

BIG GAME HUNTER

LARGE-CALIBER BULLET MAKER HUNTING HIS 74TH SEASON

Story & Photo by Rylan Boggs
Blue Mountain Eagle

Jackson DeRosier's bullets have killed everything from grizzlies to a zebra.

The walls of his home and workshop are covered with horns, hides and hunting trophies from his nearly seven decades of hunting.

He's not sure how many sets of antlers he has, but one would be hard pressed to find space to hang any more up.

In his shop, the home of Blue Mountain Bullets, he painstakingly crafts large-caliber bullets for big game hunters.

DeRosier, a proponent of lead bullets. He said they stay together better than other metals and make for a more humane kill.

He started making his own bullets in 1989 after being dissatisfied with the ammunition available on the market.

"Back in the '40s there was at least five or six big bulls lost because of bullet failure," he said.

DeRosier, now 89, first went hunting at 14 years old and shot his first elk at 18. He said he will be gunning for a bull elk this season and is looking forward to visiting the family's historic hunting site for the 74th year in a row.

"To us, it's like our church," Jackson's grandson, Zach DeRosier, said.

He explained it's often more about spending time with family in the outdoors than the hunt itself.

Jackson wasn't willing to divulge his hunting spots, but he's hunted all over the county in his time here.

The last elk Jackson shot was when he was hunting with his daughter at 82 years old.

He was out late in the season in the Rimrock area. While he was ranging in his rifle, Jackson heard four shots behind him.

He turned to see a massive set of antlers connected to an even larger bull elk coming right at him and his daughter. All four shots from another hunter had missed the creature and spooked it toward Jackson.

Wearing three jackets and a pack with a rifle ranged in at 500 yards he found himself staring at elk 50 feet away and closing fast.

Jackson said the creature was "beautiful."

"Bright yellow tail, black neck, eyes wide open, and I couldn't see the damn thing in the scope," he said.

"Dad, you gotta shoot!" his daughter yelled.

"Shoot? Hell, I cant see anything to shoot," he replied.

The elk changed course and leaped over a fence. There were 75 yards between it and freedom.

Jackson raised his rifle, took a shot and punched a hole right through the elk.

"Took two ribs nearly completely out," he said.



Big Game Hunter Jackson DeRosier, 89, stands in his workshop where he handmakes bullets.

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