

'It was by far the best feeling in the world'

By Kailea Taylor

It all started when I was around 10 years old.

Every year my dad would be gone for seven days to go hunting and this year I decided to ask if I could go. His response was, "If you can draw my bow, you can come with me." I tried and of course failed, but at that moment something sparked.

At Christmas I got a compound bow and I worked my heart out to get my draw weight up. That year my sister, Malia, and I went with my dad to the hunting camp. We didn't go the whole time but for just three days because we didn't want to miss the first day of school. It was the best three-day experience of my life.

I drove up with my uncle because my dad's truck was full. We got there late at night and settled into our cabin. The next morning we woke early, like 5 a.m. We had breakfast then met up with our guide, Kurt, and drove to our first setup.

We sat there for around 30 minutes, then we heard a snap. Some sticks started breaking and then I saw the first elk I had ever seen and it was a big one. This 12-point elk was one bush away from my dad shooting it.

The elk slowly came out from the protection of the bush. My dad drew back his bow slowly. It was perfect until there was



a little squeak from my dad's bow; turns out the rubber on his quill wore out. The elk spirited away and sure, we were all disappointed. But really, that was one of the coolest moments in my life, second compared to what happened two years later.

Fast forward to 2020 and I could draw back a weight of 45

pounds. I was ready. A five-hour drive later, we were there.

We got there fairly early and had enough time to set up our cabin. I slept on a cot, which in my opinion was more comfortable than the beds. My cot was right next to the window, so I had a little window sill to put my late-night snacks and stuff on.

Not much happened after we got there, we just ate and went to bed. We had to get a good night's sleep for tomorrow. We woke up and got some breakfast and lunch for later. Then we were off!

We had Kurt, our guide; Todd, my uncle; and my dad. We got to the first setup and waited there for about 30 minutes but didn't get anything. We moved on to our second setup. At this setup, we heard something but didn't see anything.

We slowly made our way into the cold spring area, which is cold and pretty thick woods. We got down and began to bugle. Only like five minutes in we started to hear something. Then as soon as you know it, there is an elk in sight only 30 yards away.

Kurt and Todd were calling it toward me. It had to be only 12 yards away, but I had no coverage for movement. So I had to pull back my bow so slow the elk wouldn't notice. I was doing so well until I got to the end. The elk spooked but Todd and Kurt called out and it froze.

I'm trying to get my aim and my dad's in the back saying, "Shoot it, shoot it!" So I shot it.

At first I thought I shot high, but turns out I got it right in the artery. I even got to watch it fall, which apparently never happens, especially in thick woods.

It was by far the best feeling in the world.



Healthy Traditions delivers tomato plants to elders

Courtesy photos

Far left: Ducky Simmons

Center: Sharon Mason and Healthy Traditions Temp Marie Aspria

Left: Crystal Baker-Martin