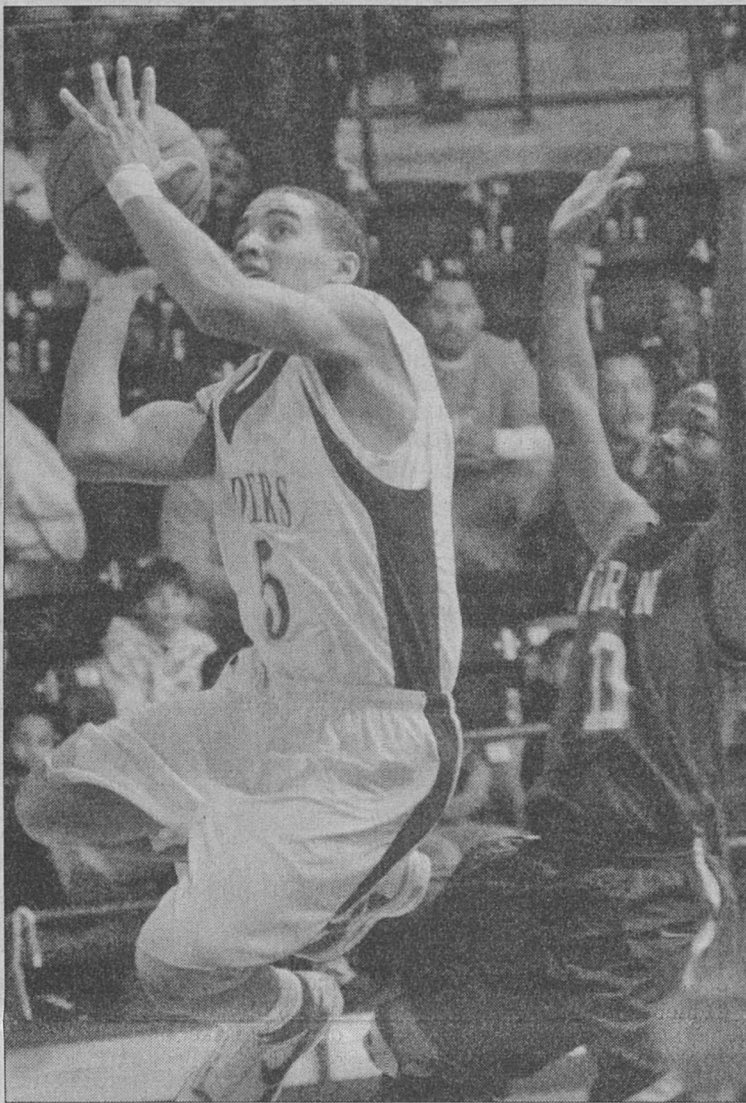


Machelsea Thomas fights for the ball in a recent game.

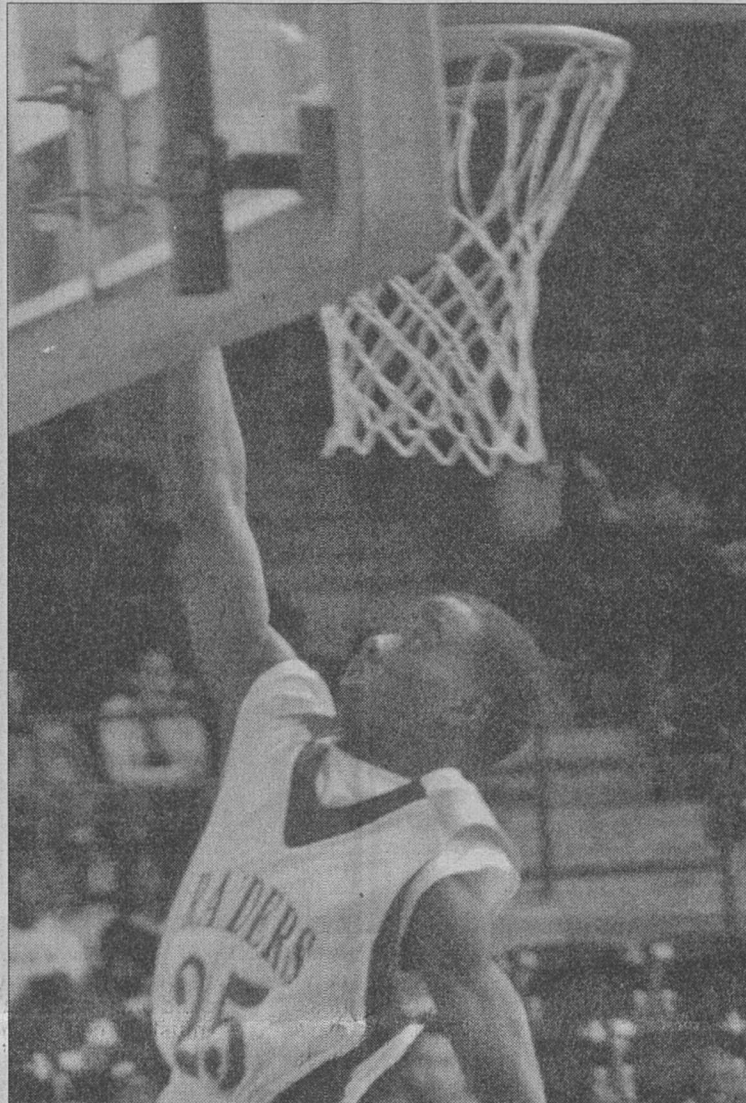


The Lady Raiders chat things over during a timeout during a recent game.

**Headlight
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Mario Hull goes in for a layup during recent Raider basketball action.



Dewey Pettus goes up strong for the Raiders during a recent game.

Alyssa Marsalia Takes Massive Buck

By Horace Gore
Story courtesy of
Texas Trophy Hunters

Alyssa Marsalia and her grandfather have a common bond—they like to deer hunt. Donnie Wiese takes the other grandchildren hunting, too, but 2007 was Alyssa's time in the deer blind. Alyssa was 14 years old last year when the season opened in South Texas and Donnie (she calls him "Grampy") had promised to help her get a good buck on the family ranch near Fowlerton, Texas, in La Salle County. Little did they know just how good the buck would be!

Donnie Wiese is a long-time deer hunter with many good trophy whitetails on his walls. Many of them were killed on the 3,000-acre ranch. It has been high-fenced for 39 years and the deer are supplemented and managed with herd control and quality harvest. Alyssa has hunted since she was six years old; taking four bucks and several does on the ranch. Her first buck was an 11-point, but she says it was a cull.

When the deer season opened last year, Alyssa had her mind set on a special buck that she and her grandfather had seen prior to the season. "Grampy" had told her that they would hunt that buck, and so they hunted—and hunted. Donnie wanted Alyssa to shoot the buck with his favorite deer rifle, a .250-300 vintage Savage lever action that he had used for years. Alyssa had taken the rifle to the range and fired several rounds at a target to get used to the trigger and the kick, which is mild in a .250 Savage. "I was ready to hunt when the season opened," she told me, as we sat in a corner of the Los Cazadores store during the awards presentation on July 19. She was there to get her jacket for taking a 165-plus buck. "Grampy and I hunted several times for that buck, and I had several good shots lined up, but he wasn't sure that he wanted the buck killed," she said. "Finally, on the sixth hunt, he gave me the O. K."

Alyssa Marsalia is not your run-of-the-mill 15-year-old girl. She is lovely, smart, and likes to run cross-country. To top that off,

she would rather rabbit hunt with her friend, Erica McConnell, than go to the mall. She is in the tenth grade at Rice High School near Eagle Lake. I've hunted ducks and geese with her dad, Bobbie Marsalia, who guides hunters on the Lissie Prairie. Alyssa has been around hunters all her life, and it is easy to see why she likes to hunt.

LaSalle County is a hot spot for big whitetails and the Fowlerton area has long been known for big bucks. The area is flanked by the Frio River, with a good mixture of low brush that is high in protein and minerals. You could say that almost any buck in that area that is 5-plus years old will be some kind of a "Hoss".

Alyssa and Donnie kept after the buck through the season, but he wasn't sure about giving Alyssa the go-ahead on killing the buck. It wasn't because he was concerned that she might cripple the deer and lose it. She is a good shot, and this wasn't her first buck. I wondered if it was something else. Was this buck bigger than anything Donnie had ever killed himself? Or, maybe he wanted the buck to breed as many does as possible before the deer's demise.

January 20, 2008 rolled around, and Alyssa and Donnie were after the buck again. It was cold, and Alyssa had on a lot of clothes—camo shirt, bib overalls, and a warm cap. The sun was barely visible over the horizon as they huddled in the high blind that they had used most of the season. They knew the buck was using that area, and they had seen him chasing does several times. Alyssa's watch showed 7:30 when the buck walked out. His high antlers glistened in the morning light as he pranced around the other deer about 80 yards away. "There's your buck," Grampy told Alyssa as the buck stood at an angle from the blind. Alyssa knew that this was the go-ahead, and she raised the .250 Savage and put the Weaver scope on the buck's shoulder. It was not a good angle for a shot, but Alyssa knew it was now or never. The season was about to end, and the buck was standing in front of her.

The rifle cracked, and the 100-grain bullet hit nothing but air. "I couldn't believe I had missed that buck," recalled Alyssa. "I guess that I was cold with a mild case of buck fever." The deer whirled and ran toward the brush, but stopped. Alyssa quickly took another shot, this time hitting the buck in the shoulder. The deer immediately went into the brush and disappeared.

"You hit him pretty hard that last shot," Donnie told his granddaughter, who was shaking like a leaf. "Why don't you get down and go look while I stay up here and watch for him. If he moves, I'll let you know." Alyssa climbed down out of the blind with her rifle and quietly moved toward where she had last seen the buck. As she approached the brush where the buck had disappeared, she could see the deer standing a few yards away, mortally wounded. "I didn't waste any time putting another bullet in him," she said. "The third shot put him down for good. I walked up and couldn't believe how big he was, a huge 10-point with perfectly symmetrical antlers."

A friend of the family, Alan Labay, came and helped Alyssa and her grandfather load the buck. They took him to Los Cazadores where he was scored at 169 1/8 Boone and Crockett (B&C) gross. The antlers were nearly identical on each side and I suspect that they netted well over 160 B&C. Alyssa told me that a bigger buck had been killed on the ranch in 2005 by their friend, Alan Labay, that scored 174 gross.

Alyssa tried on the smallest jacket they had at Los Cazadores, and even it was a little big. I asked her about the antler measurements on her buck that was hanging a few feet away on the wall, and she gave me these figures: 18-inch inside spread; 23-inch beams; five-inch brows; 12-inch G-2s; 11-inch G-3s; and G-4s that were seven and four inches. Its mass totaled 38 inches.

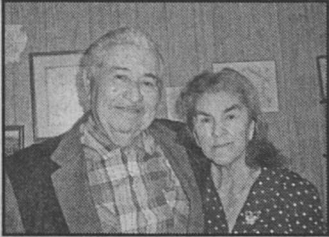

I suspect that Alyssa will bring the buck to the 2008 Houston Hunters Extravaganza, which at this writing is two weeks away. She may win another jacket—not too many 14 year-old girls bring in



169 B&C bucks!

I asked Alyssa if she thought she would ever top the buck of 2007. "I doubt it," she said. "Grampy wants all us grandkids to kill a good buck on the ranch, and I think it may be some time before we hunt for such a big buck again. But I'm happy with my buck. Some say that I probably will never kill one that big again. What do you think?" I thought of all the whitetails that I've killed during the last 50 years and not a one would come close to her 169 B&C. And without looking at her, I sheepishly said, "Probably not, my dear—probably not."

Happy Anniversary Mom and Dad
Jan. 2, 1955 - Jan. 2, 2009



Then Now

Mom and Dad our extraordinary dears, we celebrate your anniversary of 54 years. Daddy and Mom, parents we love so much, this poem is a gift from hearts you continue to touch.

This love fest had its origin way back in another world, when all of it unfurled. A marriage followed, filled with love, bonded with faith, God-loving, people who follow all that our Lord sayeth.

Your family send thanks and endless love with peace in every way. Forever more, that's our wish for you, especially on this, your special day.

We Love You and May You Be Blessed With Many More Years...

CoCo, Bully, Gerber, Michael, Danny, Anthony, Stacy, Peggy, Pam, Donna, James, Binks, Sarah and Chach

MOUTH AND THROAT CANCERS
More than 30,000 Americans will develop a mouth or throat cancer this year and males are twice as likely to be victims. You can play a significant role in early detection through self-examination.

Here are some signs to look for:

- A sore that bleeds easily or does not heal.
- A lump or thickening in the cheek.
- Pain or numbness anywhere in the mouth or on the lips.

On the lifestyle front, smoking-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, or smokeless tobacco-is a leading cause of mouth and throat cancer. Use of those products will dramatically increase the likelihood of cancer. Also, drinkers are about six times more likely to develop an oral cancer that are non-drinkers. Combine smoking and drinking, and potential for trouble goes even higher. Some studies indicate that a diet high in vegetables and fruits may help prevent oral cancer.

Because successful treatment and rehabilitation are dependent on early detection, it is extremely important to see your dentist for an oral cancer screening and regular check up at least every 6 months. Survival rates greatly increase the earlier oral cancer is discovered and treated.

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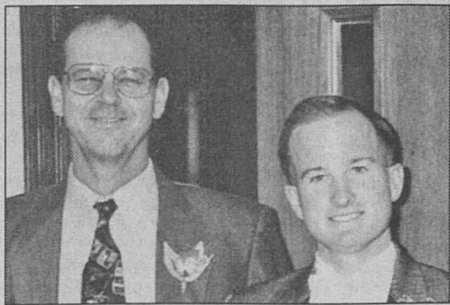
New Patient Exam & X-rays

\$30

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Reg. Price \$300

DAD



His hair is thinning, but so is mine. With each day there is less. Time is a bird that flies so quickly and I'm slower I must confess. Life brings us trials for us to face and I've learned both good and bad From a man I must admit isn't perfect, but I'm proud to call him Dad!

He taught me important stuff like hunting with rifle and with bow And when I acted hardheaded he taught me the meaning of NO! Dad put the time into raising us and often the days seemed long But because he loved and cared so much, we all know right from wrong.

Written by Lt. Richard Wiese on 12/01/2008
While deployed in Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Love Richard, Christi, Hannah, Benjamin and Micah:
Thank you for being a great Dad and a wonderful Grampy.
Happy Birthday, Dad

