

# Tracks™

July 2009

Read about Brian and Judy's unforgettable 15th wedding anniversary, Alaska spring bear hunting adventure below. (AH6)



## Anniversary to Remember by Brian Jackson, SD

As we were flying from Anchorage, Alaska to the quaint village of Cordova, could not help but be awed by the rugged beauty of the Chugach Mountain Range and its hundreds of glaciers that flow into Prince William Sound. My wife, Judy and I were to spend the next two weeks celebrating our 15th wedding anniversary in the Alaska wilderness, chasing brown and black bears.

As soon as we landed in Cordova we were met by our guide, Chris and his wife, Penny. After brief introductions, we were off to the rifle range to make sure things were in working order. Then all we needed to do was clear some last minute details and we were off to the local landing strip to head into the Copper River Delta area on a Super Cub bush plane.

Shortly after arriving in the Alaskan wilderness, we established camp and decided to take a short hike, since in Alaska you cannot fly and hunt in the same day. We wanted to check the surrounding tidal flats for sign of any big bruins. Sixty paces from camp we found tracks of a very large brown bear. Now all we had to do was wait him out, knowing eventually he would make his introduction.

**Day 1-6** found Judy stalking numerous black bears with the bears either being too small or slipping into the thicker alders which line the coastal areas. I also had a chance at an 8-9' brown bear sow working our direction, but she too slipped away into thicker cover. This cover, mostly alders and

*(continued on page 2. Want to learn more about Alaska? Contact your Outdoor Connection franchise owner)*

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devils club, was also helpful in many ways, as the bears, moose and wolves usually travel along the outside. All we had to do was watch the trails and put in our time.

**Day 7** (Memorial Day) we found ourselves watching a good location for bears when this beautiful 6' black bear gave Judy the opportunity she had been waiting for. It was last light, which this far north happened to be at 11:15 p.m., as the sow walked to within 50 yards and turned broadside. Judy squeezed the trigger and within a few minutes camera flashes were going as we now had a very nice 6' sow harvested with a nice, dark, oil-black pelt with no rubs at all.

**Day 8** had us skinning the black bear from the previous evenings hunt, and after a 5 p.m. dinner it was off to the same point to watch for brown bear. This point happened to be only 400 yards from camp. At approximately 11 p.m., an 8' sow strolled out into view along the same trail. She was on a fairly quick pace and before we could judge her size and pelt quality she was into the thicker cover. I did have a small window of opportunity to shoot but was not confident at the time. We waited for her to perhaps make a return appearance, but after 20 minutes we decided to call it a day. Suddenly, an even larger brown bear came walking along the same trail. This was a boar. His stiff legged walk and nose to the ground indicated he was in the breeding mode and after that sow. Within seconds he gave me a perfect broadside shot at 80 yards. Camera flashes were now illuminating the Alaskan twilight for a second night in a row.



**Day 9** found us skinning out the large 9½' brown bear, and immersing ourselves in the beautiful snow-capped mountains to the north and the gulf of Alaska to the south.

**Day 10** the day of our anniversary, we loaded up and headed back to Cordova with extra time left in this vacation for much needed rest and sightseeing. I'm truly privileged to have spent this time in such a magnificent, gorgeous wilderness setting with my wonderful bride of 15 years.

We want to thank our outfitter and the guide Chris for all of their hard work to make our outing a success. Also thanks to Doris at Outdoor Connection (IA) for her assistance and planning to make this adventure a dream come true.

*For more information on AH6, contact your Outdoor Connection franchise owner.*

## Unexpected Surprises by Chris Lemke (OC-MN)

On top of having two children and also a fishing and hunting problem, it was natural that I would want all my children to hunt and fish with me. Built in hunting and fishing buddies for life -- what else could a guy ask for? I think, however, I may have pushed my habit on my kids a little hard. Maybe I should have backed off a little... hours and hours in a deer stand or on a bumpy lake in a boat can ruin a kid for life. I think that is exactly what may have happened to my first two kids. Two years ago, my wife and I adopted our third child. I assumed I would have the same effect on him, so I left Anthony alone. He, however, had other ideas. He forced himself along whenever possible. I did not think a four year old could walk five miles of grouse country or endure hours of fishing without a fish, but I was proven wrong. It was an unexpected surprise to have the partner I always dreamed of.



As we were heading up to Lake Nipigon in Ontario for the 4th time, I knew exactly what to expect; BIG lake trout and BIG brook trout. We geared up, I bought everything I could get my hands on that heard would work, and the family headed north. Weather forecasts called for four days of beautiful weather. Well, if you want to be famous, be a good meteorologist. We were greeted with a horrible cold front bringing rain and lots of wind as we quickly headed to our favorite lake trout spot (a place where I have never caught a fish under 20 pounds). The fish were not on my fish finder, but just to prove that it didn't matter, we fished for them anyhow. It turns out that you can't catch a fish

that isn't underneath your boat. FINE! We decided brookies it is. Soon we were casting for brook trout along the shore. The same shores that normally produced 5-6 pound brook trout every year. When a northern pike would steal a lure, we would move on to another spot. Different spots, same story. Finally we made a good decision. Let's take what the lake gives us. We quickly tied on leaders and started casting for pike. There were very few casts that did not land a good pike. The smallest was 27 inches and the largest 42". We estimated 40 fish landed before we finally decided to go back to the river and catch some walleyes for dinner. This resort is right on a river, and we had about an hour before we lost daylight. We casted our jigs from shore and quickly caught our limit of walleyes. These were nice size "eyes"; up to 23 inches.

The next day was very near a mirror of the first. Now, we did not go to Lake Nipigon for pike and walleyes, but when life gives you walleyes, make Panko fried walleyed fillets for dinner. I have to admit, just like Anthony, the trip was an unexpected surprise.



*For more information on ONF6, contact your local Outdoor Connection franchise owner.*

NEW BRUNSWICK BLACK BEAR  
\$1,400/HUNTER

NBH1

ARCHERY ONLY - SEPT. 14-18 - 6 SPOTS AVAILABLE  
ARCHERY AND/OR RIFLE - OCT. 5-9, 12-16 - 6 SPOTS

MANITOBA LAKE TROUT  
\$2,495/ANGLER

MBF3

SEPT. 19-26, 09 OR SEPT. 26-OCT. 3, 09  
(BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY)





## Losing a Pioneer by Greg Ray (OC-OK)

The outdoor industry has lost one of its great pioneers this month. Friend and mentor, Paul Newsom lost his two year battle to cancer on the first of July. Most of you may remember Paul from Outdoor TV shows such as "Hunting the Country", "Outdoor Adventures Digest", "The Camp Cook" and NRA's "American Rifleman".

I not only had the privilege of knowing Paul, but had the opportunity to hunt and fish with him on several occasions, in fact my very first big game hunt ever was with Paul on a New Mexico antelope hunt while filming for his show "Paul Newsom's Great Outdoors", talk about intimidating. We had been tracking down a monster goat for several hours; once we were within range I thought I was going to be able to witness the master at work and watch how to hunt big game for a TV show, but instead I got my first example of how generous Paul really was. With no warning at all Paul informed me that he had taken plenty of antelope and that I was up, but not to shoot until the camera man told me he was ready (no pressure there). That goat now has a special place on my wall and brings back plenty of great memories. Paul was also the inspiration for starting "Outdoor Connection TV"; he didn't just offer me a few pointers and tell me good luck, he actually opened up his home and invited several Outdoor Connection team members to learn how to shoot good wildlife footage. Eighteen months later "Outdoor Connection TV" was nominated for "Best New Series" on our network. One of my favorite trips was when my wife and I were joined by Paul, his wife Brenda and their daughter Emma in Cabo San Lucas for our 2006 Outdoor Connection Convention and billfishing tournament and in true Paul fashion, he caught the biggest dorado on the boat, which helped us win second place in the tournament.

I was fortunate enough to attend Paul's memorial service and man did that guy have lots of friends. Several of his hunting buddies and childhood friends got up to share stories that put smiles on all of our faces and I am sure that is exactly how he would have wanted it.

We will miss you Paul.

## Outdoor Connection®

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This complimentary issue of Tracks is provided by your local Outdoor Connection franchise owner. For more information on any of the adventures in this issue or other expeditions worldwide, contact the franchise owner below:

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