

**Monday, October 30, 2017  
Saint George, Kansas**

**About a week ago I got an e-mail from a young would be fall turkey hunter Mike Heimall and in part after several unsuccessful attempts Mike wrote: "...I found myself scouring the web looking for people who have had success here at Fort Riley that might show me what I've been doing wrong. That's when I found you." When I set my web site up (I don't know how many years ago now I've lost count) it was to help and encourage young hunters like Mike; so without any hesitation I contacted Mike and we made a hunting date for last Saturday. Saturday morning around 4:a.m. (I would like to say promptly but I don't do anything prompt anymore) I somehow managed to get out of bed, get dress, have coffee, load gear, and get on the road in time for our rendezvous at the Casey's General Store in Ogden at 6:30.**

**I actually arrived at Casey's about twenty minutes early with enough time to refresh my coffee and make a breakfast (a fast food heart attack) of some kind of biscuit, sausage, egg, and processed cheese stuff, chased of course by an apple fritter. It was a rather chilly morning and I knew I'd be able to walk off whatever over loaded calorie and sugar rush I was shoving in my pie hole. Mike arrived right on schedule and after the usual exchange of first time greetings we consolidated into my vehicle and headed for a spot where I had guided a successful hunt a couple of weeks earlier. Our timing was perfect and we were able to make our way down an old road and get set up before daylight with just minutes to spare.**

**We could have taken our time because the turkeys didn't get the memo that they were suppose to be there and after a couple of hours of being stood up, we gathered our gear and our pride and headed for a second place. On our way across the maneuver areas I took my time making several stops to show Mike some additional areas he might like to hunt on another occasion. He appreciated that information and the tour because like many new comers to Fort Riley he wasn't familiar with exactly what was available and where things were located.**

**As we were driving up to our second spot we spotted a deer hunter coming out of the area (the archery/muzzle loading season is in) and after talking with him he informed us he had been there for the better part of the morning and had not seen neither deer or turkey. I thank him for saving us both a long walk and then remembered that just a couple of weeks earlier I had seen a large flock of turkeys not far to the north of where we were; so we headed for that area. As we drove past the field (where I had seen the birds) we spotted another deer hunters' truck parked on the side of the road. My policy has always been don't spoil another person's hunt so we drove on down to a turn around and some distance from the other hunter when Mike actually spotted the birds moving into a tree line. It was a good size flock of at least a dozen birds but they had a jump on us and there was no way we would be able to bust the flock; so instead we observed the direction they were moving and decided to try and get ahead of them in hopes that they would pass close enough for us to get a shot. We drove about a quarter mile down the road, got out, went into the**

tree line and got set up putting a decoy on a little rise so it could be seen from either direction and waited.

After a short time I made a yelp, did a fly down with a wing and begin scratching in the leaves (all turkey sounds) and we actually got a distant response but what we didn't realize was that once those birds got into the trees they began to run and that about half the flock had run off and left the other half and now they were separated and Mike and I were sitting right between the two halves and they wanted to get back together.

I continued to make turkey sounds with an occasional yelp when suddenly the response just about blew our ears off. Less than five yards behind me and to my left were at four big turkeys; Mike and I froze. I didn't dare move and I tried not to breathe. I was hoping that that they would move in front of me and toward the decoy where we could get our guns up for a shot when one bird spotted me and threw its head up to sound the alarm but it was too late I jumped to my feet followed by Mike just off to my right, the birds were stunned and paused for Milo-second before starting to run and just like that Mike had an eleven pounder and I had a ten pounder and finally I don't have to eat that nasty tasting store bought turkey this Thanksgiving. We were tagged out! What a rush! Make a great day!



Myself and 1LT Mike Heimall with our fall turkeys October 28, 2017.