



WYOMING OUTFITTERS & GUIDES ASSOCIATION

2020 HONORARY LIFETIME MEMBER AWARD

CLAYTON VOSS SPONSORED BY **SCI** FIRST FOR HUNTERS

BIG GAME HUNTING

MY FATHER WAS AN OUTFITTER

in Colorado in the 1930's. I grew up hearing the fun stories and adventurous times he had packing through the wild country. Those stories stuck with me and shaped the life I would create for myself.

I was raised in South Dakota. In 1972, at the age of 17, I came through Wyoming on the rodeo circuit. During a stay over at the lodge outside of Dubois I was offered a job to pack and guide for the '73 season. I accepted the job and have never looked back. This was my chance to experience the adventures my father had reminisced about for all those years.

I started off running summer and hunting trips from the lodge. In 1979 I met Mitzi and we married in 1981. A few years later, in 1984, we bought our first wilderness camp called Five Pockets in the Dubois area. Later we found another camp we liked called Lenagon Meadows. The camp was very remote, a two-day ride, which Mitzi and I enjoyed immensely. We both loved riding and packing so much it did not seem like work at all, just us on our adventures. We later acquired another camp, Hays Park, in the Wind Rivers.

Soon we had the opportunity to get the neighboring camp on the Downs Fork. It was the ideal set-up, running the two camps in the same area of the Wind Rivers. We raised our three daughters in those mountains. They were along for the ride during our summer



fishing trips, jumper chairs hanging from the cook tent ridge pole. It was a great way to raise a family, staying together and in the years to come, working together. My girls stayed involved with all aspects of our business, learning the tricks of the trade and meeting so many wonderful guests. We are still in contact with people from around the world who we outfitted for. What an amazing opportunity to be able to show

the guests the lifestyle and ways of living in Wyoming. The friendships we have made have lasted a lifetime.

I will never forget one year that we had a pretty big blizzard coming in. I set out for camp to keep the snow off the tents to prevent them from collapsing. By the time I got to camp it was snowing so hard I could barely see in front of me. As I approached camp, I noticed a man standing outside one of my tents. He ran into the tent as soon as he saw me. I was not sure what to think. After I tied up my mules I walked over to the tent and asked him to step outside. To my surprise, out walked 11 men. It turns out they were from the British Army. They had been dropped in the mountains for

a survival exercise and needed shelter from the storm. I let them stay, but 11 men sure can drain your food reserves quickly. The storm lasted three days so I had a lot of time to get to know the men and hear their stories. The Officer has returned several times over the years to do pack trips with us. A few years after our first meeting the officer sent me a letter and some paperwork asking me to be the Godfather of his first child. Outfitters and guides do have an impact on people's lives.

I am so grateful to have had this as my career. My youngest daughter Laura and her husband, Dustin Stetter, have taken over the business. They are now raising their son in the mountain camp. I still go out and pack for them and take my grandchildren along for more family adventures.

I have enjoyed my time watching outfitting evolve and change with the times. I truly hope agencies see the importance and benefits of outfitting for the towns, counties and the state. In the time I spent on the Wyoga Board of Directors and as President of the Dubois Outfitters Board, I have seen business relationships advance. I commend Wyoga for their efforts and thank you for the honor of this award. 🙏

