

# Kenton Bray Memorial Wounded Warriors Hunt (Part 2)

## Wanderings from the Woods & Water

by Jay Bicknell

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This is a special column because my wife will be co-authoring with me.

I want to give a brief description of the HOOAH program. The HOOAH program is associated with the Warrior Transition Battalion (WTB) at Ft. Campbell. The wounded soldiers in the WTB either transition to a regular unit or medical retirement.

This is our fourth year of hunting with the HOOAH program. HOOAH has several different meanings in the Army, but for this program it means Healing Outside Of A Hospital.

Sergeant Hackworth of the HOOAH program spoke on day one of the hunt. He said that last year 23 lives were saved because of HOOAH. There was 23 soldiers contemplating suicide that, because of an outdoor related trip, saved them. Please know that your involvement is helping American heroes!

Thursday morning kicked off the turkey hunting. All the guides and hunters headed to the woods well before daylight. I got to hunt with my good friend (Ret.) Lt. Colonel Dale Patterson. Dale used to be over HOOAH and this is his fourth year hunting with us. The highlight of my turkey season was calling in a long beard for my good friend. I am pretty sure that

I was whooping and hollering more than Dale. It was one of those hunts that I will never forget.

So, day one of hunting ended with three turkeys down and a few misses. The evening meal was provided by the Estill NWTF chapter. We all ate and fel-lowshipped. The food was awesome! It was a great time to get to know all of the soldiers; Friendships made that will last for a lifetime.

Day 2 of turkey hunting was tough! We had a few misses and no kills. The guides went to every turkey hunting honey hole around. The birds were just not working. The tough day of hunting ended with a great meal provided by the Masonic Lodge. It gave all the guides and hunters a chance to eat well and tell some hunting stories.

Day 3, a few guides and hunters went back for more punishment with the turkeys winning big time. Luckily a giant breakfast was awaiting provided by Estill NWTF chapter. A new tradition was started on day 3. All the guys who missed a turkey got their shirt tails cut off. We also passed gag awards to the soldiers. Even though very few turkeys were killed it was the funniest Wounded Warrior hunt ever.

I hope we helped some

soldiers during our hunt. I always take something away from every hunt. This hunt the take-away for me is, "don't just be!" Strive to be the best you can be, because a lot of soldiers have paid a great price so you can have the Freedom to be the best you can be.

(Chandra Bicknell author)

Tasha Alvarez is a precious 6 year old little girl that I got the honor of watching while her parents, who were Wounded Warriors, were hunting. And yes that made six kids for me if anyone is counting!! Something we tend to forget is the kids of soldiers. The kids of soldiers go from having a mom or dad at home to them being deployed thousands of miles away. The kids of soldiers have to live with the fear of a parent not coming home from a deployment. The children of soldiers routinely have to move because their parents get new orders. So while the kids and I spent time with this brave, independent, smart and wonderful little girl, I got to thinking about all the children of soldiers. This experience has humbled me and helped me to realize the freedoms that I take for granted on a daily basis. I had an opportunity to

see personally what the children of soldiers go through so that Jay and I can have the freedom to worship God and home school our children. So please say a prayer for all the children who have a mom or dad in uniform protecting our country. May God bless the children of our soldiers!!

There are so many people involved that made this a success. I just want to say THANKS to everyone that helped! Thanks to the guides for working hard during a tough turkey season. Thanks to all the folks who donated to the hunt. Thanks to the DAV, Twin City Kruzers, Estill NWTF chapter, and the Masons. Most of all Thank God for great weather and a safe hunt.

I went to the mailbox this morning and had a letter from an 80 year old lady in Indiana who reads my column. She knew my Granny Richardson. She sent me some old pictures of my granny. Thanks for letting me write for you! It's special moments like that letter that makes writing so much fun!

Until next week, get out and enjoy God's creation! Looking forward to next year's Kenton Bray Memorial Wounded Warrior Hunt 2015!



Tasha Alvarez daughter of Wounded Warriors Oscar and Barbara Alvarez



Guides and Soldiers



Matt Plowman, Jose Sixtos, Kelby Browning



Shirt tails being lost!



Lt. Patterson and Jay Bicknell

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