

## My Hunting Weekend

by Corbin H.

It all started on February 24, 2017. My dad picked my sister and me up from school early. We were headed for “The Dodd Ranch” in Calvert Texas owned by Glenn and Martha Dodd. Dad said we needed to make a few stops on the way. First stop was at Academy for some bullets for my rifle. The next stop was for ice. Dad said it would take about three hours to get to the ranch, this was going to be a long car ride.

Once we arrived, we were greeted by our grandmother and Mrs. Martha. After lots of hugs and kisses, we unloaded the car. My sister and I were then able to get our BB guns out and started target practice. My sister is not very good with her BB gun yet, she’s only shot it a few times in our backyard. My dad and I then loaded up the deer rifles and headed out to my grandfather’s (Pop) deer stand. We were at the ranch to hunt hogs for the weekend. After what seemed like forever, we hadn’t seen any hogs yet. All of a sudden a giant raccoon came out and was eating in the sender. Mr. Glenn said to shoot every raccoon that we saw because they eat all the deer corn. My dad told me to get my gun and get ready. As I tried to look through my scope, the sun was making such a glare that I told my dad “I can’t see anything.” My dad got his gun out of the window and said he could see, so I told him to shoot. BANG! With one shot the raccoon dropped in its tracks. Then we went back to the house and had a wonderful dinner.

That night Pop, my sister and I got to sleep in an old school bus. Mr. Glenn had taken out all the seats and replaced them with bunk beds. There is no electricity or running water at the bus. We had to use oil lamps to be able to see. We slept in our sleeping bags and it was a little chilly that night. Pop told us a few scary stores trying to scare us.

Saturday morning came way too early. My dad came and picked me up and we were headed to another deer stand. The stand that we went to is called “Buzzard Hill” ,because of all the buzzards that roost on the power poles next to the stand. It was pretty cold in the blind, so my dad lit the propane heater in the stand. As daylight came we saw lots of deer, but no hogs. We sat there until 8:30 in the morning and then went back to the house for some breakfast. After breakfast we got to shoot our BB guns some more.

Mr. Glenn was ready to go do some ranch stuff. I got to ride in his big John Deere tractor. Mr. Glenn has several 4-wheelers at the ranch for his grandkids to ride on. Dad got one of them out so we could ride on them too. We went to pop’s stand because the weekend before a tornado had blown over a bunch of trees. Mr. Glenn is a crazy driver in that tractor, pushing huge trees and stuff out of the senderos. We were there for what seemed like forever. All I wanted to do was ride the 4-wheeler with my dad. We went back to the house for lunch.

Mr. Glenn said that after lunch we needed to head out to the stand because of how cool it was, the hogs might be out eating the grass. So, dad and I loaded back in to the car and

headed out. As soon as we got in the blind I told my dad that I was going to take a nap and to wake me if he saw anything. When I woke up I asked him if he had seen anything, he said just a few deer. Around 5 p. some hogs came out in the sender. Dad said just to watch them for a few minutes. They were about 150 yards away. All of a sudden they left, I was crushed. Dad said they would come back out, but they didn't.

A short time later another group came out. This time dad said get your gun and get ready. He told me which one he wanted me to shoot. I took careful aim and dad kept whispering, just squeeze the trigger, just squeeze the trigger. BANG! I missed and all the hogs ran off. Again I was crushed. Dad said not to cry and that they might come back out, but they didn't. He reminded me that this was only the fourth animal I have ever shot at and that everyone misses. Soon after that some more hogs came out on a different sender and it was way too far for me to shoot at. Dad raised his gun and what seemed like forever again, BANG! I missed and all the hogs ran off. Again I was crushed. Dad said not to cry and that they might come back out, but they didn't. He reminded me that this was only the fourth animal I ever shot at and that everyone misses. Soon after that some more hogs came out on a different sender and it was way too far for me to shoot at. Dad raised his gun and what seemed like forever again, BANG! Two hundred fifty six yards away and the hog was down. I told him "see you don't miss," he said he has been doing it a lot longer and with more practice I would be able to do the same. By now it was totally dark and I was ready to go eat dinner. After dinner we watched some of Mr. Glenn's hunts from Africa and I was ready for bed.

The last morning hunt. We woke up at 5 am and headed back to the "Buzzard Hill" stand. Dad lit the heater again and I took a short nap again. When I work up it was daylight out. Dad said he had only seen a few deer, no hogs. He said that we would stay until around 8:30 again. Around 8:15 a.m. we saw two coyote's come out way passed were dad shot the hog the night before. I knew that it was again way too far for me to shoot. Dad opened the window in front of him and raised his gun. Several minutes later, BANG! HE MISSED, I have to say I was a little happy. He said "see even I miss too". I kinda think he did it on purpose. When we got back to the house, we told everyone about the coyotes and where they were. Mr. Glenn said that they were about 567 yards away. Now I know why he missed, that's a long shot.

After some more riding on the 4-wheeler and lunch, it was time to load everything back in the car and head home. I didn't really want to leave without getting a hog, but there's always next time I guess. We had a great weekend filled with ups and downs and made great memories that will be with me the rest of my life. I want to say thank you to my dad for taking us on an awesome weekend of hunting and enjoying the great outdoors. Thank you to Mr. Glenn and Martha for letting us come and enjoy their ranch. Thank you to Pop and Grandma for being there too. So, I'll keep practicing with my rifle and hopefully next time I'll get my first hog.