Feeling right at home
USSA gives 19-year-old Eric Corey the chance to hunt

by John Groth
Jackson County Chronicle

Eric Corey’s life revolves around hunting. The 19-year-old from Knox, Ind., has lived in the country and around nature his whole life - hunting animals such as deer, turkey, coyotes, rabbits, squirrels, and even coon. So Saturday, at the United Special Sportsmen’s Alliance (USSA) and Safari Club International (SCI) event held Saturday in Pittsville - just outside of Black River Falls. There were 75 children who traveled to the event, located at 7864 Shotwell Rd. Eric, 19, was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s disease in 2001 and at the age of 15, he is the youngest person to ever be diagnosed with the disease.

Eric (left), Doug and Carol Corey who are from Knox, Ind., attended the United Special Sportsmen’s Alliance (USSA) and Safari Club International’s (SCI) event held Saturday in Pittsville - just outside of Black River Falls. There were 75 children who traveled to the event, located at 7864 Shotwell Rd. Eric, 19, was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s disease in 2001 and at the age of 15, he is the youngest person to ever be diagnosed with the disease.

While there, Eric came face-to-face with a cape buffalo - an animal which is nicknamed “black death.” The cape buffalo is widely known as the most dangerous animal in Africa, as it kills more people than any other animal there. But, Eric didn’t let that fact stop him from hunting and killing it - just like he doesn’t let the disease stop him from hunting.

So, the two drove through the African landscape and stalked the dangerous buffalo. Once they found the herd and moved closer range, Eric picked up a 375 high-power rifle and, with one shot, sent one to the ground. While it lay on the ground, he blasted two more shots into the buffalo to finish it off.

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“Then it’s about 30 yards from you and looking at you, it’s kind of nervewracking,” he said. “That’s the most nervous I’ve ever been in my whole life.

But, that wasn’t his only kill there. Eric also hunted and killed three zebras, an eland, and an impala.

For Eric’s parents, Carol and Doug Corey, Saturday marked the first time they have traveled with their son on an USSA trip. The Corey’s made the eight-hour drive in the camper and arrived Friday morning to 7864 Shotwell Rd. in Pittsville. But, they’ve made family hunting trips much further than that.

“It’s fabulous how all these organizations can get together and do this for these kids. You couldn’t ask for a better place with all the activities,” Doug said. “Here they’re all the same. They don’t see themselves as having disabilities here.”

Eric wouldn’t have four of his hunting opportunities without the assistance of Brigid O’Donoghue and the USSA. O’Donoghue has helped Eric to go on two USSA hunts, including his most

See Corey on page 810.