuring system. The class was sponsored by the Student Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation and had about a dozen participants.

Special thanks to Kelli Poole for organizing this, and THANK YOU to Fred King for an excellent clinic (as always).

Photo provided by: Julie Cunningham, Bozeman Area Wildlife Biologist Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks



Lon Dale and his ram taken from HD 216.

This sheep was harvested in 216, upper Rock Creek on 10/26. Tight curl, so will be in the 177+ range and because of 37" horns and 15" bases will not make the 180, but should make the 175+ after shrinkage. He was the best looking one we saw, and we saw lots of rams. Problem was that he was by himself and offered little comparison, and was a long shot at about 335 yds. So I am pleased with the hunt and the result. My son was with me which also made it special. I am 72 this past fall so the assistance in packing out the quarters and back straps was also appreciated.

## 2018 LIFE MEMBER RAFFLE

- All LIFE MEMBERS of MT Wild Sheep Foundation are included.
- MUST BE PRESENT at Annual Banquet in Bozeman, March 10, 2018.
- Transferable ONLY to another LIFE MEMBER that is also PRESENT.
- Hunt Dates August 10th-21st, 2018 with Lazy J Bar O Outfitters in unit 20A.
- This is a great Alaska Dall Sheep Hunt with a very successful outfitter.



2017 Life Member Raffle Winner Matt Martin and his tremendous ram.



2017 Rams from Lazy J Bar O Outfitters Brian Solan and Ryan Trenka

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## Join Montana Wild Sheep Foundation!

Interested in becoming a member? Simply complete the below form and return with payment.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Select category (one only please per form) and membership length:

- Youth
  - 1 year - \$15.00
  - 3 year - \$35.00
- Regular
  - 1 year - \$30.00
  - 3 year - \$80.00
- Family
  - 1 year - \$50.00
  - 3 year - \$120.00
- Life - \$500.00

Mail this form and dues to:

**Montana Chapter WSF**  
**PO Box 17731**  
**Missoula, MT 59808**