

WE ARE FAIR CHASE

As any comedian who makes a living on stage can attest, a joke is funny only if the audience laughs. As obvious as that statement might be, it's surprising how often those behind the mic—or, for that matter, those behind the editor's desk—believe our material is oh-so clever if we get a chuckle from our own punchline.

Sure, all of us who put together *Fair Chase* work hard to make sure that our columns and stories are informative, interesting, and relevant in the context of the issues we face in the hunting and natural resource community. At the same time, we recognize that, with each issue, the true measure of success is not in our own view, but, dear reader, in yours.

That's why, every few years, we survey our readership, notably the more than 4,600 Associates and Lifetime Associates who make up the lion's share of our subscribers.

A quick snapshot of our Associates (based on those who responded to the survey) reveals that the vast majority of you—96 percent—are male. Most of you are between 54 and 65 years old, with the

second-largest age group being 65 and over. Conversely, our ranks are thin among the 35-and-under crowd. Remember, you can sign up a young family member or friend as an Associate and they will then get their own copy of *Fair Chase* magazine!

Almost half of all of our Associates have an undergraduate degree and many have gone on to obtain a graduate degree as well.

A quarter of all our Associates hail from the mountain states, followed by 16 percent from the Pacific states and 14 percent from the Midwest and north-central region that includes Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Only two percent of our Associate base call New England their home.

Not surprisingly, most all our readers hunt, and they spend more time afield than most sportsmen, many of them—41 percent—hunting 31 days or more per season. All told, some 75 percent of our Associates spend at least two weeks hunting each season and more than 60 percent have hunted in multiple states in the last three years. Some 80 percent of our

Associates have hunted 20 or more years, underscoring our older demographics.

More than three-quarters of all Associates hunt whitetail deer, and more than 60 percent hunt elk and mule deer. Bear and pronghorn are pursued by around half of all Associates and a third of you hunt sheep.

As far as first hearing about *Fair Chase*, 45 percent of Associates came to the magazine through entering a trophy, and 28 percent learned about the publication online. We are very pleased that a large majority of you rate the magazine as excellent, and close to 80 percent of you would recommend the magazine to a friend or relative. It's also great to see that more than 50 percent of our Associates read the magazine from cover to cover.

In our survey, we received many comments from our readers. One of my favorites is: *"It is one magazine out of the several that I get that I slow down and take everything in. One of the few publications that makes you stop and think. Keep up the good work."*

If we are helping you understand and evaluate the



Doug Painter
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

issues that will shape the future of our hunting heritage, that's a great start. As a group, our Associates—you—are an exceptionally well-educated, dedicated, and active group of hunters. As we go forward, please do not hesitate to email me (painter.doug@yahoo.com) with any suggestions, questions, or thoughts you may have.

We face no shortage of challenges. By working together and by working to build our ranks, however, I believe that we can continue to make good progress.

As we look down the road, let's remember that it's those who laugh last...laugh best.

Hope to see you down the trail. ■

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