



NHF Day Co-Chair Feature
Shockeys Stand United
Kevin Jarnagin

Jim and Eva Shockey are arguably the hunting industry's most dynamic duo. The father/daughter team gives sportsmen and women a unique voice that is as charming as it is lethal. But don't tag them as bloodthirsty. The Canadian pair are deeply rooted in conservation efforts to better the sport of hunting for future generations.

This year, as the two embark on their many adventures, they carry with them the title of National Hunting and Fishing Day co-chairs. They were selected to serve as models of the conservation spirit for their numerous works to better North American properties and to share how conservation not only helps wildlife but sportsman as well.

"The biggest thing that people don't understand is that hunting isn't just about the kill. If anything, that is the smallest part of what we as hunters do," said Eva Shockey. "For starters, hunters are the biggest contributors to wildlife habitat and conservation out of any group. The money raised comes straight out of each and every hunter's pocket to pay for licenses, tags, ammo etc. On top of that, hunting is about the entire adventure from beginning to end, including saving up money to buy hunting gear, taking the time to practice shooting, spending time putting out trail cameras, scouting during pre-season or working out at the gym to be fit for hunting season comes."

Sportsmen and women around the country rarely stop to realize where the money they spend actually goes. While feeding one's family or another is beneficial, the real beauty of hunting, fishing, birding, shooting or camping is what it takes to maintain and create properties that can be enjoyed.

The Pittman-Robertson Act is a great example of how sportsmen, like the Shockeys, are creating a better environment. This piece of legislation has provided states with funding for wildlife research and projects that would have been unaffordable otherwise. Through an excise tax on sporting goods and licenses, these moneys go to fund important restoration and conservation projects that benefit all.

According to a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service webpage that was updated in January 2010, over two billion dollars of federal aid has been generated through the Pittman Robertson Act. The habitat acquisition and improvement made possible by this money has allowed some species such as American black bears, elk, cougars, white-tailed deer, wild turkey and others, to expand their numbers and ranges beyond where they were found prior to the implementation of the act.

The Shockeyes understand the importance of sportsmen and women and their efforts to maintain and grow conservation through these types of actions.

“For me it’s when outdoorsmen proudly fly the flag, and don’t shy away when confronted by the loud anti groups,” said Jim Shockey. “As long as we stand proud and are always outspoken proponents of the outdoor traditions, we are educating the non-outdoors people. I’m not talking about being arrogant or over-bearing, I’m talking about resisting, never backing down when we are accused by those that contribute nothing in support of wildlife but are against what we do. We are right, we are the stewards and we are the hope of wildlife.”

Each member of the Shockey team has been very clear and consistent with their message to those that speak out against what they or sportsman do. These two traverse the globe looking for the next adventure. Whether on safari in the jungles of Africa, working up a mountain in Pakistan or tracking big game in the Rockies, Jim Shockey believes the role of sportsman is critical to the conservation model.

“By being an outdoorsman or woman, you are indirectly representing wildlife, stewarding those animals,” said Jim Shockey. “The dollars we spend go toward financing the conservation efforts of all the state wildlife agencies. And when that money talks it sends a clear message to the politicians to make decisions that protect wildlife and ensure that wildlife will be around for generations to come.”

Sportsmen will also encounter barriers. It seems female hunters have taken the brunt of these encounters over the past few years, but that doesn’t discourage those like Eva from facing the fight head on.

“For the last few decades, hunters have been painted in a bad light for one reason or another and today women hunters have taken some hits,” said Eva Shockey. “Being a young, blonde female who doesn’t fit into the stereotypical hunter, I knew I would be the target for anti-hunters. But, at the same time I also knew that I had a unique opportunity to influence a lot of people and show them that hunting is a good thing. Knowing that I am reaching young girls and women who are taking up hunting after seeing me and thinking, ‘Hey, if Eva can do it, then I can do it’, makes the pressures from the anti-hunters seem insignificant in comparison to how great it is to see other girls getting involved with the outdoors.”

Throughout 2015, Jim and Eva will be promoting National Hunting and Fishing Day in order to help recognize all the efforts sportsmen and women do for conservation.

National Hunting and Fishing Day is set for September 26. For more information about National Hunting and Fishing Day visit. <http://www.nhfd.org> and Like us on Facebook

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