



Safari Club International hosted its 2025 annual convention, celebrating 53 years of protecting the freedom to hunt and promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. Whether it was the number of attendees who passed through the doors, the money raised to defend the freedom to hunt and promote conservation worldwide, the exhibitors on the show floor, or the 140 countries represented, this landmark event, held at Music City Center in Nashville, Tennessee, was again record-breaking in every metric. We extend a huge thank you to our exhibitors, entertainment, award winners, and all attendees for joining our celebration of hunting and for making it the best Convention yet!

Our world-class exhibitors set up booths in the convention hall to provide attendees with exceptional opportunities to book hunting trips in locales near and far. Some of the outdoor industry's most recognizable companies highlighting innovative products, including firearms, accessories, optics, ammunition, archery, gear, and other tactical and hunting goods. Other notable vendors sold fine luxury goods like fur, furnishings, clothing, and jewelry.

Attendees who sought educational and informational sessions could attend presentations about hunting, fishing, shooting, and a myriad of additional outdoor activities. Seminars on everything, from Wildlife and Property Management through Food Plots to The Wild Game Cooking Demo held each day of the Convention, and rooms were packed to hear community legends like Jim Shockey speak. There really was something for everyone, at every turn!

Each evening, SCI held dinners and live auctions, and SCI Foundation's advocacy and conservation efforts, respectively.

"On behalf of everyone at SCI, I would like to say thank you to all who attended and supported the SCI Convention. "Your attendance and steadfast support of this organization allows us to continue advocating for hunting freedoms in the U.S., and around the world. We look forward to seeing you all again next year for another fantastic SCI Convention."

To those who were unable to attend this year's celebration in Nashville, SCI is excited to announce the 2026 Convention will be held in Nashville, TN at the Music City Center, February 18th through February 21st, 2026. See you there!

SCI Foundation's Mission and Purpose

The mission of SCI Foundation is to ensure the future of wildlife through conservation, education, and hunting,



Partnerships are the key to success for both non-governmental organizations like SCI and state agencies like GFP to bring the public outdoor opportunities aligned with our hunting and shooting heritage in the United States. The Shooting Range and Training Complex will be a fantastic addition to the Black Hills area and will complement the Outdoor Campus West that the Department of Game Fish and Parks built in 2010. Over the last 15 years GDC has assisted GFP with over \$330,000 funding for projects in the Black Hills region because of the support of SCI members and those attending the SCI events in this area. This funding resulted in over 1.2 million with the 75% match from the Pittman Robertson Act! The shooting complex also affords classrooms to teach hunter & shooter education classes. Most people do not think that "To be a hunter, you have to be a shooter first." Teaching classes on firearms safety will give students easy access for the live-fire portion of the firearms education course. Students will receive greater immersion into the safe and responsible handling of firearms, in person, and on the range rather than on a computer.

South Dakota's Game Fish and Parks is truly a leader in outdoor opportunities and now Wyoming Game & Fish is in the planning stages for a similar shooting and training complex visiting various communities across Wyoming and non-governmental organizations that have interest in the partnership approach with training and shooting opportunities! The Greater Dacotah Chapter wishes Wyoming the best of luck with this effort!

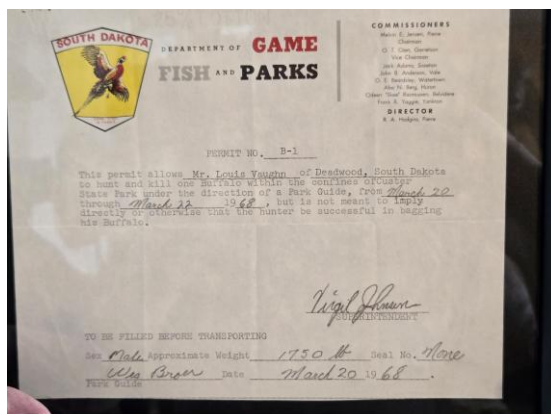
SCI Board Member Louis Vaughn and the First Custer State Park Bison License

KOTA TV in Rapid City, South Dakota, had a news story about Bison tags being issued for the first time in South Dakota history. The price tag was \$500. This was in 1968 so that was a large amount of money, especially to a high school boy. A couple of days later my dad, Floyd Vaughn, asked me if I was serious about wanting to hunt bison. Dad said he had an idea how to manage it and would see what was involved with getting the license. I still thought it was too good to be true. A couple of weeks later, he said he had something to show me and handed me an envelope from Custer State Park. I opened it and it contained a license to hunt bison in Custer State Park in March of 1968. It also was tag #1, meaning it was the first buffalo tag ever issued in the state of South Dakota, and I was the first individual to harvest a bison with a SD license. I asked how he could afford the cost of the tag. That is when he shared the information that you could sell the meat.

In Custer State Park we were met by Virgil Johnson, the Park Superintendent and Wes Broer, who was to be my guide. Wes would go on to be the Park Superintendent later in his career. I was told we would be hunting the old rogue bulls which were past their breeding age and not the herd bulls.

The day of the hunt was a snowy spring day. There were several inches of snow on the ground and more coming down. A rogue bull was finally spotted, and the stalk was on. The first shot was about an inch high. The bull turned and started moving sideways to us, which presented a chance for a second shot. The next shot was behind the ear. The bull dropped in his tracks.

As we walked up to the bull, the reality of the whole situation started to sink in. I had been overwhelmed by the entire series of events, and it was finally done. I remember standing there looking at the bull and trying to comprehend that I had just taken a bull bison. I was an incredibly happy teenager! Hunting history in South Dakota!





Greater Dacotah Chapter President Gary English and his 10-year-old son Luke English travelled to Nashville, TN. where the Grand Slam Club Ovis awards were held in conjunction with the SCI National convention. Gary receive the GSCO Super Ten award and Luke received the Youth Three award.



“The Greater Dacotah Chapter SCI” and “The Safari Club International Foundation” has made donations to SDGFP for \$163,375 over the past 3 years to initiate and complete this Shooting Complex. Thanks to all the GDC supporters and sponsors that made this possible.

The Greater Dacotah Chapter is a strong advocate for the future of hunting in North America and around the World! Over the last 24 years the Greater Dacotah Chapter has contributed over \$132K around the globe to fund SCI projects, and another \$756K locally for Youth Hunting, Hunter Access, Wildlife Research & Management, and Education! Your continued support is critical for the future of Hunting, Conservation, and the Shooting Sports and that is why SCI & The Greater Dacotah Chapter is "First for Hunters."

The Greater Dacotah Chapter received the First "Community Impact Award" at the National Convention in Nashville Tennessee. President Gary English was on stage with the other award recipients. This award reflects the "Chapters" efforts in hunter advocacy and conservation funding efforts in South Dakota.

This award would not be possible without the support from SCI members, supporters, and sponsors in the Black Hills area.

South Dakota has 249,000 licensed resident hunters which is the highest per capita of any state in the nation. Every year Wyoming and South Dakota are the top two in the nation.

The Greater Dacotah Chapter is immensely proud to represent the hunters and outdoor enthusiasts in the center of this great nation and thank you for your continued support!

Ben Cassidy (SCI Director of Government Affairs), "Governor Kristi Noem," and Gary English (President of the Greater Dacotah Chapter-SCI) attending the 2024 Governors Pheasant Hunt!





February 2025 Open House at “The Last Mile Taproom”

In February, the Greater Dacotah Chapter-SCI held an open house at the Last Mile Brewery for Neil and Anel UYS with Harloo Safaris. Neil discussed hunting options in South Africa and other countries that they hold concessions and hunts being offered at the GDC Banquet and Auction August 23rd at THE Box Convention Center in Rapid City!

Another open house at the Last Mile Brewery included Dream Team Safaris, Rupert, Henno, and Carla are putting together hunts in South Africa for the GDC Banquet and Auction. Henno began offering hunts 17 years ago and now with Dream Team Safaris additional opportunities are created for both archery and rifle hunting.

The Chapter will host an open house at the Last Mile Brewery every Quarter to keep members, and the public updated on events and GDC/SCI projects.

Thanks to everyone attending and for Last Mile Brewery (Kent & Angie, and their staff Heidi, Jake, & Michelle) for sponsoring this open house. The food was great, and their craft beer taproom exceeded every expectation and detail for a great “Open House” The Chapter had over 40 in attendance and is open to the public to gain support for Hunting & Conservation!

If you would like to be on our newsletter mailing list email greaterdacotah-sci@hotmail.com





We hope to see everyone August 23rd , 2025, at THE BOX Convention Center ,
631 Watiki Way, Box Elder, SD 57719 for the 25th Banquet and Auction

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