



Mom's Bull

MY MOM, Faye Morris, turned 66 on Dec. 24. My dad, Charles Morris, is 70.

Mom was born and raised in Letcher County. She loves the mountains. Mom and Dad are in the woods daily, riding the 4-wheeler hoping to see a deer, bear or elk. Dad does some guiding for the lucky hunters who are drawn in the elk lottery.

We all applied for the elk lottery this year. We got a shock when we found Mom was the lucky one in our family to get a bull elk tag. We were all excited, but weren't sure if she could do it or not. Dad got out his .22-caliber rifle and drew a small elk as a target for her to use for practice. She was very accurate and hit the bull's eye with almost every shot. We knew then she was ready.

She has done some hunting in the past – about 40 years ago – and we have some footage from the old 8mm camera of her shooting a rifle. But she is a sportswoman.

Mom's elk hunt started on a Sunday evening. My nephew, Robbie Baker, joined Mom, Dad and myself for the trip to the blind. There were four bulls bugling around us and we thought one might get within range before dark, but no luck.

On Monday, Mom, Dad and my nephew hunted from daylight until 11 a.m. The bulls were still bugling, but they didn't want



PHOTO COURTESY CHUCK MORRIS

to move from their cows. It was the same story that evening: bulls bugling but not moving.

On Tuesday, Dad decided to move closer without spooking the bulls. Dad said once you have spooked them, they may not return for days. Still no luck, but Dad could tell the bulls were getting more active.

On Wednesday morning, they decided to move to another blind a few hundred yards away. As they walked down the trail, an elk bugled very close to them. Then four cows crossed in front of them.

A monster bull then stepped out 40 yards away. Mom took a great broadside shot

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with her .30-06 rifle and got him right in the sweet spot. The bull was confused about where the sound came from; he ran toward mom and her group. Mom thought the bull was going to run over them.

But the bull stopped at 20 yards. Mom shot again, another broadside in the shoulder. The bull then ran until it was 60 yards away. Dad told her to shoot again, so she pulled the trigger two more times. The bull didn't go more than 50 yards before it went down.

Mom is an incredible woman. She has two great-granddaughters that I hope will follow in her footprints. ■

Author Chuck Morris is a draftsman for Alpha Natural Resources. A life-long resident of Letcher County, he started going squirrel hunting with his dad at age 5. He said his mother "is the kind of mom that anyone would love to have."