

# EDITOR'S NOTE



**Greg Tinsley**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
Boone and Crockett Club

## Blessed Be the Hunt

November Third is the Feast of Saint Hubertus of Liege. Certainly, a large percentage of the *Fair Chase* readership must know all about Saint Hubertus. But because I have missed so many thousands of church services, Sunday schools, and Bible classes during the past 40+ years, including another one this morning under the auspices of writing this, I am embarrassed to confess that I was oblivious to the work of the hunter's patron saint until a good friend of mine, Bill Sugg, recently mentioned him.

Although Mister Bill gave few details, he did extend a second invitation for me to attend a short, late-morning Saturday service recognizing Saint Hubertus at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in West Point, Mississippi, which would be followed by a wild-game lunch.

Therefore, in the spirit of my past-due theological discovery, I appropriately began this past Saturday, the day of the Feast of Saint Hubertus, in a treestand waiting for whitetails...meditating, contemplating and counting blessings. Eventually, as sunlight first randomly pooled on the floor of the Southern bottomland, I shot a wild, exceedingly fair-chase whitetail with equipment not much unlike what Saint Hubertus would have used in the 7th century. The encounter was exciting: at the arrow strike, the deer leaped into a soaring high kick, a bucking action so spectacularly wild and high that the deer crashed to the ground on its side, gathered itself and then hurriedly walked a semi-circle around me to about 35 yards where, in plain view, in the same spotlight of morning sun where I'd first seen it only seconds before, it melted gently into the weedy understory of the forest as quietly as the dead leaves of the white oak fall to earth.

My father never witnessed anything to match that, but he had a word for it: Wowzer! The supercharged event definitely took my personal perception concerning the joy of hunting with traditional archery tackle up a notch. Hallelujah, indeed.

Some hours afterward, following a variety of opening prayers, the Reverend Dr. Karl Schaffenburg began the Saturday sermon by announcing to the congregation that the legend of Hubertus saw him born to

nobility near Brussels around the year 656, at a time when Christianity still struggled against paganism. Life was a succession of good times for the charming Hubert until his wife, Floribanne, daughter of Dagobert, Count of Leuven, died giving birth to their son, Floribert.

The grieving Hubertus, a keen hunter to begin with, then completely immersed himself in the chase, which by most records of the day had archers accompanied by hounds coursing red stag bulls through the old growth forests of Europe. And so the legend goes that Hubertus was hot to a magnificent stag one particularly fine day, specifically a Good Friday morning when most everyone else was in church. Closing in for the moment of truth, the stag turned to face Hubertus, and there within the bull's massive antler branches stood a great, suspended crucifix. The awestruck Hubert dismounted, fell to his knees and was immediately directed by the voice of the Almighty to tighten up: Hubert, unless thou turnest to the Lord and leadest a Holy life thou shall quickly go down into Hell.

Further, God told Hubertus to seek the instruction of Saint Lambert. Soon after becoming Saint Lambert's protégé, Hubertus redistributed all of his personal wealth to the poor, studied for priesthood and began building a name for himself as an eloquent man in the pulpit. The "Apostle of the Ardennes," as he is also called, the patron saint of hunters and hunting dogs, trappers, mathematicians, opticians, metalworkers and forest workers, died in 728 at the age of 72.

To conclude the sermon last Saturday, the Reverend Schaffenburg discussed special revelation—better known as the Bible—and general revelation, which is perhaps best represented by the pristine beauty and order of nature. He closed with blessings and thanksgivings specific to the hunter and the hunted.

We adjourned to the Feast of Saint Hubertus, fortunate to have thick carvings of September-fresh elk venison—the American parallel, of course, to Hubert's red stag—in both a summer sausage and a roasted version. Speaking to a small group of men happy for the occasion to show up for a church service wearing pressed camouflage shirts, the reverend, smiling wryly, whispered: "Had God not intended for humans to hunt, he would not have made animals out of meat." ■

### PRODUCTION STAFF - FAIR CHASE

Editor-in-Chief

Greg Tinsley

Managing Editor/Design

Julie T. Houk

Conservation and History Editor

Steven Williams

Research and Education Editor

Winifred B. Kessler

Hunting and Ethics Editor

Mark B. Steffen M.D.

Assistant Editors

Keith Balfour

Craig Boddington

Jack Reneau

Assistant Designer

Dariusz Janczewski

Editorial Contributors

Keith Balfour

Craig Boddington

Robert D. Brown

Jordan Burroughs

Jeffrey S. Crane

Frans Diepstraten

Lisa B. Flowers

Ryan Hatfield

Theodore J. Holsten

Paul R. Krausman

C. Robert Palmer

Jack Reneau

William Taylor

Jack Ward Thomas

Ryan Walser

Wayne van Zwoll

Photography Contributors

Denver Bryan

Tony Bynum

W. Perry Conway/Corbis

Donald M. Jones

Gary Kramer

*Fair Chase* is published quarterly by the Boone and Crockett Club and distributed to its Members and Associates. Material in this magazine may be freely quoted and/or reprinted in other publications and media, so long as proper credit is given to *Fair Chase*. The only exception applies to articles that are reprinted in *Fair Chase* from other magazines, in which case, the Club does not hold the reprint rights. The opinions expressed by the contributors of articles are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Boone and Crockett Club.

*Fair Chase* (ISSN 1077-3274) is published for \$35 per year by the Boone and Crockett Club, 250 Station Drive, Missoula, MT 59801. Periodical postage is paid in Missoula, Montana, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to: *Fair Chase*, Boone and Crockett Club, 250 Station Drive, Missoula, MT 59801

Phone: (406) 542-1888 Fax: (406) 542-0784

Email: [bclub@boone-crockett.org](mailto:bclub@boone-crockett.org)

Advertising Contact: Keith Balfour – Ext. 208

### BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB STAFF

Chief of Staff – Tony A. Schoonen

Director of Big Game Records – Jack Reneau

Director of Publications – Julie T. Houk

Director of Marketing – Keith Balfour

Office Manager – Sandy Poston

Controller – Jan Krueger

Assistant Director of Big Game Records –

Ryan Hatfield

Associates Program Manager – Amy Hutchison

Development Program Manager – Jodi Bishop

Assistant Controller – Abra Plemmons

Assistant Designer – Dariusz Janczewski

Customer Service –

Ina Crist & Wendy Nickelson

TRM Ranch Manager – John Rappold

Conservation Education Program Manager –

Lisa B. Flowers

Facilities Coordinator – JoAnne Cobb