

Wheel 'em Inn and get 'em out hunting

Physically challenged hunters have access to outdoor adventures that are provided by dedicated volunteers and organizations.

by Ed Neumann
Special to the WSD

Over the course of my turkey hunting career I've utilized every tactic in the book from aggressive fight calling to stalking and ambushing the cunning red heads. I, however, have never drove a camo golf cart to within a 100 yards of a roosting sight, draped a cart with camo netting and attempted to lure a Tom into shotgun range of a golf cart. I'm sure Carl, the ground's keeper in Caddyshack, would love to get a hold of one of these carts to stalk that troublesome gopher! Myself, Jeff Krueger and Wayne Krueger were setting up this nonconventional hunt to give Charlie Ande, who is living with multiple sclerosis, a chance to give a Tom a ride in the cart.

The setup

Wayne Krueger, along with his family and friends, have gone to great lengths to provide

an accessible environment that is friendly to physically challenged hunters.

Transportation is taken care of via two golf carts on steroids. A cart that was once home on the back nine has become a versatile way of moving physically challenged hunters to the back forty. The EZGO carts are decked out with a full camo paint job and equipped with a six inch lift kit; I was amazed at the terrain a modified golf cart could cross. The seat height on the cart also provided easy access to move a physically challenged hunter from the cart to a wheelchair or vehicle. Well maintained trails, many covered with gravel, provided easy access to many hunting locations.

The "Wheel 'Em Inn" cabin provides all the comforts of home. Electricity is provided by a generator that is started by a push of a button. I can't fathom the amount of time, energy and money that Wayne, his family and his friends have invested in this fantastic operation. I can tell you that his hunters find the accommodations to be priceless. Wayne charges nothing for physically challenged hunters to utilize the cabin, carts and land.

Hunting out of a golf cart

Jeff and I met up with Charlie and Wayne at the Wheel 'Em Inn at four a.m. on the Saturday morning of the third Wisconsin turkey hunting season. Wayne had determined a good spot to set up for the morning hunt was a roost sight that the birds frequented. After the short drive we converted the cart into a blind; it's surprising how fast and effective a camo golf cart becomes a blind with the addition of some camo netting.

We set "Monica" and "Bill," the nicknames of the hen and full strut Tom decoys, out in front of Charlie and his highly portable blind. Within a few minutes we had Toms gobbling close to our setup. They gobbled 50 plus times, gave us a few invitation gobbles to come and join their party but ended up flying down in the opposite direction of us. The toms were off to buy the hens some alfalfa at the local field.

I don't mind hunting in wet, cold or windy weather but I prefer to not hunt when the weather is wet, cold AND windy. This was the exact poor weather conditions that our Saturday morning hunt provided. As we moved from wet setup to cold setup to windy setup, myself, Jeff and Charlie swapped hunting stories. It was great to hear that Charlie had numerous hunting adventures over the past year due, in large part, to his affiliation with Adaptive Sportsmen Inc., a Wisconsin based organization that provides opportunities for physically challenged people to enjoy the outdoors.

We braved the deer season like weather until noon and headed back the Wheel 'Em Inn. While Charlie didn't take a bird, I was able to take a new perspective from the hunt.

What would you do?

What if the unimaginable occurred and you fell out of your deerstand and were paralyzed or were diagnosed with M.S. and were unable to walk? Would you just leave the sport that



SUCCESSFUL HUNT: Keith Hanrahan (left) and Wayne Krueger (right) with the results a successful hunt with the help of a camo golf cart, accessible trails, "Monica" and "Bill."

you love or continue to hunt?

I watched the sunrise and listened to Toms gobble around me on the Sunday morning after our hunt with Charlie and I contemplated those questions. Most of us feel that hunting is one of the most important aspects of our lives...it's in our blood and have no choice but to continue. There's a better chance of you hearing a buck gobble than for me to give up the sport that I enjoy pursuing, no matter what the circumstances or condition I'd be in.

As sportsmen we need to provide more opportunities for those who aren't able to hit the woods or lakes by themselves.

Organizations like Adaptive Sportsmen Inc., Fishing Has No Boundaries Inc., and N.W.T.F.'s Wheelin' Sportsmen hold events through out the year and would love to have you volunteer your time, land or talents to lend a hand to physically challenged sportsmen.



WHEEL EM IN: The "Wheel em inn" cabin provides physically disabled hunters will all the comforts of home.

We can

As Charlie and I swapped contact information my pen slowed its progress across the torn scrap of cardboard when he gave me his email address. There were four little, yet very powerful, letters at the beginning of his email address... "I CAN."

I know I CAN do a lot more for physically challenged sportsmen by volunteering my time, talents and land access. And together WE CAN get a lot more of our physically challenged brothers and sister back in the wild were they belong.

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