



Photo credit to WWIA Guide John Keeney from the 3rd Annual Quail Creek Spring Turkey Hunt

Notes From the Field: March 2018

The month of March brings with it the anticipation of springtime and what better way to welcome in the change of season than with two outstanding WWIA events. Both of these events treated our Heroes to early and beautiful spring weather, as they were held in Florida and South Carolina. The coming months are some of our busiest and are full of more outstanding opportunities for our Purple Heart Heroes. We look forward to sharing these highlights with you, so stay plugged in! Don't forget to check out our March Spotlight article to glean some insight and inspiration from one of our incredible WWIA Heroes. If you know someone who would enjoy receiving this newsletter, please forward or share this with them. If someone has shared this newsletter with you and you would like to sign up to receive it in your inbox, please click [here](#). As always, thank you for your faithful support of WWIA and our Heroes!



Events and Fundraisers

3rd Annual Quail Creek Spring Turkey Hunt

March 16th - 19th



Three of our Purple Heart Heroes gathered in Ona, Florida for the 3rd Annual Quail Creek Spring Turkey Hunt. This event provides the rare opportunity for our Heroes to hunt for the coveted Osceola turkey. This event was full of camaraderie, great food, and lots of turkeys! Two of our Heroes had the honor of having harvested Osceola turkeys, and this meant a great deal to both of them. One of these Heroes was 79 years young and had always wanted to harvest an Osceola turkey...mission accomplished! For our other Hero, the Osceola turkey was his first game ever taken! I'm sure there are few hunters that can wear that badge of honor. Moments like these made this an incredibly memorable event. Although the hunting was exceptional, the bonds formed among brothers in the field and around the dinner table throughout the four-day event was truly the pinnacle. We extend our highest appreciation and gratitude to Host David Ward as well as his guides and friends (Frank Chunn, Gene Drake, and Doug Ellsworth) for welcoming and honoring our Heroes throughout this amazing event. Special thanks also go to WWIA Associate John Keeney for his outstanding contributions and support throughout the event.

" I want to thank the WWIA program for giving me the opportunity to come out to this special event. By no means was this just an event. It was a game changer, life changer and a new chapter in my life. I want to thank our hosts, David Ward, Jean, Frank, and Doug for hosting this event. Coming out here I didn't know what to expect. One of my fears was to shoot a gun, as I hadn't since I have been out of the Marines, 10

years. Well, I'll tell you what, mission accomplished. I made a perfect shot on the Osceola turkey, rarest turkey. This was one of the best feelings in my life besides getting married, the birth of my daughter and coming home from Iraq. This will be a new chapter in my life, hunting and I will appreciate every time I get to be in the outdoors. John Keeney, you are the man I want to thank for your service, for keeping me updated and getting me pumped up months before the event. It was also a great opportunity to spend time with Rod, a Vietnam Vet, which is the real deal. I will never forget the trip and will continue to communicate with everyone from here. I recommend this trip to whoever needs a boost in life. "

2nd Annual SC Couples Turkey Hunt

March 23rd - 26th



Three of our Purple Heart Heroes and their spouses were recently hosted for four days at the 2nd Annual SC Couples Turkey Hunt. This couples event is a special way to honor both the Heroes and their spouses and allows them to have some much-needed time away to reconnect with one another in a beautiful and serene setting. This trip truly offered the best of both worlds as the first full day saw our Heroes taking in some successful turkey hunting while their wives were chauffeured via limousine to three different vineyards for tours and wine tasting. Our couples were then treated to a delicious home-cooked meal in the evening.

The next day was equally special as the men hit the field for more turkey hunting while their spouses were pampered with a morning at the spa for facials, manicures, and pedicures. After another home-cooked meal, our couples had plenty of downtime in the evening for relaxing, sharing stories, and getting to know one another. In only the second year, this event continues to raise the bar and provide memorable life-changing experiences for these couples. We would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to Brian and Elizabeth Whetstone for graciously hosting this event. Additional thanks to WWIA Guide Tim Spence for his support throughout this couples event.

"This was an amazing hunt with several first occasions. This was my first turkey hunt, my first bird, the first game I've taken since 2007, and the first time my wife and I had gotten to spend any time away from the kids. I had been on a WWIA hunt in 2015 without taking any game but was still successful! This hunt was a lot of fun and my Guide, Tim, was exceptional with his wealth of knowledge on the game and his ability to

bring the birds in. Brian and Elizabeth were amazing hosts, making us feel like family as soon as we arrived. I will consider these folks as family and friends for years to come. I am grateful to everyone here and to WWIA for letting my wife and I enjoy this trip."

WWIA March Spotlight



Our March Spotlight features WWIA Hero and Guide Jeremy Smith. Jeremy is a U.S. Army veteran, husband of 12 years to wife April, and father to two children, Natalie and Matthew. Jeremy previously worked at the Pennsylvania DCNR as a Park Ranger and currently serves as a Property Manager and Caretaker of 1400 acres of land and wildlife. Jeremy attended his first WWIA event in 2012, and now guides, mentors, and assists other Purple Heart recipients at various WWIA events across the country. Jeremy was recently featured in WWIA's latest Purple Heart Stories episode: The Long Road Home. Click [here](#) to watch that video and learn more about Jeremy's personal journey and his experience with WWIA.

How did you first get involved with WWIA?

After attending an event in 2011 I knew that the Foundation was really something special and I wanted to be a part of it in any way I could.

Why do you choose to be a WWIA Guide on our events?

Serving as a Guide has helped me heal by leading events and guiding other Purple Heart recipients in the field. Nature's healing power and ability to bring together Heroes in such a pure environment is truly a blessing.

What has been the biggest benefit for you since becoming involved with WWIA?

Knowing that the Foundation has reconnected me to a life outside of the military and provides me the opportunity to serve alongside our nation's Heroes amongst the great outdoors.

What is something you would like others to know about WWIA and your own experience with the Foundation?

Life. The Foundation has filled a void in my life that was leading me toward a darker place. WWIA has allowed me the opportunity to serve and be a part of a team which in turn has continued to heal my heart and soul.

What would you say to others who are considering getting involved with WWIA either as a Hero or in any other capacity?

The opportunity to heal and serve with the Foundation is more rewarding than you could ever imagine. The connections we make, people we work with, and Heroes we serve all make the mission worth the effort.



Sponsors and Friends

Thank you for your support of WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes!

We would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the following individuals for their gracious contributions and support of WWIA. THANK YOU!

Tim Holt \$2,500

Craig and Lisa Shuneson \$500

10th Annual New Lenox Luncheon Fundraiser



THANK YOU to Chris and Kellie DeMik and to everyone who recently participated in the 10th Annual New Lenox Luncheon Fundraiser held on March 10th, 2018 at the American Legion Post 1977 in New Lenox, IL. Over the past 10 years, these outstanding community patrons have raised over \$110,000 in support of our Purple Heart Heroes! We sincerely appreciate the incredible efforts and dedication of these individuals and businesses that have gone above and beyond to support WWIA and honor our Heroes!

A New Member of the WWIA Family



We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Carmella Arnold (center) and family for

their incredibly generous donation of a Camillus puppy to WWIA Guide Jeremy Smith (left). Also present was WWIA Science Advisor Dr. Keith Tidball (right), who was instrumental in facilitating this donation through the WWIA FLX Chapter. We welcome "Cooper" to the WWIA family and know that he will serve as an amazing companion that brings much joy and healing to our Heroes through WWIA events. Learn more about this amazing donation [here](#).

Show your support for WWIA wherever you go!

get all your WWIA gear!



Show your pride and support for WWIA and our Purple Heart Heroes with your own WWIA branded gear! Check out our store to find a huge selection of WWIA branded merchandise, such as clothing, hats, backpacks, blankets, drinkware and more! Be sure to add code 15OFF at checkout through 4/22/18 to save 15% on your purchase. Click [here](#) or on the picture to go to our WWIA store. Get your WWIA gear and help spread the message and mission of WWIA in a variety of creative ways!

PLEASE SHARE your WWIA experience!



Thank you for helping us become a top-rated nonprofit in 2017! If you haven't shared your own WWIA experience, would you consider leaving us a review to help us continue this honor for 2018? We appreciate your support of WWIA & our Purple Heart Heroes. Click on the following link to share your WWIA story and to read what others have had to say!

<https://greatnonprofits.org/org/wounded-warriors-in-action-foundation-inc>

Want to learn more about WWIA, visit us on online!

Our website is full of information about who we are, how we serve our Purple Heart Heroes, and how you can get involved! Visit us today! [Click Here!](#)

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Purple Heart Patriots

Become a Purple Heart Patriot by donating monthly to WWIA and the Heroes we serve! Monthly contributors receive an introductory gift and mention in next month's newsletter.

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◆ **THANK YOU** to all of our [Purple Heart Patriots](#)! We sincerely appreciate your support and generosity. ◆



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