

Departments

LASTING LEGACIES: ROSE HAROIAN

Gentry Hale

No Grass Grows Under Her Feet



Rose Haroian never stops moving. She even packed out an elk all by herself at age 62.

It was a November afternoon and the temperature had dropped into the single digits. A foot and a half of snow weighed heavy on a sea of deadfall somewhere near Glenrock, Wyoming.

Earlier that day, 62-year-old Rose Haroian shot a cow elk by herself. By late afternoon she was still packing it out in quarters on her back. She hauled the meat as far as she could, then stacked it in a sled and went back for more. When the sled was full, she pulled the cumbersome load uphill through snow and deadfall using the straps of her homemade harness. She took frequent breaks to catch her breath as she made her way to her truck.

“Of course it was all uphill!” remembers Rose.

After nearly eight hours of grueling work, Rose left with half of an elk in her truck. Then she returned the next morning to do it all again.

“That was a big personal accomplishment for me because it was something I had always read about people doing, packing out their own elk. And I thought, one of these days I’d like to do that. But now that I’ve done it, I don’t need to do it again!”

Packing out an elk alone at age 62 is a huge accomplishment for anyone, but for Rose it is only the tip of the iceberg.

Rose grew up in Illinois across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, Missouri. Nobody in her family hunted, but her dad would take her and her brother fishing during family vacations. She fell in love with nature and pursued a degree in geology from Southern Illinois University.

After college she began working as a geologist for Peabody Coal, a company where she would spend her whole career.

“I worked for corporate headquarters in St. Louis and they were opening up some new surface coal mines in Wyoming and needed a geologist, so I said, ‘I’ll go!’ And I did, and I haven’t looked back.”

She made it to Wyoming in 1987, where she met friends who took her bird hunting for the first time. She started with pheasants, then turkey and small game, then deer and pronghorn in the early ‘90s.

Eventually she set her sights on elk. Her first hunt was outside of Dubois . She overslept and was supposed to meet a group of friends at a point where they had seen a herd. She headed up the two-track road toward the meeting spot when her friend looked over and said, “Hey! There’s some elk!”

Rose jumped out of the vehicle. After a short pursuit she found a good rest and shot a cow on the hillside above. Twenty years later she still remembers the excitement she felt as she approached that first elk . She's been hooked ever since.

Rose became an RMEF Life Member in 2015, a few years after her retirement. She then chose to add RMEF as a beneficiary in her estate plans, making her a

member of the Trails Society.

The Trails Society recognizes those who have included RMEF as a beneficiary in their estate plans through a will, life insurance policy or a retirement account.

“I wanted to put RMEF in my estate plans because I just think it does great stuff for conservation. People are trying to get out of cities, the countrysides are filling up and it seems like everybody wants to come to the Mountain West. I like the fact that RMEF helps landowners ensure conservation easements and conserves property so that it’s never going to be developed. I think that’s a good cause.”

Rose is a huge proponent of public access and has always hunted primarily on public lands. Her estate plans also include the WYldlife Fund, which designates funds to Wyoming Game and Fish’s Access Yes program that leases property from private landowners for public access.

“The more public land we have to hunt on, the less crowded it is going to be and the more access we will have to landlocked public areas that are surrounded by private property,” says Rose. “So any kind of access that Access Yes or RMEF can get us is welcomed.”

Now that she’s retired, Rose is a beekeeper and has three hives that keep her busy. “I don’t let any grass grow under my feet,” she says. She also tends to her vegetable garden and goes golfing, kayaking and hiking with friends. She is even the president of the Outdoor Enthusiasts of Converse County (OEOCC).

The OEOCC meets for outdoor activities, arranges litter cleanup projects, organizes hikes for members and non-members, arranges trail races and hosts archery shoots in the Medicine Bow National Forest, among other projects.

The OEOCC also purchases and donates Fish and Game lifetime hunting and conservation stamps to youth as well as scholarships for the Wyoming Game and Fish youth camp in the Whiskey Mountains.

Between all these activities, Rose still finds the time to elk hunt, although now she brings her friends to help her with the packout.

“Tell you what, I’m having the time of my life! When I’m on my deathbed, I don’t want to say, ‘You know, I wish I would have done this. I wish I would have done that.’ Because then it’s too late. So I just go 110 miles an hour.”



The Trails Society: Committing to the Future of Elk and Wild Places

The peak of the elk rut occurs mid-September through mid-October. During this time, bugles echo through the mountains and plains as bulls vie for the hearts of their harems. Fall also brings golden leaves, crisp air and the first dustings of snow.

The shift of seasons is an apt metaphor for the changes and cadence of our lives. And looking forward to what lies ahead is at the heart of RMEF’s Trails Society, a group of passionate and dedicated supporters who aim to leave a legacy of conservation so future generations can enjoy stunning landscapes, plentiful game and lasting memories.

Including provisions for RMEF in your will or trust—or as a beneficiary of a retirement account or life insurance policy—can be the most impactful way to support our mission.

If RMEF is already in your estate plans, we’d love to know about it so we can thank you properly. To learn more about planned giving and the Trails Society, please reach out to us at legacy@rmef.org or 406-523-3479.



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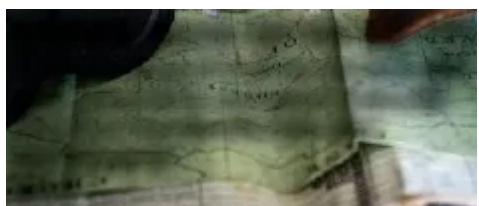
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