

Heartwood Outdoors 2013 Youth Turkey Camp

"It all starts in the heart" is the slogan of Heartwood Outdoors Outreach Center and its founder Tracy Grove. It pretty much says it all as I and many others have learned by knowing Tracy and the members of Heartwood Outdoors.

The Outreach Center was a dream or mission if you will of Tracy's for many years. The actual center was established June 2012 on 160 acres in Maryland. Tracy wanted a place where he could use hunting and the outdoors to reach and help those who are hurting or in need of help or just need a pick me up, children and adults. You can't change people's future or outlook in life by just taking them hunting. But hunting can be used as a springboard to change their hearts and meet their needs. That is the goal of Heartwood Outdoors Outreach Center. Use the outdoors to open people up, build friendships and change lives. As they say at the center BUILD, ENCOURAGE and IMPACT LIVES. It's not just about the hunting/ outdoors, but it is about reaching lives of individuals and families.

Heartwood Outdoors travels doing seminars in churches and other venues, on turkey and deer hunting. From one of these seminars at Central chapel near Hedgesville, VA three young men were chosen to participate in Heartwood Outdoors 2013 Maryland Youth Turkey hunt on April 11-13. These young men, Brandon Barrett of Martinsburg WVA, Jamie Minghini of Inwood WVA and James Runion of Bunker Hill, WVA got to spend 3 days with experienced turkey hunters learning the ropes of turkey hunting. They learned to pattern their shotguns, learned about decoys and decoy set up, calling and they even got to make their own turkey call. During their down time they got to do some trap shooting, archery shooting and a little fishing in the pond next to the cabin. The culmination of camp is Friday night when the boys draw to see what property they will hunt and which guide they will go with. Then as we all know you try to get some sleep anticipating opening morning in the turkey woods waiting to hear that gobbler shatter the morning silence as he comes down from the roost and lets his presence be known to all the hens in the area. I am sitting at the computer writing this as the boys are hunting and find myself wanting to call to see who got what, but I will wait for a report. The report has finally arrived; all three boys had gobbler encounters on Saturday morning. Two of the three connected, Brandon Barrett at 6:45am on a gobbler 9 3/4" beard and 3/4" spurs and James Runion at 8:45am on a Jake with a 5" beard. The first turkeys harvested by these two boys and what a better way than with Heartwood Outdoors at their youth camp. Jamie learned you don't always get what you go for. Hats why Tracy's motto is "Success is found in the Heart of the hunter not the size of the animal "That's a motto we all need to live by!

Tracy invited me to come up to camp on Thursday and Friday to take pictures and see what

Heartwood Outdoors Outreach Center is all about. The best way I can describe camp is by saying; It's was like being with family. It was like you have been around camp for years. Everyone was gracious and made you feel at home from the start, no one was a stranger. I know these three young men and their fathers/mentors felt the same way too. They not only learned about turkey hunting, but they learned life lessons as they shot their guns, bows and sat around the camp fire each night telling and listening to hunting stories.

That's what it's all about folks. It's not just going out shooting something; it's about building relationships in life. I know these three young men have experienced something they will never forget. As they get older no matter where life takes them the memories of the three days at Heartwood Outdoors Youth Turkey Camp will go and be with them always! I know that's what Tracy Grove is striving for!!!!

Heartwood Outdoors is a non-profit organization, if you would like to help go to heartwoodoutdoors.com to learn more about them.

Mineral Bob Warden