



# Catch-A-Dream update

BY DR. MARTY BRUNSON

People across the country are embracing the Catch-A-Dream vision! Following national exposure in *Outdoor Life* and several replays on Mossy Oak's "Hunting the Country" television show, our program has begun to grow almost exponentially. We have increasing numbers of Supporting Partners who have contributed both financial and in-kind resources to position Catch-A-Dream to serve youngsters across the nation.

We just completed our fourth dream adventure, and have nine more children in the queue for adventures ranging from white-tail hunts, to deep-sea fishing, to elk, mule deer and moose hunts later this year. We currently have children in seven states that either have had, or soon will have, an outdoor dream wish come true! Since the last update, we have granted three dreams for children from Mississippi and New York.

Matt, a 14 year-old from north-central New York, asked for a dream whitetail hunt in west Texas. Although Matt has hunted deer with his dad and grandfather in his home state, he had never been successful. One of our Supporting Partners, an outfitter in West Texas who has asked to remain anonymous, hosted Matt and his dad on a 5-day hunt just after Christmas. Mrs. Peggy Brady and Bruce Brady, Jr. accompanied Matt as cheerleaders. On his first afternoon hunt, Matt harvested his



first-ever deer, a big, mature doe. Two days later, he harvested a magnificent mature 8-pt, and the next day helped the outfitter by graciously harvesting an additional "management buck." Matt's deer will be mounted by a taxidermist Supporting Partner in Texas and shipped to him, and we understand that he is already enjoying venison steaks back home in New York.

Ashley is a 14 year-old girl from Mississippi who is battling leukemia. Her dream request was to harvest a white-tail "big enough to go on the wall." Supporting Partner Georgia-Pacific hosted Ashley, her Mom, Dad and little sister at their Mill Property near Monticello, MS for a 2-day hunt on January 4-5. Georgia-Pacific Vice-President, Asa Hardison, and his G-P staff pulled out all the stops, housing the family in their VIP Guest

house nestled on the Pearl River, and treating them and the Catch-A-Dream team to a steak dinner Friday night and catfish on Saturday, both prepared by their famous cooking team. Huntmaster, Bill Little and his crew did a tremendous job in preparing for the hunt, and Ashley harvested not one, but two, bucks that now adorn her walls! Brookhaven taxidermist Allen Morgan provided the mounts in record time!

Aubrey, a critically ill 9 year-old cancer patient from Mississippi, initially wanted to go hunting, but by the time he made an application hunting season was over, and Aubrey's condition was such that a road trip of any type wasn't advisable. Not to be outdone, we suggested a fishing trip near his home, and he took us up on the offer. And fish he did! Supporting Partners Jo Mac Hudspeth and Primos Hunting Calls teamed up to put Aubrey on fish in a big way on February 12. Jo Mac hosted the event at his home in Brandon, and Primos celebrity Kenneth Lancaster teamed up with Catch-A-Dream (and MWF) Board member Bill Maily to give Aubrey and his 9 year old cousin, Aaron, a bream fishing bonanza. With their personal guides, the two boys landed 205 fish in just over an hour of fishing! A meal of some of Aubrey's favorite foods, including venison sausage as an appetizer, followed.

To say that the program is flourishing would be understatement. We are daily amazed at the responses from all over the country, and have some aggressive plans to continue building upon early successes. There is room at the Catch-A-Dream "table" for as many partners as have an interest. If you have "caught the vision," or know someone who has, call us. We have a role for you to play! A letter that we received from Matt's mom is evidence that the Catch-A-Dream "vision" is on target. She wrote, in part: "...I would like to say "Thank You" for giving Matt such a wonderful experience. I don't think that he has come down from the high yet. I can't explain the joy that our family has experienced from seeing Matt so happy. It's probably a proud feeling as well. Last June when he was so sick and in the hospital, he had such a depressed feeling and he was asking about dying. Today he is talking about his future. He is even looking into colleges. He has decided to become involved with Wildlife..... What a difference!"

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