



Life Hunt 2007 by Audra Mickle

This year I had the opportunity to go on a dream hunt that only some can dream of, all because of ACEOA. Rusty Morrow, ACEOA President and lifelong friend, called my father and asked if I would be interested in attending this hunt. Was that a question he really had to ask? Yes, of course, I was interested. Who wouldn't be? Finally, after filling out applications, medical forms and a few weeks of endless waiting, we finally heard that I had been accepted into the hunt. That's when it really hit me... I was going to be going to a program that recognized people with disabilities... but wait, that couldn't be right... I'm not disabled...? That is true – I'm not disabled. But I do have a rare form of cancer, Carcinoid cancer to be exact. I receive treatments every twenty-one days and will continue to do so until they find a cure.

On this hunt I met some pretty important people by society standards and some pretty important people by my standards. For instance, Jackie Bushman was there, pretty important by society standards. But there, I also met a man named David Sullivan. He is the reason we were able to go on this hunt. After Make a Wish Foundation stopped giving "hunts" as a wish, David took it upon himself that wishes were continue to be filled. David, for that reason, is pretty important by my standards. Without every person there working behind the scenes to make sure we were happy, full, and warm, the weekend would not have gone as smoothly as it did. From every cook, to guide, to cameraman – they were all thrilled to be there. I could tell that this was something that they were truly passionate about. Like, no one had to ask me if I wanted to be there that weekend, no one had to ask the workers that weekend to be there either.

I would like to say that I took a very nice eight point buck that weekend - but that would be a lie. I didn't do it alone. That deer that I took is just as much theirs as it is mine. If it hadn't been for everyone and anyone that worked to help put that weekend together, I never would have even had the opportunity for that shot. That hunt not only gave me the opportunity, but so many others that weekend to just be...a person – not one with disabilities. It allowed us to show, not only others, but ourselves, what we really can do. This dream hunt, Life Hunt 2007, I now understand why they call it that...That hunt changed my life.

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