



and grubbing out tree/fence lines. For years, I never worried too much about wildlife, but I do now. People have to start helping the wildlife,” he said tending his wife’s goats.

Bond wished more landowners were like Hoy. “John really cares about wildlife. He’ll ask me what more he can do to help wildlife. That’s dedication,” Bond said.

### The Central Susquehanna Chapter

One of the main chapters backing up the Susquehanna CREP and the WPRA has been the Central Susquehanna Chapter out of Bloomsburg, a college town of 15,000, some two hour’s drive north of Philadelphia. This chapter is a real family affair, and the name to remember is Appelman!

Joining me for a get-to-know-you dinner were chapter volunteers and Appelman patriarch Harris Appelman, 85; Sherewood Appelman; Treasurer James Appelman; Sally Appelman; Lynn Appelman; Tom Ball; Robert “Butch” Krick; Michael Amick; Joyce Amick; Doug Burkhardt and Terri Yurko.

Harris and his son Jim are two volunteers that are really driving the chapter’s fundraising; Harris collected the most funds from sponsors and his son the second most the last eight years. That’s a father/son team to admire!

Burkhardt, Lynn Appelman, Ball, Bond and others all pitch in for the youth hunt, which hosted nine youth in 2012. Krick did 70 acres of food plots and nesting cover in 2012 and Lynn helped him spray another 700 acres of CREP — all using chapter equipment. CREP landowners only have to pay for chemical and fuel.

Ball, Burkhardt and several other chapter volunteers also conducted a pheasant survey in the recovery areas, supplying the raw data to the PGC for analysis. As you can see, this chapter is a well-oiled pheasant habitat machine.

### McKayla’s First Bird

Why does the chapter do what it



**McKayla Robbins, daughter of PF Regional Wildlife Biologist Shon Robbins, was thrilled to take her first rooster.**

does, do it so well and with such enthusiasm? In a word, for people like McKayla Robbins, the next generation of hunter conservationist.

The next day I was joined by Robbins, his daughter McKayla, 15, and some other close friends to chase state-released birds at a scenic public hunting area.

The area is situated on a steep mountain hillside of mixed clearings and woods, all decked out in falls colors and full of life.

It wasn’t long before a rooster flushed near an eager McKayla, who after her second shot dropped the bird — creating a

memory she will never forget!

Our hunt continued for some time. I dropped out of the march as younger legs carried up and down the steep hills. Staying behind did not mean I was alone, however. Raucous crows sailed across the far-reaching valley, their caws echoing in the clear morning air. Cardinals and blue jays flitted about after their morning meal. As I munched on some deer jerky from, you guessed it, McKayla’s first whitetail, a turkey putted nearby. A redtail hawk soared round and round on the thermals overhead as a great blue heron squawked at me from a nearby pond. The colorful flowers of late blooming flea bane, goldenrod and daisies waved in the breeze as deer crossed here and there to avoid the hunters. Migrating flocks of robins passed by on their way south as a phoebe called from the safety of a nearby oak grove.

It was an idyllic scene, but one missing something. From among all those wild creatures, there were no wild pheasants. I knew, however, that the efforts of Pennsylvania PF, PGC and NRCS would soon add the sharp crowing of that King of the Gamebirds to the fields where McKayla, and future generations of Keystone State hunters, anxiously await them.



*Herwig is editor of Pheasants Forever Journal.*



**Team PF is all smiles after a great autumn pheasant hunt. Pictured, from left, McKayla Robbins, Shon Robbins, Doug Burkhardt, Kurt Bond and Lucas Allen.**