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September 2008

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ArrowTrade Cover Story

Retailers Employ Multiple Skills

Over the past several years I have had the opportunity to travel across this country visiting archery shops large and small located in busy metropolitan shopping centers, small towns and along rural back roads. During that time I have found two common threads that ran through all of those businesses. First was the owners' dedication and love for archery and bowhunting and second was a true entrepreneurial spirit.

I never gave much thought as to why there are no national chains of archery shops like a McDonalds, Burger King or Red Lobster, but as I sat to write the story of Jeff Scavazzo and Endless Mountains Archery it finally dawned on me. Every one of the archery shop owners I have had the pleasure of meeting not only had a different personality but they often had entirely different approaches to the world of business as well. It seems as if archery shop owners are a maverick breed who see every challenge as another opportunity and are sure they know just how to solve it. They often combine the most unlikely business into one enterprise and are quick to use the most unconventional approaches to getting the job done. They are not the kind of people well suited to cookie cutter answers or to following a set of neatly spelled out rules.

When these dealers shoot their last arrow on earth, if they head for the big archery range in the sky and meet Saint Peter at the pearly gates I think the following might just happen. As Saint Peter hands them a set of angel wings the response probably will be, "No thanks Pete, I've been thinking about it and I'd like to make my own. No disrespect but I got a few ideas on



Jeff Scavazzo and Lorraine Clune form the partnership behind the successful combination of Endless Mountains Archery and Scavazzo's Deer Processing. Jeff's unbridled enthusiasm and Lorraine's attention to detail make them a perfect team.

how to make them better and if you don't mind I'd like to sell some of my new wings to the other angels."

Typifying that entrepreneurial spirit and unbridled enthusiasm for life and business are Jeff Scavazzo and his partner Lorraine Clune, owners of Endless Mountains Archery located in Birchardville, Pennsylvania. Birchardville is in the sparsely populated Susquehanna County of northeastern Pennsylvania about 20 miles from New York's southern border. It would be unfair to say that Birchardville is in the middle of nowhere because it is actually closer to the edge of the earth which makes the success of Endless

Mountains Archery all that more amazing and a real tribute to the work and dedication of Jeff and Lorraine.

Jeff has an impish grin and clear sparkling eyes that seem to drink in everything around him. At times when talking to him he seems to drift away for a second as his mind processes all the information he is gathering and it is obvious that his internal wheels never stop spinning. Both Jeff and Lorraine are talented and creative people and while Jeff is impulsive Lorraine is deliberate and detail oriented making them a perfect team.

Jeff was a meat cutter by trade

Endless Mtn. Archery

By John Kasun

to Bolster The Bottom Line



Scavazzo's Deer Processing center is located in its original building which is adjacent to Endless Mountains Archery. The original building has been expanded and now contains three large coolers, two walk-in freezers and a smoke house. Scavazzo's processes between 700 and 800 deer in an average year plus it supplies customers with specialty meats during the holiday seasons.



This is an example of Jeff's chainsaw carving skills. Carvings are on display in both the archery shop and deer processing plant as well as in his home and throughout the property. While they offer an added decorative touch Jeff stresses the fact that they are also for sale.



The bird house is an example of the many that are on display throughout the archery shop and retail area in the meat processing plant. These are all designed and hand crafted from barn wood by Jeff while Lorraine likes to add the special metal roof touch. Not only do they add an attractive display to the shop but customers like to purchase them as gifts.

having grown up in his fathers' meat business called Dotti-Lou Meats, which is widely known in the area for its excellent custom meat products. Being a dedicated bowhunter Jeff was well aware of the popularity of north-eastern Pennsylvania when it came to attracting hunters not only from Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont and New Jersey but several other surrounding states as well. The area is filled with vacation homes, hunting cabins and state game lands which are open to public hunting.

It was 1993 when Jeff's entrepreneurial spirit began to gnaw at his insides and he longed to strike out on his own. It was at that time fate stepped in when Jeff met Lorraine Clune. The two struck up an immedi-

ate friendship and shortly Jeff was spilling out his ideas of a hunting based business. Lorraine who was a junior accountant and small business owner was attracted by Jeff's enthusiasm and saw potential in his vision.

With so many hunters coming into Susquehanna County for the hunting season Jeff saw the need for a deer processing center in which he could use his existing skills, but his vision went beyond simply processing deer. Seeing the need for a local archery shop and knowing that many of the hunters from out of the area were always looking for last minute items or something they had forgotten he decided to open a small archery shop as well. Jeff is very personable and being a knowledgeable

and successful bowhunter felt confident he would connect with the hunters.

Lorraine owned a custom machine shop which had a small adjacent building located on her property which was vacant at the time. With plenty of surrounding ground Jeff and Lorraine decided it would be the perfect spot for the business. They established a dealership with Kinsey's Archery Products and selected Hoyt as their main bow line. Jeff invested \$10,000 in inventory and both he and Lorraine attended Hoyt's technical bow school to get up to speed.

"The shop opened in April of 1994 and I printed up flyers and put them in every local business, bar, campground and rest area plus ran ads in

Endless Mtn. Archery

the local Shoppers Guide, a free hand-out newspaper," explained Lorraine. "Because we were off the beaten path we needed to use every trick possible to let people know where we were located and what services and products we offered."

"We added 30 3-D targets out back and held monthly shoots plus I installed a sporting clay range," Jeff added. "People started to trickle in and slowly the business began to build. I had about 1,400 square feet of total space for both deer processing and the archery shop so things were tight but I knew we could make it work. The first season we processed 77 deer but the second year that number jumped up to 247 deer which was a 320 percent increase from the year before."

"In 1995 the machine shop located in the adjacent building was sold and the way the business was growing it was obvious that we needed more space for both the archery shop and the meat processing operation," Jeff continued. "In 1996 I moved the archery business into the old machine shop building giving me more room for our growing inventory. At the same time moving the archery operation out of the meat processing location gave me more room for expansion there as well."

"In 1998 we added 3,400 square feet to the archery shop and installed a 30 yard indoor range," Jeff said. "The range gave our customers a place to try a new bow, release, stabilizer or sight. People will buy a product quicker if you can get it out of the package and into their hands so they get a chance to try it. A lot of people also use the range for practice as well. We charge a flat \$8 per hour rate for range time. The range is also a great way to promote the shop and get customers through the door. In many areas winter leagues work best but in our case we do well with summer leagues because most of our customers are snowmobiling or coyote hunting in the winter. We have considered adding a video system but decided



ABOVE: This sprawling building, formally a machine shop, houses Endless Mountains Archery outside of the small town of Birchardville. **RIGHT:** The large sign indicates the last turn off in what to many seems like a never ending series of twists and turns in Pennsylvania's north country. It's studded with reflectors to help catch headlights. **BELOW:** Jeff's sense of humor is evident in this sign inside the pro shop.



against it and stuck with our indoor 3-D range. So far that has proven to be a good decision. It was at this time with the business growing, I was finding it more difficult to keep up with all we had going on and decided to close down the sporting clays course."

Over the next several years the meat processing side of the business continued to grow with an average of 700 to 800 deer being processed each year with a record being set in 2002 when over 1,000 deer were processed between October and December. To meet the demand the processing plant was expanded by 10 times its original size and it now contains three large coolers, two walk-in freezers, a smoke house and a variety of new tools and equipment including vacu-

um packing machines.

Although Jeff adds part time help during the rifle season to handle the increased inflow of deer for the most part he and Lorraine handle it themselves putting in 14 hours during the height of the season. To ensure an efficient operation Lorraine takes control and

runs the business like the Captain of a ship. When a hunter drops off a deer a two part tag is issued with one half of the tag being placed on the deer while the other is given to the hunter to ensure he gets his own meat back. Lorraine then takes the customer's order as to the products desired and enters that into her system. Jeff and his crew skin the deer, trim and clean the carcass, de-bone the meat and cut steaks and chops or process the meat into various products such as kielbasa, salami, jerky and bacon as specified by the hunter.

"It gets nuts in here in deer season and we all really work hard to keep caught up," Lorraine laughed. "During that time one of my most important jobs is just keeping everyone away

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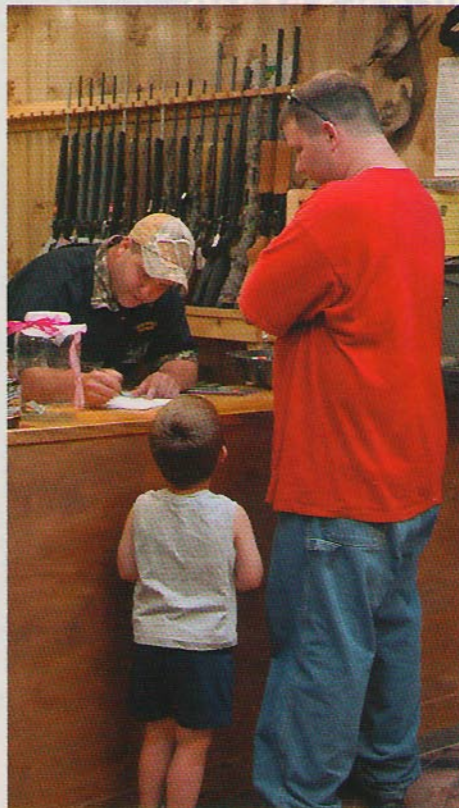
Endless Mtn. Archery

from Jeff. I just tell the customers it's not safe to talk to Jeff when he has a knife in his hand."

Not only do Jeff and Lorraine handle the deer brought into the shop they have actually had hunters ship meat into the shop, some from as far

away as Texas, to have it made into some of Jeff's special products.

Although the meat processing operation is only open during the deer season the demand for Jeff's custom meats has led him to take special orders for Christmas, Easter, Memorial Day and the 4th of July. Prior to each holiday Lorraine calls a growing list of customers to take their special orders. Jeff then makes those



LEFT: Jeff is shown here writing an arrow order for a customer and a "future customer." "It's obvious that the future of bowhunting and archery depends upon our ability to bring young people into the sport," Jeff stressed. "Everyone talks about it but it is more important that we all do something about it. We hold youth leagues in an attempt to get the kids out from in front of the TV and put a bow in their hands."

BELOW: Lorraine uses a spare minute to restock inventory and keep things

neat and clean. "I am an organized person and I can't stand it when things get out of order," said Lorraine. "When things are organized it makes it easier for the customer to see what we have to offer and find what he is looking for. That in turn helps increase sales."

Endless Mtns. Archery
Youth League Now Forming
 9 weeks, starting:
 Sat., May 3 - Sun., June 29
 (shoot either Sat. or Sun.)
 9:00am - 12:00 noon
 Ages 8 yrs old - 13 yrs. old
 *Finger shooters class
 *Sight and Release class
 \$4.00 per person each week
 Trophies awarded upon completion
 of league:
 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, & 5th place
 sign up by May 1st.
 off Rt. 267, on Valley Rd., Birchardville, Pa
 Call: (570) 553-2703



products such as smoked hams, bacon, kielbasa and chicken, slim Jims, sausage and a variety of other holiday meats to order.

Over the years Jeff noticed that interest in shooting the outdoor 3-D range was dropping off. In 2004 the bridges that connected the land on which the shop is located to the 3-D



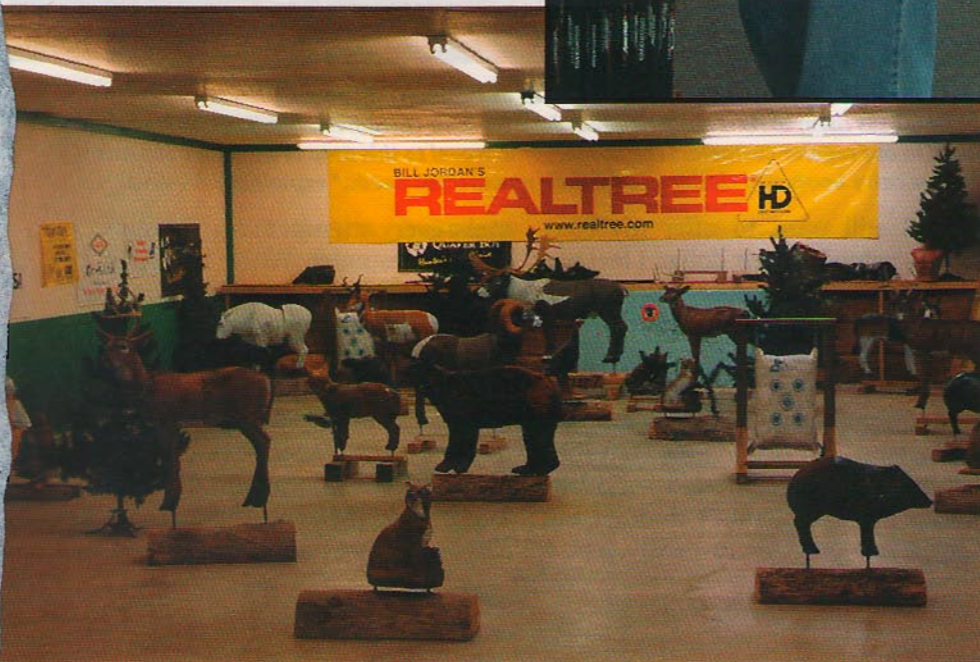
ABOVE: Jeff packs a lot of variety into his inventory as is shown here with his extensive target selection. "I like to give my customers a choice so having a good variety on hand is important to me."

RIGHT: Arrows are a must have item for any bowhunter and Endless Mountains Archery keeps well stocked in carbons at all times. In addition to their regular local customers Endless Mountains does a brisk business with the out of area hunters as well who may find themselves short of "ammo" during a successful hunt or suddenly discover that they left their arrows at home on top of the refrigerator.

BELOW: This 30 yard indoor 3-D range was added in 1998. The range serves double duty as it not only attracts customers to the shop it also gives them a place to try out any equipment that they may be considering buying.

range were swept away in a flood. At that time Jeff abandoned the outdoor range set-up and concentrated on his indoor range by promoting leagues, instructions and special community events. For instance they organized a covered dish supper and held it at the shop, opened the range for a fun shoot, sold raffle tickets and gave out door prizes. The event brought a large number of people through the door, raised over \$1,400 for Breast Cancer Research and gave Endless Mountains Archery a very positive public image.

Jeff turns his inventory between two and three times per year with Hoyt, Reflex, Fred Bear, Jennings and Golden Eagle making up the major



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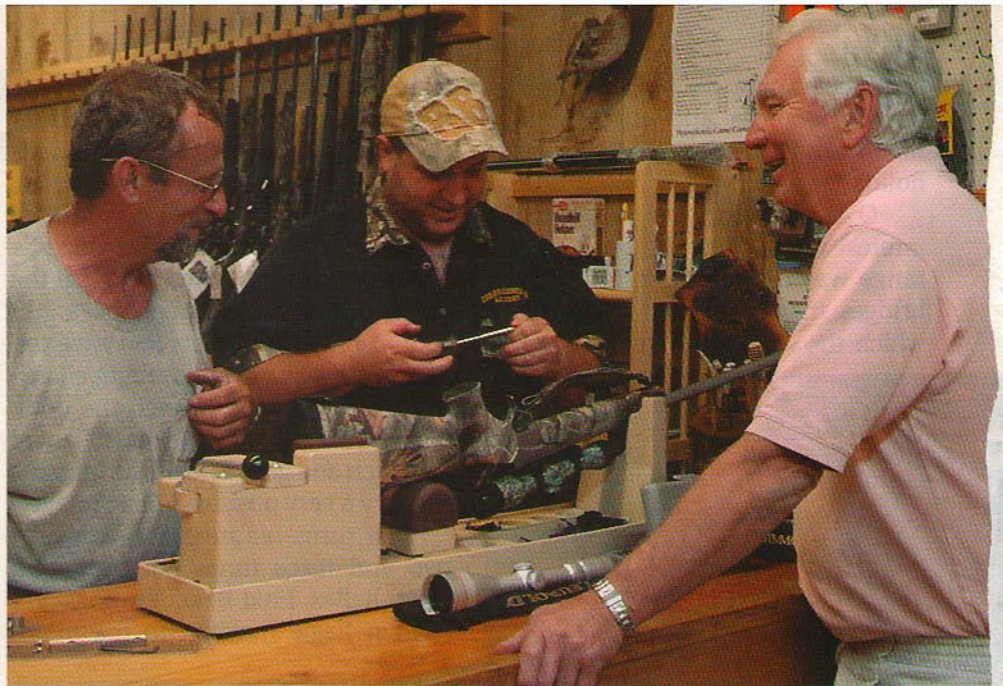
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bow lines. Rocket broadheads, TruGlo, Trophy Ridge and Whisker Biscuit are some of his more popular accessories. A complete line of Gold Tip, Easton, Beman, Blackhawk and Carbon Express finished arrows and components are on hand at all times to ensure that every customer will find an arrow that matches his specifications and budget.

"I like to tell my customers that I am a carbon arrow only shop," Jeff laughed. "I have not sold an aluminum arrow in the past two years; it's been 100 percent carbon. I guess there might be two reasons for that. One is the growing popularity of carbon shafts and the second is that I truly believe they are the better shaft and recommend them to all of my customers. I believe that is a true reflection of just how influential an archery dealer can be. Customers truly do seek the dealers' advice and value the dealers' opinion. While that is a great vote of confidence it is also an awesome responsibility. It's that responsibility that keeps me constantly on my toes to make sure I do what is best for my customers at all times."

"To keep current on trends within the industry I rely heavily on the trade magazines such as ArrowTrade as well as keeping an eye on the catalogs from the retail giants such as Cabela's, Gander Mountain and Bass Pro," Jeff explained. "While it is important to keep aware of the latest hot movers it is just as important to buy right. I attend the Kinsey Dealer Show each year and take advantage of the promotional buys offered there. Not only does it save me money but it also allows me to put together attractive packages for my customers. I try to take advantage of any early buy or dating programs as well. Although we all want to make money when we sell a product it is important to remember that if you save money when you buy a product that savings rolls right to the bottom line as an increased profit. My shop is located equal distance between two Gander Mountain stores and while I do not try to price match



Jeff is equally at home setting up a bow or putting the final touches on a rifle. Endless Mountains Archery is located in an area that attracts a lot of out-of-the-area hunters for both the archery and rifle seasons. Being able to service all the hunters needs enables Jeff to bring in more business over a longer period of time.

At right in this photo is Mike Raykovicz, a regular ArrowTrade contributor who accompanied Business Editor John Kasun on the trip to profile this retailer.



While many shops shy away from items such as clothing and boots Endless Mountains Archery uses them to fill a much needed niche for their customers. "While we sell a lot of boots to our regular customers the hunters who travel to this area to hunt love the fact that we carry boots and clothing to fill their unexpected needs," explained Lorraine.

them I still want to offer my customers value for their dollar. I feel my greatest advantage over the big box stores is my knowledge, expertise and service."

"I know some shops do not service equipment that they do not sell but personally I don't agree with that line of thinking," Jeff said seriously. "When someone comes through my door I not only try to satisfy him I

make every attempt to turn him into a regular customer. When it comes to bows I will repair any bow I can get parts for. While I do charge to service bows not bought in my shop the customers seem to understand and accept that policy. We give free range time with any bow purchased from us and of course set the bow up for free. These perks make a difference and as a matter of fact I have even had sever-

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al people who had bought a bow elsewhere return it and buy one from me when they found out about our service policy."

While Jeff makes every effort to service his customer he does not take trade-ins. "When a customer buys a bow from me he expects to buy a quality product and have me stand behind it," Jeff explained. "I do not always know where a trade-in comes from or how the bow has been treated so it would be difficult for me to sell it with any degree of confidence. While I could try to pick and choose which trades I would take and which I would turn down that could get to be a sticky situation so I just decided; no trades."

"Over the last year or two I have seen an increase in customers looking for quality bows at a lower price, Jeff said. "People are feeling the economical pinch and everyone is trying to stretch their dollars. To make it easier on the customer we accept charge cards and have a great lay-away program. After an initial down payment the customer can place a bow on lay-away but come in and shoot it anytime at our range. It allows them to enjoy the bow while making payments yet we retain control and pos-

session until the bow is paid for. It is a win-win situation."

Because Pennsylvania also offers extensive rifle hunting opportunities that attract many hunters Endless Mountains Archery also stocks firearms covering most major brands including black powder rifles and accessories. About five percent of total sales come from firearms and accessories with another three percent generated from the sale of muzzleloaders. The biggest sellers on the black powder side are the kits or value packs which contain a rifle and all the required accessories. The hunter just needs to add powder and ignition caps and he is ready to go. These are quite popular because of the early

muzzleloading season that falls in the middle of Pennsylvania's archery season.

Just as in the deer processing business one of Lorraine's main jobs in the archery side of the business is acting as a buffer for Jeff. "I handle the counter sales and check out the customers, keep the shelves stocked and do anything else that takes the burden off of Jeff so he can concentrate on handling the customers that require his personal attention," Lorraine explained.

Keeping the burden off of Jeff is somewhat of an understatement when one looks at the burden they both share. While the archery shop maintains a regular schedule of hours



ABOVE: Lorraine helps these customers make a decision on how they want their deer meat processed by letting them try some tasty samples.

LEFT: A customer once commented after watching Jeff wield his knife, "When Jeff is done there isn't enough meat left on a bone for a fly to land on. The guy is amazing"

BELOW: Skinned deer carcasses hang in one of the three coolers.



between July and November it is really open 24/7 as Jeff and Lorraine live right across the lane from the archery shop and processing plant in a large sprawling home that was originally built in 1824. Customers know if they need anything and the shop is closed to simply walk across the road and knock on the door. Jeff likes to say, "If we are home, we are open." Once the deer season starts however Jeff and Lorraine have to switch their attention to the deer processing side of the business which meant closing down the archery shop and requiring customers to come to the meat plant if they needed anything. In 2007 Jeff added a retail outlet in the front of the processing plant which would allow both meat and archery customers to come to one location. This move now allows Lorraine to serve double duty handling meat customers as well as handling the retail archery business during the peak of the deer processing season.

If that seems like a pretty heavy schedule I forgot to mention that Jeff also works as a carpenter when he

BELOW: In 2007 Jeff and Lorraine added a small retail area to the front of the deer processing plant. This allowed them to better serve their archery and gun hunting customers during the height of the deer processing season when they can't staff both buildings. **RIGHT:** This sign on the pro shop door directed customers last fall.

DEAR CUSTOMERS
 OCT & NOV. PLEASE
 DRIVE OUT BACK TO
 THE MEAT PLANT TO
 GET ASSISTANCE FOR
 SUPPLIES
 HOURS
 M-TU-TH-FRI-SAT
 9AM-3PM
 SUN 9AM-12NOON



The Heater Body Suit Shockey's Secret Weapon

by Jim Shockey



I'm asked all the time by whitetail hunters for secrets in consistently killing giant bucks and the only way I know how to answer that is:

- A. Hunt where giant bucks live.
- B. Hunt every hour and every day possible during the season.

Once "A" is satisfied, then I'll put my chips into "B's" basket every time. The longer you are out there, the greater your chance of scoring.

When I walk into one of my Saskatchewan deer stands, anytime from November to December, and intend to sit all-day, the temperature will be around zero Fahrenheit. Colder is better. Snow is better yet. Sitting all-day in these conditions is impossible without the best equipment.

In 2007, I personally became better-equipped, thanks to the Heater Body Suit (So did the clients in my Saskatchewan whitetail camps). We tested these suits in a season that was one of our coldest and snowiest on record. And I can say without a shadow of a doubt that, no matter what your hunting clothing preference, you can benefit by wearing what you like and then crawling inside a Heater Body Suit.

No Guff, a Heater Body Suit will stack the odds of taking a giant buck in your favor, and you don't have to be in Saskatchewan to realize these benefits. I know a lot of hunters in the States who can't stay on stand all-day once it gets below freezing. Their feet or hands get cold, they start fidgeting, and as soon as they're uncomfortable- the mental discipline necessary on stand is gone, and the hunt is over.

Listen, I like to think I'm as tough as the next guy. But hunting whitetails effectively is not about being tough. It's about being comfortable enough to keep your body and mind in the hunt. I don't care how I look doing that, (as some of you would attest), I just care that I'm warm and that I have enough chocolate chip cookies to last me. The Heater Body Suit might not look cool—it looks like a big sleeping bag with legs—but it's my new secret weapon for giant whitetails. Try it this season. I won't guarantee you'll kill a giant buck, but I'll guarantee that you'll hunt longer than you would have otherwise. And that alone gets you closer to taking the biggest deer of your life.



To learn more about The Heater Body Suit, contact:
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FROM THE PAGES OF BOWHUNTER MAGAZINE — NOT A PAID ENDORSEMENT

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Endless Mtn. Archery

isn't at the archery shop or in the meat processing plant. Now if you got all of that straight lets toss in some chain-saw carving. Yep, two years ago Jeff traveled to Ridgeway, Pennsylvania to the Appalachia School of Artisan to learn the art of chainsaw carving. In a building off to the side of the house Jeff has a shop where he carves bears, eagles and a variety of animals which are displayed around the property and are for sale in the shop.

Also displayed around the property and in the shop for sale are unique birdhouses made from aged barn wood which Jeff makes in his woodshop. Many of these houses feature metal roofs which Lorraine designs and adds for a special touch.

Just in case you think that Jeff simply lies around the rest of the time I should mention that in the past he had a turkey call manufacturing business, operated a guide service out of his home called Strut-N-Rut and is also a taxidermist.

During a tour of the rest of the

property we drove by beautiful fish ponds and Jeff showed me the extensive food plots he had prepared for wildlife this year as well as some of his tree stands which are located within sight of the house. During my visit I had time to check out Jeff's trophy room that Lorraine calls the "dead head room" which is also home to Jeff's collection of hand carved waterfowl that he does in his "spare time."

Late in the afternoon on the day of my visit I had a chance to set down with Jeff and Lorraine to share a glass of lemonade in their huge kitchen. I asked about their plans for the future to which Jeff replied, "Oh, we intend to keep on doing exactly what we are now doing until we retire or they strike gas on the property." Somehow I had a hard time thinking of either of them as retired.

My time spent at Endless Mountains Archery with Jeff and Lorraine was not only enjoyable but I think typifies the spirit of archery shop owners across the country who are hard working, creative, innovative people and

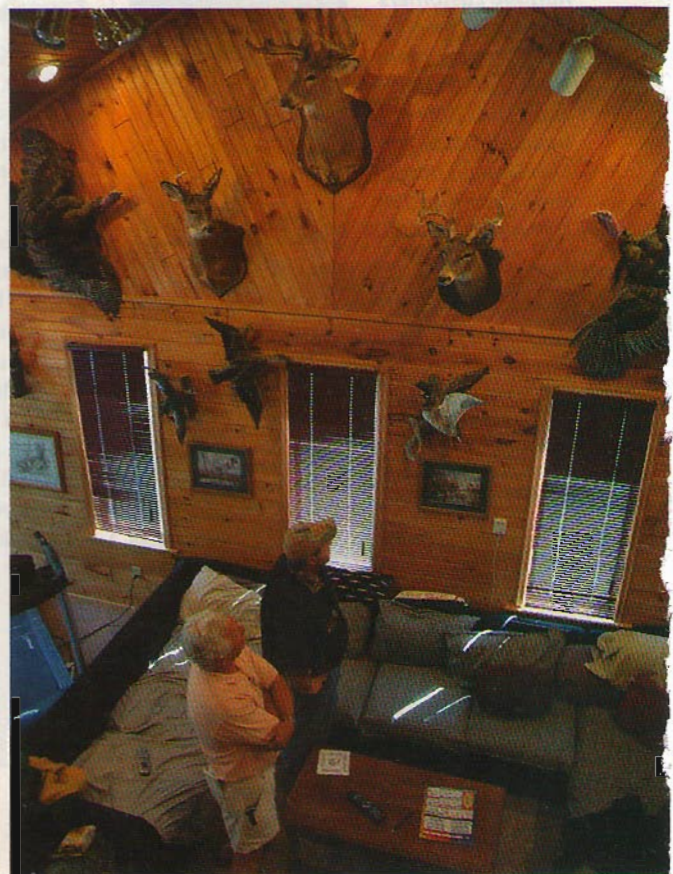
without whom there would be no archery industry as we know it today. While they are all different and may take a completely different approach to their businesses their love for the sport and dedication to their customers make them part of the same family.

Editor's Note: In addition to his writing duties, John Kasun is an outdoor seminar speaker and a business consultant with experience in corporations large and small. He can be reached at 126 Hickory Lane, Duncansville, PA 16635, by phone at (814) 695-5784 or by email at kasun@atlanticbb.net. ←

RIGHT: Jeff, an accomplished bowhunter, took this beautiful Pennsylvania buck from his farm several years ago, a farm where he practices quality deer management.

BELOW: Jeff is shown here holding two of his waterfowl carvings while others are on display.

BELOW RIGHT: Jeff shows Mike Raykovicz from ArrowTrade some of his trophies in what Lorraine calls "The dead head room."



RIGHT: Two years ago Jeff traveled to Ridgeway, Pennsylvania to attend the Appalachia School of Artisan to learn the art of chainsaw carving. In a building off to the side of the house Jeff has a shop where he carves bears, eagles and a variety of animals which are displayed around the property and are for sale in the shop. When I asked Jeff how difficult it was to carve an eagle out of a log he replied, "I don't think it's hard, all you have to do is take a log and cut away anything that doesn't look like an eagle."

BELOW: This close-up of Jeff's chainsaw carved eagle shows both his attention to detail and his skill. While most of Jeff's carvings are for sale Lorraine has staked a personal claim on this one which she states is "off limits."






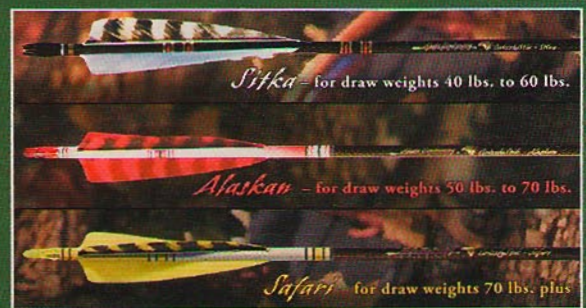
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