

Wise Olde Pine Plantation provides trophy buck experiences

By SCOTT PHILLIPS

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AMERICUS - Nestled in the woods in rural Sumter County, Georgia lies a quiet hunting plantation known as Wise Olde Pine Plantation. Although this serene 3,000 acre plantation offers beautiful sunset views and plenty of amenities, it is not just a vacation destination, but also a true hunter's paradise loaded with big trophy bucks.

In 1987 Mickey Wise and father Jean Wise began Wise Olde Pine Plantation as a way to spend time together following Jean's retirement. Originally, Wise Olde Pine was a quail hunting lodge, but over time the younger Wise decided to start incorporating deer hunting for several reasons.

"We already had the land and we had the deer stands, and I did the food plots anyway, so I decided I'd go after that market," Mickey said. "As the deer hunting business got better I just phased out the quail hunting because the overhead got so high with me traveling over 120 miles to get the quail. I started doing just the deer hunting and focusing on that and planting bigger deer plots, so for the past 15 years I've been mainly deer hunting," he added. Wise Olde Pine Plantation has established itself as one of the most successful hunting clubs in Southwest Georgia for producing trophy deer. One major reason for this is that Mickey only permits large bucks to be taken, allowing younger, smaller bucks to grow into a trophy.

"We focus on only shooting the big trophies," he said. "One thing that we have focused on more lately is we have deer stands that will accommodate a father and son, a father and daughter, or a husband and wife. A lot of people bring their children and their children kill the trophy of a lifetime, and that satisfaction is what I get out of it."

Although Jean passed away less than two years into Wise Olde Pine Plantation's existence, Mickey said that one quote by his late father still inspires the way he conducts his business today.

"It's a labor of love, and you get out of something what you put into it. My daddy always said 'you never really own the land, you are just the shepherd over it,' and so you become as good a shepherd as you can possibly be and you hope that the next shepherd can be as good as you are," Mickey said. Mickey added that you do what you do on a plantation because you love the land. One of his favorite parts of owning a plantation is striking up new friendships, and one group in particular has become a huge asset to Mickey and Wise Olde Pine.

"I basically run the place by myself, except for two weeks out of the year when I have a group that we call 'The Kennel' come in and help," he said. "One of my very best friends now, Wayne Peacock of Toccoa, Ga., who came here as a guest of another hunter saw all the work that went into running a hunting business. He said, 'we need to get a group of guys together that have a common interest and want to come here and be a part of Wise Old Pine.'"

The Kennel is a group of about 15 men that come to Wise Olde Pine from Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina twice a year to work on the plantation and complete building and renovation projects.

"It's a great group of guys and we all enjoy each other's company," said Mickey. "We cook and we work and we hunt together, and then they come here and hunt during the year as well."

Wise Olde Pine has many unique features that make it one of the premier hunting plantations in the southeast. A sauna, porch swings facing the sunset, and a billiards cabin are just a few of the things that put the Sumter County Plantation over the top, according to its owner.

"We have a sauna where people can sit and relax and a heated swimming pool. We have a smoker and a walk-in smoker where we can make our own sausages and meats that The Kennel and I built," Mickey said. "We've also got a billiards room that we can turn the music up and shoot pool in.

Everything has evolved over the years."

The main lodge for the customers is known as the log house, and it is three different log cabins built into one impressive structure. The three cabins, built in 1834, 1840, and 1867, have been transformed into a beautiful guest house that is rich in history, but also offers modern comforts like central heat and air and two and 1/2 baths.

Wise Olde Pine offers a unique opportunity to really have a hunt personally catered to you however you like. Hunters can receive transportation to and from their stand whenever they want, have their deer processed on site, and have "Country Gourmet" meals prepared by Mickey's wife, Connie Wise, if they prefer not to cook their own in one of the smokers.

"We score Boone and Crocket, but I don't do deductions so all the points are counted. The stand fee covers transportation to and from the stand, so they can sit as long as they want and they can come in and eat whenever they want," Mickey said. "When they kill the deer we drag it out of the woods and take the pictures and then hang it up and take more pictures. We then skin it out and process it for them. It's pretty flexible when people are here they can do about what they want to."

Two people that have been influential at Wise Olde Pine are Mickey's life-long best friend Chris McPherson and new friend Steve Arsua. McPherson was described by Connie as someone who 'always comes when Mickey needs

him,' and he is also the longest-tenured member of The Kennel. Arsua, a welder from Blairsville, works as a guide at Wise Olde Pine during the winter months when everything is frozen in north Georgia.

Wise Olde Pine Plantation also offers turkey hunting, hog hunting, and will host wild quail hunts if there are interested hunters. For more information on Wise Olde Pine, visit their website at www.wiseoldepine.net, or contact Mickey and Connie at (229) 846-5491. Wise Olde Pine is located at 590 Three Bridges Road, Americus, GA 31709.

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