

We Have come a long way baby !!!!

When I was young boy, there weren't many raccoons, if any, in Putnam County West Virginia. My family always kept and hunted hounds. Fox hounds, Walkers, Julys, and Triggs were their dogs of choice. They also kept what they called Short Game dogs, they were mix breed dogs. Short Game dogs were used at night to bay skunks, tree raccoons, possums and cats. Short Game dogs were used in the day time for rabbits, squirrels and would tree ruffed grouse. These dogs helped feed our family and were a source of income from the hides we sold. John Knapp, who fought in the Civil War, was my granddad's granddad, I don't know before him. Since John Knapp we all have owned and hunted hounds. There weren't any bears and very few raccoons, in western West Virginia when I was growing up. I guess you would have to say I was a skunk and possum hunter, because that was all we could catch. When I was in my early teens we caught a few raccoons and thought we were big time coon hunters. Then after I came back from my military service, I really started coon hunting, I worked a job and hunted three nights a week. Skunks and possums were a thing of the past, no one loved coon hunting more than I did. My wife's family were hound hunters also, the Ashworth family. That is how I met her, through hound hunting with her brothers. I had better dogs than her brothers, she might have married me to get my dogs? My wife is a dog lover and loves hound hunting. I owe a lot to hound hunting, because she is the greatest thing that ever happened to me, other than God and his son. God, family, hounds my life comes in that order. Then bears came to western West Virginia, when I started treeing bears, raccoons soon became a thing of the past. It has been a long hard hike from possums and skunks to raccoons, then bears. I loved every step of it. No wonder they say Dog is man's best friend, I agree. Some of my fondest memories are shared with hounds, friends and family. My family and I have truly been blessed!!! My Dad always said; If a man was truly blessed in one life time, he would have one good dog and one good woman. I have to confess I have had both, and still got the good woman.

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