

How To Make Tapered Wood Arrows

93709
Aug/Sep 2006
\$4.99
IN CANADA
\$6.75
DISPLAY UNTIL
October 2006

Traditional Bowhunter

Meet The Folks at 3Rivers Archery

Hunting Caribou
Dall Sheep
Moose
Sitka Blacktails
Nyala
Antelope

How To Use a Map & Compass



0 62825 93709 1



them for twelve years, became vice president of their second corporation and learned a lot about growing a business in the process. As a business consultant, Sandie's firm specialized in business development consulting and processing SBA loans for banks.

Dale continued to work for Speed Queen for the next 14 years in the plastics department. Like many of us, he dreamed of owning his own business someday. Dale held a firm belief that with hard work, level-headed thinking and willpower, he could be successful. Living in a small town, jobs were limited so he knew he had to create his own. Sandie firmly believes that God was grooming them for many years, directing them every step of the way. She said, "We didn't know where we were headed, but I always felt His guiding

3RIVERS ARCHERY: CHASING THE DREAM

By Denny Sturgis Jr.

Have you ever dreamed about the perfect job? For those of us who love traditional archery, having a job at 3Rivers Archery would seem to fit the bill. But how does one end up owning 3Rivers? For Dale and Sandie Karch the road was long, but became the American Dream came true.

Todd Smith introduced me to Dale and Sandie shortly after they purchased 3Rivers. We hit it off from the start and over the past six years, we've become the best of friends. Dale and I have hunted together in Michigan, Texas and Africa and we're planning another adventure together for water buffalo in Australia next June. I thought TBM's readers would enjoy the Karch's story.

Born and raised in Milwaukee, this

young couple decided the city was "no place to raise a child" and moved to rural Wisconsin in 1984. Dale, a journeyman tool and die maker, worked for Speed Queen and Sandie was a stay at home mom. Although "life" interfered several times with Sandie's education, she decided to finish her college degree in the fall of 1987. She needed to commute 100 miles to finish her last 18 credits. Dale was happy to have his mother-in-law move in to help with the two boys, Matt, age three and Johnny, two. After all, it was hunting season and Dale was needed in the woods.

After earning her bachelor's degree in business administration with a minor in management information systems, Sandie landed a part-time job answering phones for a couple starting a small business out of their garage. Long story short: Sandie worked for

hand through the twists and turns of our lives. When we ended up at 3Rivers, it suddenly all made sense."

Archery entered Dale's life at the age of eight when he first wrapped his hand around a bow. An avid hunter, Dale was always happiest in the woods. Sandie hunted with a bow as a teenager, with her Dad and brothers. When they first met, she continued to hunt with Dale until, as Dale puts it, "the ring was on her finger."

Dale saved his hard earned money and ordered his first custom bow. After shooting the bow and examining the craftsmanship, the perfectionist in Dale said, "I can do better!" So Dale and his good friend Greg Szalewski, a fellow

*The 3Rivers Management Team.
Left to right—Dean Vanderhorst,
Teresa DeLancey, Todd Smith,
Sandie Karch and Dale Karch.*



Humble beginnings. Yet, hard work and persistence certainly paid off for the the Karch family.



Sandie shooting an early Tomahawk recurve.

tool and die maker, built a heat box and developed forms to build their own. Dale continued to perfect his design and workmanship over the next few years, building bows for friends and relatives.

In 1994, Dale shot a large black bear with the first bow he ever built. The passion for bow-building had been sparked and Tomahawk Bows were born. Next came the hard part: convinc-

ing Sandie that he could make his living building bows.

Since their home had no basement, Dale built his bows in the utility porch on top of Sandie's washer and dryer. So in 1995, when Dale asked Sandie to take out a second mortgage to build a shop, she had a personal incentive to comply: she was tired of moving his "stuff" every time she wanted to do laundry. The deciding factor was that Dale had always planned to retire at age 50. He told Sandie that if he perfected his trade over the next ten years, he could supplement their retirement income by building bows.

With the help of friends and relatives, they built a 28' x 48' shop outside their home. "When we bought our home, there was a 5-car parking space. I always wondered what that was for," says Sandie. "The shop was a perfect fit." They built their shop with a dividing wall. Initially, half the workspace was used for bow building and the other half was the retail store.

Every weekend, it seemed they were off to archery shows throughout the Midwest, displaying Tomahawk Bows and talking to potential customers. Sales were slim at first, and it would have been easy to give up. "But," Sandie says, "We were just planting the seeds. When the customer was ready to buy a custom bow, they would be back. It was necessary to travel to all those shows just to get the bow into the customer's

MEGGER'S
Traditional
Archery

20 Years
crafting the finest
cedar arrows

Custom Cedar Arrows
Tapered & Barrel Shafts
Longbows & Recurves

Larry Meggers • 563-538-4258
63 Shaw Street • Lansing, Iowa 52151
e-mail: megtradarchery@mchsi.com
www.meggerstraditionalarchery.com

Ancient Technology Meets
the 21st Century!

Saluki
Bow
Co.

Call or write
for a free
brochure

Scythian Turk Genghis Ibex

Saluki Bow
Individually crafted custom bows by Lukas Novotny

P.O. Box 438 • Grand Rapids, OH 43522
Phone: (419) 832-2105 • Fax: (419) 832-2224
E-mail: info@salukibow.com • Website: www.salukibow.com

got target panic?

(snap shooting...freezing...premature release)
(short draw...mental tension...trouble holding)

**CURE IT FOREVER IN A FEW MINUTES
WITH A NEWLY DISCOVERED TECHNIQUE.**
www.PushRelease.com

Tollgate Traditions

Over 40 years experience
Fair Prices and Personal Service

george's hand made Bow Strings

Flemish & Endless Loop
Dacron • Fast Flight • S-4

Economy & Custom Arrows

Wood • Aluminum • Carbon
Parabolic • Shield • Traditional • Banana

Traditional Accessories

Bows by: Bear Archery • Great Plains
Martin Archery • PSE Bows
Samick • TQ Bows

Tollgate Traditions

1233 US Hwy 20
West Winfield, NY 13491

(315) 822-5893

Free brochure available.
All major credit cards accepted.
e-mail: archery@tollgatearchery.com
www.tollgatearchery.com



With the help of family and friends, Dale and Sandie built their shop.

hands. Once they shot the bows and talked to Dale, the seed was planted. All we had to do was wait!"

During those early years, their customers were always asking to buy extra strings, armguards and other accessories. Dale always bought supplies from 3Rivers Archery in Ashley, Indiana, and kept them in plastic bins in the garage. One day Sandie, as the business consultant, said, "You know, you've got a couple of thousand dollars

of inventory in those bins. Why don't you set them out in the shop for customers to see so they'll buy more?" That was the start of DMJ Archery, LLC. Sandie says, "Our young son Matt once thought DMJ stood for Dad's Moneymaking Job, but it really stood for Dad, Mom, Matt and Johnny. This truly was a family business right from the start. To hear the boys tell it, they were dragged from show to show every weekend and forced to work the booth."

Their son Johnny claims he has been working since the age of 9. Sandie is very proud of the fact that her boys know how to make change! She created catalogs on her home computer and made photocopies during her lunch hours. The night before a show, the boys were "forced" to help assemble catalogs on the kitchen table. When they complained, Sandie always told them, "Some day you're going to complain when I ask you to bring in a case from the truck that just dropped them off."

DMJ Archery grew rapidly as there was a great demand for traditional archery supplies in Wisconsin. Customers visited their shop on a regular basis as the word spread. Dale and Sandie still fondly remember their first visit to 3Rivers Archery. "We were excited to be walking into the largest "traditional only" business in the world. We were like kids in a candy store!" reflects

Bingham Projects Inc.

Clearly the Bowyer's Choice

When you insist on quality bow making materials such as clear glass, riser woods, phenolic, wood and glass accent strips, limb core laminations in parallels and tapers ground to your specs, limb locking hardware, epoxies and anything else you might want or need, your search stops here.

Over 40 years in serving bowyers throughout the world has taught us what every bowyer wants: **Quality without delay.** This is what we are and what we do best...

Authorized
Distributor of GORDON
COMPOSITES Clear Bo-Tuff,
Core-Tuff, Uni-Weft, Carbon Uni,
and Power Tuff
Clear E-Glass

QUANTITY GLASS PRICING

Send \$3 for our current catalog

1350 Hinckley Drive, Dept TB2
Ogden, UT 84401-3375

(801) 399-3470 • 24-Hour FAX (801) 399-3471

visit us at www.binghamprojects.com

USPS, UPS, C.O.D. ORDERS



Dale. The entire family enjoyed the experience, shopping at their leisure through thousands of square feet of nothing but traditional archery products while enjoying the strong smell of cedar shafting. I'm sure Dale and Sandie were thinking, "Some day we'll be this big." Little did they know....

For several years, Dale worked for Speed Queen all day and spent his nights building bows. The boys were 12 and 13 at the time and too old to go to a sitter for the summer. Since Dale and Sandie firmly believed that young kids that should not be home alone any more than you'd leave a toddler alone, it seemed natural for Dale to become a stay-at-home dad. Fortunately, Speed Queen offered a voluntary layoff that summer. Dale took the opportunity to see if he could make a go of his new business.

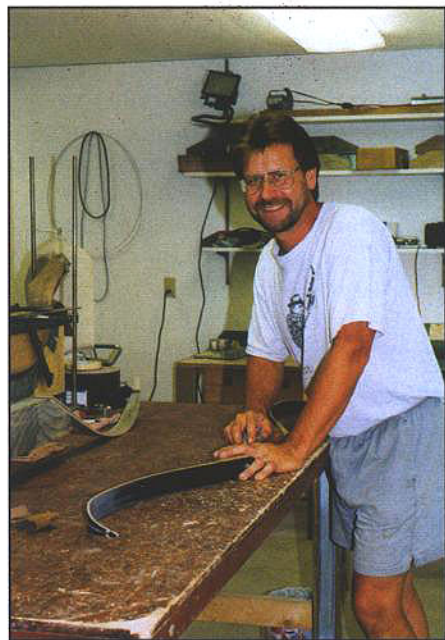
DMJ Archery continued to grow, but as hard as Dale worked, there was no way he could earn a living with a "hobby business." But Dale and Sandie would not give up. They just realized they needed to work smarter. Reviewing how many hours it took to build a bow,

Sandie, the business consultant, said, "You'll never be able to make it unless you cut your production time to one-third the current hours. Secondly, you need to find someone to distribute the bows you build." Dale immediately invested more of the family's savings into traveling to work with other successful bowyers, where he learned many tricks of the trade.

Dale figured that since he'd been doing business with 3Rivers Archery, it only made sense that they should sell his product! That's when Dale contacted Todd Smith and made his pitch for Tomahawk Bows. When Todd didn't call to place an order, Dale approached him again at a show, determined not to take no for an answer. Todd's reply to Dale's persistence was, "Look, we're for sale. If you want your bows in the catalog, why don't you just buy the business?"

That was in 1999. Steve Ferree had started the company 14 years earlier in a back bedroom and watched it grow into a 10,000 square foot building with eight employees. Steve was ready for retirement.

When Dale relayed this suggestion



Moving out of the laundry room and into the new shop was a big step for Tomahawk Bows.

to Sandie, she said, "Why not? At least if we buy the business, since it's already successful we might be gaining back the next ten years of our lives instead of working to develop DMJ Archery to

WOLVERINE & GRIZZLY BROADHEADS

Deep Penetration
Bone Splitting
Easily Sharpened
Shoot Like Field Points
No Windplaning

DEALER
INQUIRIES
WELCOME

Available in 130,
145 & 160 grains.

Available in 100, 125,
145, 160 & 190 grains.

Try Our Quality
Leather
Products

Wolverine & Grizzly

106 Cherry Springs Road • Coudersport, PA 16915 • (814) 274-0905

Ohio Society of Traditional Archers

State Shoot

Hosted by Jackson Bowhunters

4701 Jisco West Road • Jackson, Ohio

September 2 & 3, 2006

(Labor Day Weekend)

Classes: Men & Women:

Longbow • Recurve • Selfbow • Ole Timers 50+

Boys & Girls: Youth: 14 to 18

Cubs: 11 to 13 (Free) • Peewees: 0 to 10 (Free)

Novelties • Raffles

FREE Camping and Vendor set up
Food Available • Water on the grounds

For information call:

John Gesner 614-939-4828 or Doug Duhl 740-384-2102

that level. Maybe we could even get paid for our work!" They had been doing business with 3Rivers as DMJ Archery, so they knew there was already a great team of employees in place. They made the difficult choice to move the entire family including Bull's-Eye, the family dog, to Indiana rather than move the business to Wisconsin.

Six months later, when Matt was a sophomore in high school and Johnny a freshman, the family moved to Ashley, Indiana. Dale and Sandie were now in debt; having mortgaged everything to

chase the American Dream. If you think they lived happily ever after on "easy street", you'd be wrong. The work didn't get any easier, but they now get paid to live, breath, eat and sleep, thinking about archery.

Now, of course, you'll find Tomahawk Bows proudly displayed in the 3Rivers catalog. They even improved the Tomahawk Bow line with the introduction of the "Diamond Series" a few years ago. Recently they launched, TomahawkBows.com, a state-of-the-art web site designed to make shopping for

a custom bow easier. Their only problem now is that they can't produce bows as quickly as they sell them. Their bows are commonly backordered about 18 weeks. But Dale proudly says, "That's a good problem to have!"

The new owners carefully listened to their customers and quickly made several changes, eliminating the \$15.00 minimum order and \$2.00 catalog fees and offering a 100% satisfaction, 30-day guarantee. Over the past six years they've invested in new telephone and computer systems, resulting in a greatly improved ordering process and allowing them to ship 95% of their orders the same day they get them. Two years ago, they hired a call center to take orders 24/7, 365 days a year. "Our customers were so happy with the toll-free order line (1-866-RECURVE), that we even added a toll-free customer service number this year," says Sandie.

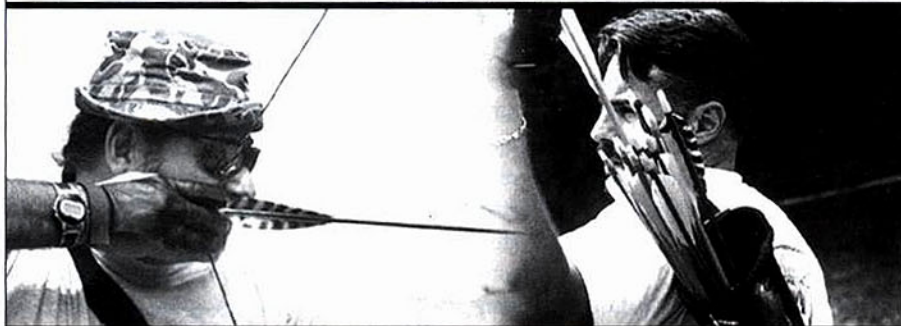
Dale is constantly seeking out new products and developing products that aren't being produced, in order to meet the demands of the traditional market.

Dale continues to broaden the asset base by producing hunting videos and purchasing other product lines like Wensel Woodsmen broadheads. "Quality is the key to the success of 3Rivers Archery: Quality products, quality service, and quality guarantee," Dale states.

Apparently their business philosophy is working as the "new" 3Rivers doubled their sales and inventory in the first five years. Sandie recalls with a smile, "The first year we printed 20,000 catalogs. This year we're looking at ten times that number, and they're delivered on pallets by a semi truck." I wonder which of the boys she'll ask to bring in the next case?

Sandie says, "3Rivers is still operated as a mom and pop business, only we now have more mouths to feed. We employ anywhere from 15 - 20 people, depending on the season. Yes, our sons are still involved in the business. Johnny is in college majoring in public relations. It's our hope that some day he will return to 3Rivers to join the team, but for now it's just summer and winter breaks. Matt is currently finishing a 4-year stint in the Navy and plans to come home to attend college and work

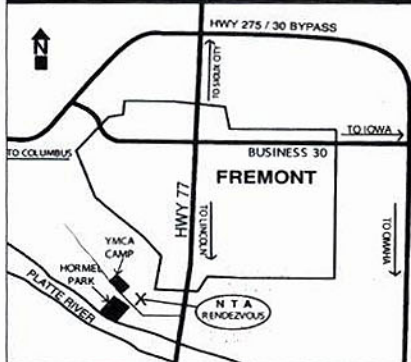
NEBRASKA TRADITIONAL ARCHER'S 11th ANNUAL



SUMMER RENDEZVOUS AUGUST 19 & 20, 2006 • HORMEL PARK, FREMONT, NE

*Families Welcome, Traditional Bows Only
Registration Fee Covers Unlimited Shooting
Primitive Camping • 2 - 3D Courses • Novelty & Blanket Shoot
Special Kids Shoot • Door Prizes & Raffles • Vendors
Community Grill on Saturday Night*

2 DAY	MEMBER	\$10.00	YOUTH	\$6.00	FAMILY	\$20.00
	NON MEMBER	\$12.00		\$8.00		\$30.00
1 DAY	MEMBER	\$17.00	YOUTH	\$10.00	FAMILY	\$40.00
	NON MEMBER	\$22.00		\$12.00		\$50.00



**Saturday Night Guest Speakers
CONNIE & GARY RENFRO**
Writers for
TRADITIONAL BOWHUNTERS MAGAZINE
With an Auction to follow

Call **VINCE SMITH**
for more info **402-727-9141**
or netraditionalarchers.org

for us – voluntarily this time. Matt, like his father, is an avid hunter and very entrepreneurial, we hope he'll also return to the 3Rivers team."

As a way to give back to the traditional archery industry that has been so good to them, 3Rivers continues to support many archery clubs and special functions through donations and offers a customer appreciation hunt giveaway each year. One year, they even gave away a custom Tomahawk Bow every month.

Dale has always been passionate about traditional archery, dedicating countless hours to support various organizations. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Compton Traditional Bowhunters and is a past president of Wisconsin Traditional Archers. He is a member of PBS, Pope & Young and a certified Bowhunter Safety Instructor.

Since taking over six years ago, Sandie has redesigned the 3Rivers web site twice, improving the shopping cart to make online shopping much easier. "Technology is changing rapidly and as a small business we struggle to keep up. It's a good thing that I minored in Management Information Systems, so I have a clue as to what this technology is all about," Sandie states. They also appreciate all the ideas, comments and feedback they get directly from their customers on how they might improve the website. Dale interjects, "We love it when they give us their input. It helps us know what *they* want. After all, without our customers, we wouldn't be here!"

Field-testing new bowhunting products is part of Dale's job description. How cool is that? As often as he can swing it, he's "Gone Hunting", sometimes capturing the excitement of big game hunting with the bow and arrow on film. Many of these bowhunting adventures have found their way into the "3Rivers Archery Adventure Series" including "Africa!", "Javelina!" and "Bowfishing Bonanza." Dale assures us there'll be more in the future. When asked about all those hunts, he offers a wink and a smile, saying, "It's hard work, but someone's got to do it! I'm just glad it's me." Sandie adds, "Just a couple of years ago, I started to hunt again and we have shared some very special hunts together. But when we hunt



Dale and Sandie Karch, with Bullseye, the official 3Rivers greeter.

together, he's not allowed to bring his bow. He's my personal cameraman!"

What's next? Dale has this to offer: "We have a saying around here; we're going to keep throwing things against the wall and see what sticks." Dale and Sandie strike me as perfectionists, so I'd say it's a pretty safe bet that they'll never stand still. They realize that even if you're on the right road, you'll get run over if you just sit there. They're currently considering expanding their building to facilitate the growth of 3Rivers' arrow production and their ever-expanding new inventory. "The hours are long and the pressure high," Dale notes, "but it's great to be able to go to work every day and do what you love—talk about bowhunting!"

Driving home after our interview, I reflected on many of the subjects we'd discussed: where they'd come from, how hard they'd worked to get where they are today, and what their goals were for the future. I thought about how important family and friends were to both Dale and Sandie and how passionate they were about shooting bows and arrows, bowhunting, and being the best they could be for their customers. Then it hit me. They're not chasing the dream anymore. They're living it!

For more information on 3Rivers Archery visit one of their websites:

3RiversArchery.com, TomahawkBows.com, or WenselWoodsman.com.

A residential builder and co-owner of Traditional Vision Quest LLC, Michigan bowhunter Denny Sturgis Jr. contributes regularly to the magazine.

An advertisement for the "SMOKE VAULT" outdoor cooking device. The device is a black, boxy, four-legged metal structure with a door on the front. To the right of the device are illustrations of various foods: a ham, a brisket, a whole chicken, and a turkey. The text "SMOKE VAULT" is at the top in a large, bold, serif font, with a banner below it that says "Lock in the Flavor". Below the device, the text reads "LOCK IN GREAT FLAVOR TO RIBS, HAM, FISH, BRISKET, POULTRY AND MORE!". At the bottom, it says "OutdoorCooking.com" and "FREE SHIPPING for the Smoke Vault Enter Coupon Code: TBW".