

SCI – Flint SafariCare & Michigan’s Military

It's the first day of Autumn and I'm relaxing in my back yard in late September, enjoying what will no-doubt be one of the very last 80 degree days of 2010 here in Michigan. Like so many of you, I'm just fine with that and I gladly embrace yet another hunting season here in our beautiful state! As the 2010 hunting season draws near, many year-long hunting plans are about to become reality. I'm referring to all the hunters that made their way to last year's **SCI – Flint Outfitter's Expo and the SCI – Flint Fund Raising Dinner / Auction** and took advantage of the huge auction that is held each spring. As always, it was a very busy time for SCI's Flint Regional Chapter. The chapter's annual Auction / Fundraising weekend always keeps your Board of Directors hopping as we go about the business of coordinating the Major Event of each year. Last year's gatherings at Davison Country Club and at Perani Arena were a terrific success as attendance remained strong and a great list of donations was assembled. Anyone that has ever attended these annual events knows full well that it's a great place to book your next hunt and to meet with the outfitters face to face. No matter your game of choice, whether your destination is near or far, the auction is the place to be each spring **IF** you want to realize a great bargain AND help support the ongoing work of SCI – Flint and SCI International.

At last spring's event we were once again fortunate enough to have the US Military well represented. Thankfully, many Veterans attend each year, as well as Active Duty personnel. **“ Hats Off ” to the fine Men and Women of our Military ! We are honored to have you as members or guests of our chapter and in attendance each year.**

My fellow board member, Marc Somers, had a conversation with attendee Major Tom Sierakowski of the Michigan Air National Guard. Major Tom had become aware of our **SafariCare “ BLUE BAG ”** program and he wanted to talk with me. A few days later Tom and I were able to connect via phone to discuss an upcoming flight that Major Tom and his squadron were planning to make. Two personnel carriers were due to depart Selfridge Air National Guard base in April, 2010 bound for a humanitarian relief event in Ghana, West Africa. The first of its kind by the Michigan Air National Guard into Ghana and Major Tom wanted to take along **2 SCI “ BLUE BAGS ”** filled with medical and school supplies. They would be distributed amongst the needy residents of Accra and Takoradi. These two coastal cities are over 100 miles apart and the logistics of the event were certainly complex. Still, the Air National Guard wanted to include **Safari Club International's “ BLUE BAG ”** program and we were more than happy to work with them.

Mid April, 2010 came quickly and I made arrangements to deliver the 2 humanitarian relief supply bags to Major Tom. It was great fun to spend a few minutes with Tom and his family. His wife and their two young children were all excited about the project and I was very pleased that our Flint Regional Chapter could make this meaningful connection! Since freight capacity was not an issue on these military flights I was able to include considerably more supplies than usual in each bag! Within a few days of that delivery those two bags were put on board a Military transport aircraft and taken to Western Africa to help provide relief to underprivileged residents, in the name of the **United States Military and Safari Club International !**

While the Mission Statement of SCI International and the Flint Regional Chapter focuses specifically on Hunting related issues and events, isn't it good to know that our chapter's efforts go beyond that? Your continued support and membership within the chapter allows us to assist other, less fortunate people, literally around the globe. As I compose this letter our Chapter President, Dave Porter, is in South Africa, delivering a blue bag and doing some world-class hunting. Each and every "**BLUE BAG**" delivery is very important and I look forward to discussing this aspect of SCI – Flint with you one on one! You too could make this type of difference in the lives of others on your next hunting adventure. On behalf of your Board of Directors, I wanted you to know about this particular delivery AND to remind you of our **SafariCare Humanitarian Services. SCI is making a difference !**

Safe Hunting !

Keith Estes,

Board of Directors / SafariCare Coordinator

SCI – Flint Regional Chapter.

(810) 252-7757 , Keith@KeithEstes.com