After reading Bob Boyd’s article in the January/February 2003 issue of Boar Hunter Magazine, I reflected on an important trend in the hunting industry. While providing hunts for the physically challenged and dream hunts for terminally ill citizens of this great nation is a growing trend among caring landowners and outfitters across North America, well-intentioned organizations such as “Make a Wish Foundation” must seemingly bow to activist groups that exert increasing political pressure.

The simple problem is that the irrational value system of an elitist group is being imposed upon an alarmingly high number of Americans. The physically challenged and terminally ill cannot be subjected to the mega-G forces provided in today’s amusement park rides. No, these challenged humans can’t normally participate in activities such as going to the movies or shopping in a mall, but they can still enjoy the outdoor world of hunting and fishing. It’s up to those in the hunting world to make it happen.

Dallas Hawkins and his best friend, Heath Shadwick from Neosho, Missouri, had heard many accounts of the ferocious temperament and courage of wild boar, and they wanted to see first-hand if these stories were true. Dallas was born with Osteoporosis, which manifests itself in easily fractured bones. Frequent infections are common due to problems with Dallas’s bone marrow weakening his white blood cell production. With Osteoporosis providing a serious challenge, boar hunting was only a dream for Dallas.

Charlene Long’s ranch is located near Jourdanton, Texas. Charlene and her husband, Jay, own and operate the “Long Ranch,” which has been in the family for many years. Besides big whitetail deer, Southern Texas is known for a healthy population of wild boar inhabiting the diverse habitat of ranches through the state.

Charlene had been in contact with Brigid O’Donoghue, President of BioTec Research, Inc. and with the United Special Sportsmen Alliance (USSA) for over a year regarding dream hunts for special children. With USSA’s sponsorship and the determination of a team of members and sponsors, young Dallas went to the southern Texas brush to test his nerves on a real Texas trophy: Boar!

Since Dallas has a frail bone disease, Charlene decided to use a tripod stand to keep his legs out of harm’s way. Charlene placed Dallas in the tripod stand surrounded with a lot of thick brush. Dallas’s friend Heath and Charlene sat close to the tripod, and John Mozingo, a USSA Director, sat nearby and Brigid O’Donoghue sat farther down the creek bed, also in a good hog habitat.

A cloudy day with temperatures in the low 50's greeted the excited foursome as they headed out that afternoon for their “rookie” hunt.

The Texas countryside looked quite different compared to Dallas’s native southwest Missouri woods. After a few hours perched high in his tripod, Dallas spotted a nice hog foraging along the creek bed. The hog was well within range of Dallas’s 7mm Remington Magnum, Model 700. The tusker hit the ground in a cloud of dust. How do YOU spell BBQ in Texas?

During the next two days John and Dallas hunted hogs. South Texas was good to all who had participated in the event, and the Long Ranch’s owners treated everyone like family. For once, disabilities and sicknesses took a back seat.

Wild boars are real trophies in anyone’s book. They are elusive and tough and seem to walk around with a chip on their shoulder! They provide count-
less hours of quality hunting experience for all Americans, including the disabled and terminally ill.

Under good conditions a boar reproduces rapidly and sufficient hunter harvest is part of a sound land management program. The fact is, these special groups of people need a hunting experience. Most hog habitat is under-hunted, and can use the hunters. These hunts are quite desirable for both the sportsmen and the habitat.

We thank Charlene and Jay Long for providing the opportunity for Dallas and John to have such a successful hog hunt. John Mozingo who took the time out of his busy life to accompany these special young men, who had also harvested two hogs, and Dallas went home with not one, but two Texas Trophy boars. Another special thanks goes to Boar Hunter Magazine for helping promote this valuable service for those who need it the most: the terminally ill and disabled. Media coverage is a critical link to any worthy cause, and Boar Hunter Magazine is doing its part.

If you would like to join USSA by donating a hunt or being a guide, or if you have a disabled or terminally ill child, please contact us. We work with numerous non-profit organizations nationwide, and our only goal is to grant special wishes.

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