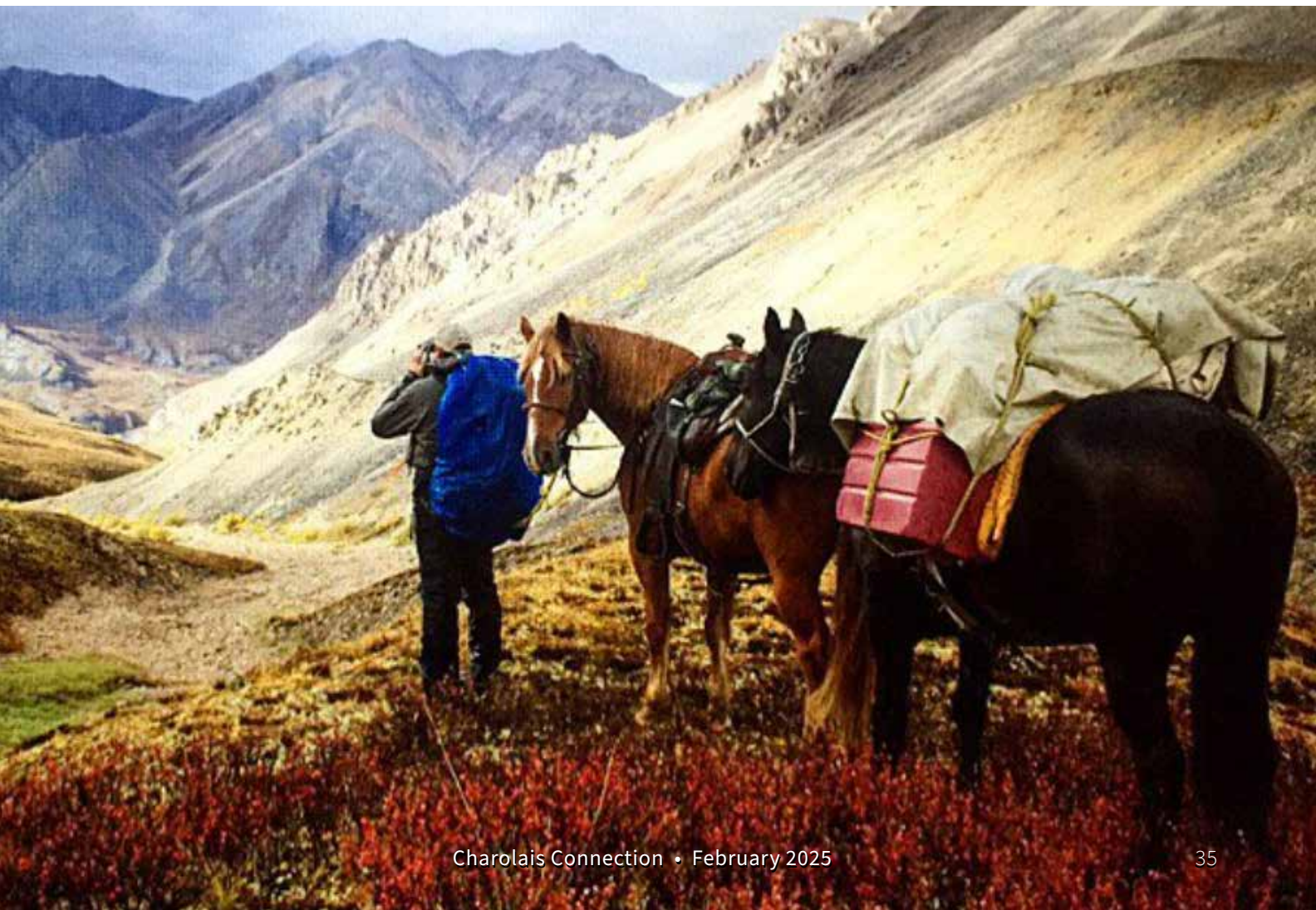


Hunting, Fishing and Cattle

Many of you have seen Nate Marin working ring at various sales in the past, but what you may not know, is how he spent the off season for 15 years and what he is doing now. We hope you find it as interesting as we did.

Nate Marin was raised on a mixed farm near Radville, Saskatchewan, with his parents, Garnet and Giselle Marin and sisters Leanne, Erica and Alana. His dad did some grain farming and always had cows around. In the mid-nineties, that shifted to mostly cows, primarily Simmental and Angus and used some Charolais bulls.





Nate went through the 4-H program while he was in school. He spent some time at Merit Cattle Co. with Trent and Janelle Leibrieck, Southview Ranch with Shane Kaufman and when he graduated he spent a couple of falls with Brent Stewart showing cattle.

“In the summer of 2001, my friend Justin Morrison was helping Tom Warnyca, of WTK Polled Herefords, prepare for their dispersal and when I got home from guiding, I went to help him. A lot of the cattle were purchased by DeShazer Cattle Company. Justin and I went to Texas where we spent the winter showing cattle at many of the major shows including Fort Worth and Houston.”

“When I returned, I went to live with my Uncle Brian (Bobcat) and worked for LLB. That was my first winter clipping bulls with Chub and Jose. Working with Chub was a very steep learning curve. At the time I couldn’t clip with my left hand, Chub would make me do everything left-handed including eat dinner. If I started eating with my right hand, he would take my food away from me. It’s funny looking back on it, but at the time, I could have killed him. After that, I started clipping bulls on my own with Justin Morrison and Cody Doud (Mongo). When Justin went to manage Soo Line Cattle

Co. I continued to clip sale cattle. I have probably clipped over 100,000 head when you include dispersals.” He has a few aches in his shoulders to prove it.

Nate did some custom showing for a few guys, starting with Brian McKenzie and ending with Bar E-L, but there were many others in between. “They would send cattle to my place in September to get ready for the fall shows, Luke Lewis, Rose Currie and I would then take them to Edmonton and Regina.”

“We got lucky and showed in quite a few Supremes in both places, we made it to the finals, but never managed to win the Agribition Supreme, although we did win the Farmfair Supreme once.”

He started working ring at sales in 2007 with his first sale in Melita, Manitoba, with Brent Carey and Dennis Erickson. Dennis and Brent were great mentors and helped him a lot. He has worked ring at hundreds of sales and across most breeds.

Growing up in Radville, he hunted gophers, birds, deer and coyotes. What you may not know about Nate is that he was a hunting guide in the North West Territories for many years.

“In the spring of 1999, my uncle Bobcat, got me a the phone number of an outfitter, Bill Mckenzie, of Gana



River Outfitters, in the North West Territories. When I called, Bill said they needed help and if I thought I could last three months in the bush, to come. He didn't know me, and I didn't know him, but it worked out. When Bill retired and my friend Harold Grinde took over, I continued to work for them. I was 18 when I started and I worked there for 15 seasons or so. The last few years, I was only going up for a couple of hunts."

"I started as a wrangler, basically the guy who cuts firewood and looks after the horses. In the morning, you would catch and saddle the horses before the guides

and hunters were awake. They were turned loose, with hobbles and bells around their necks at night. Every morning was different as they would hide in the bush, or take off down the trail for miles making them hard to find. I would go up to Northern BC where the horses were wintered around the 25th of June to shoe them, drive them up the Alaska highway and trail them 150 miles through the mountains to base camp. The season would start the 15th of July and hunters would fly in by float plane to base camp on the 14th."

"When I went there, I had never seen a sheep, or a



caribou, or even a mountain," he laughs. "That first year one of the guides got sick and they were short a guide, so I ended up guiding a caribou hunt."

"That first hunt I guided, we came across a group of caribou bulls. We picked the biggest bull out of the group and I asked the hunter what he thought. He thought he looked pretty good and asked what I thought. I said it was the biggest one I had ever seen (it was the first one had ever seen) so he shot it. We got lucky and it ended up being an extremely big bull."

"After a few years, I would stay home longer to help with haying and fly in with the hunters at the beginning of July."

"The early hunts, we would be hunting Dall sheep, but many hunters often had a tag for caribou as well. Sheep was their primary animal, so after they they got their sheep, we would go looking for caribou. The first of September we would start hunting moose and do one or two moose hunts. We would trail the horses out about the 25th of September, many of the years the water was freezing and there was snow on the ground. The hunters came from all over the world, but they were mostly Americans."

"I only guided one grizzly bear hunt. Residents of the NWT are the only ones allowed to shoot one bear a lifetime. We had a resident come to hunt one year and my friend Cody Prichard and I guided him to get a moose, caribou and bear. The bear hunt got really exciting as the hunter wounded it and we went into the thick willows after it. I thought the bear would be dead in the bush but he wasn't. We were following the blood trail when the bear heard us and he circled around to the side of us and came charging out of the bush towards Cody, Cody was able to raise his gun to his hip and shoot and hit the bear which was only 10 feet away. The bear turned and headed back into the willows. Being young and



Tahr in New Zealand



Wallaby in New Zealand

maybe dumb, we decided to keep following the bear, which was again still alive the next time we found him. This time, it was in a small open meadow, he came at us again, in the end there was three empty guns and one dead grizzly bear."

Nate does have some bear hides in his lodge. "At one time, you could get a non-resident grizzly bear tag in the Yukon, so when we got done guiding one fall, a group of us went up the Wheaton River hunting for ourselves and I was lucky enough to get a grizzly."

"Typically, horseback hunts would be 12 twelve days and backpack hunts 10 days. When hunting with the horses we would ride trail horses packed with all our gear a day or two from the main camp and set up wall tents and hunt the valleys close to that location. If we didn't find what the hunter was looking for, we would pack up the horses and move to a new location and set up camp again and hunt from there. When the hunter did tag out, we would head back to the main camp and the hunters would hang out and fish on the a lake. We would repack pack boxes, reshoe horses, do laundry and get ready for the next hunt. We also prepared the hides for the taxidermist. They were salted fleshed, and the ears, nose and eyes were turned, and hide was dried."

"The guide was responsible for getting the trophy out. We would skin, butcher and debone the animal on the mountain where it was shot. We had to carry it out in our backpacks, so we tried to trim as much fat and bone off them as possible to cut down on weight.

The first sheep hunt I was ever on, I was helping another guide, Dale, and the hunter killed a nice ram. Dale loaded all the meat in my pack, and he took the head and hide. I couldn't believe how heavy a sheep was, I made the comment to Dale a couple times, but he just laughed. When we got back to camp that night there were 20 lb of rocks packed in



The north end of the Quesnel Lake



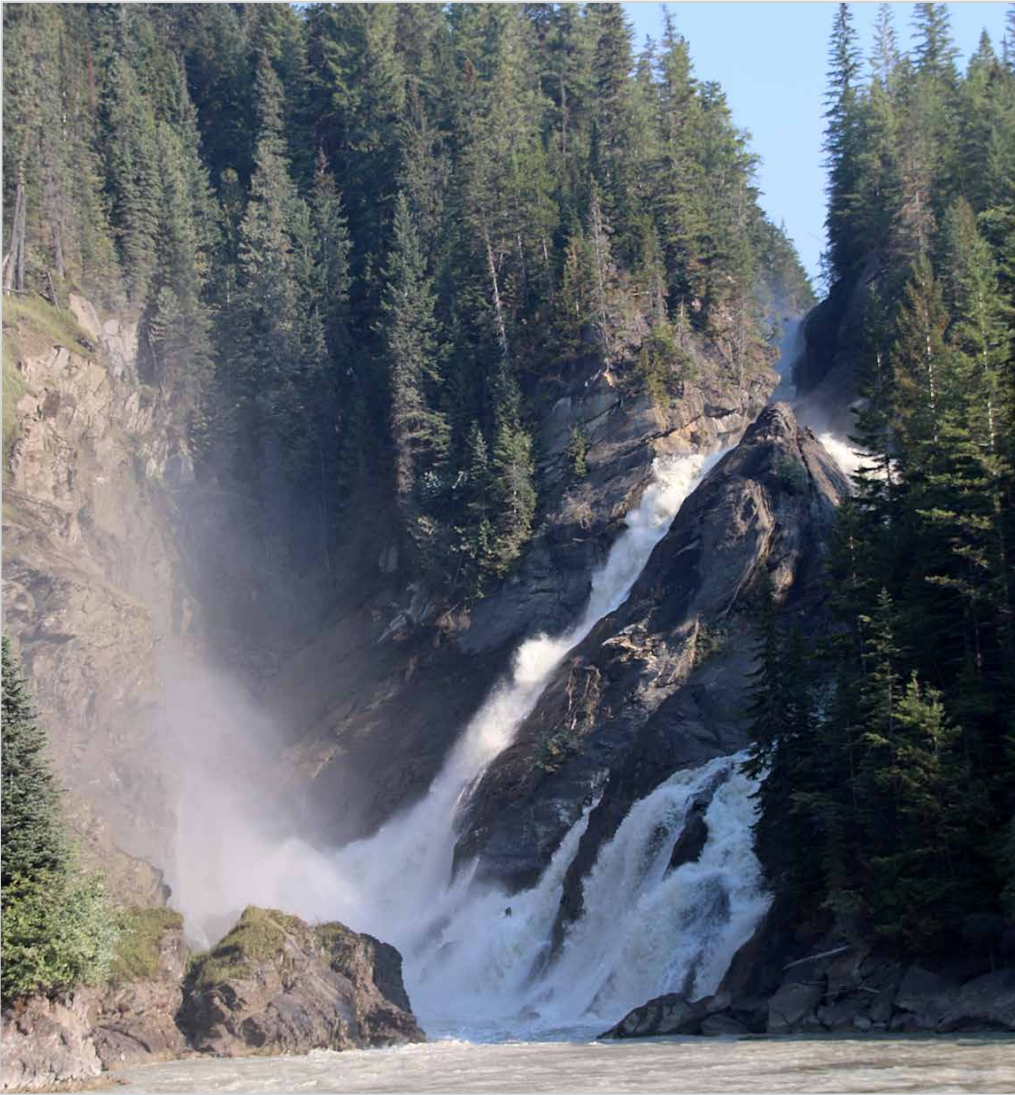
A view of the lodge

with the meat, Dale was rolling around on the ground laughing. I've never let anyone pack my bag since then. I learned a lot from Dale that first year.

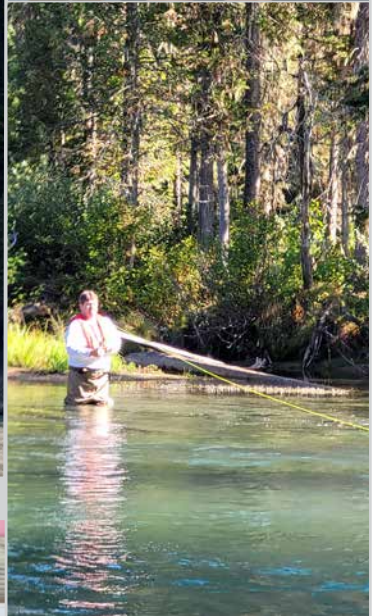
Later in the season it would start to freeze at night, I didn't have the best sleeping bag so I would pile all my clothes on top and zip it to the top. One night, my feet were so cold I couldn't sleep and thought it was my poor-quality sleeping bag. Even though I had my sleeping bag zipped to the top, no matter what I did, I couldn't get my feet warm. When I got out of bed in

the morning to get the horses, I noticed that Dale had unzipped the bottom half of my sleeping bag. Again, he was laughing at me."

"I spent most of my time with the horse crew but did a couple of years where I we just backpacked. When you have horses, you eat real food, sleep in big tents and have extra clothes. When you are backpacking, you just eat have freeze-dried food, chocolate bars, sleep in pup tents and have 2 extra pair of socks. They would basically fly you into the mountains, land on a gravel



Niagara Creek feeds these falls into the Quesnel Lake



Nate cooking our catch



Lainey, Nate, Reanne Sanford & Jax - Lainey, Nate, Reanne & Jax

bar and kick you out to wander around with whatever you could carry on your back. Backpacking was good because when you got up the mountains and were able to find water, you could stay up high and keep hunting. With the horses, you had to come back down the hill every night to look after your horses. When you had finished a backpack hunt, you could find a level spot or a gravel bar close to where you were for them to land the super cub to pick you up.

Later in my seasons, we had satellite phones so we could call camp to tell them where we wanted to get picked up by plane. When I started, there were no sat phones, so we would lay a blue tarp on the air strip or gravel bar with rocks on the corners so the wind wouldn't blow it away. Every few days, they would fly over and if there was a blue tarp, they knew we were ready to leave. Sometimes, we had to sit near a landing strip for a couple of days waiting for them to come."

Bill and Harold had a bonus for the guides, after 3 years you got to shoot a caribou and after 5 years you got to shoot a sheep. "When it was my year to shoot a caribou, my tag was back at base camp. We were finishing a moose hunt and they were coming to fly the hunters, moose meat and horns back to camp. They also planned to drop off my tag so I could hunt for a couple days before we had to trail the horses out. That day was 9/11 and all planes in north America were grounded, so by the time the plane could fly and I was able to get my tag, I only had a day to hunt before we had to trail horses out for the season. Gary one of the other guides came with me. About midafternoon, we found a herd of caribou bulls bedded down. We snuck up to them just as they were getting up and moving around, there was one really big bull in the herd. The plan was for Gary to keep an eye on him while they were milling around starting to leave, while I got set up to shoot. When I was ready, they were all single file walking away from us. Gary said he's the second one. So, I shoot the second bull and down he comes. I'm kind of celebrating but Gary



is still looking through his binoculars. He looked over and said oh shit he's the second one now. We both had a good laugh; I shot the wrong one."

"One of the more memorable hunts I had was with "Charles Eddy, he was a judge from Arkansas I got to guide a couple times. Charles was up on a sheep hunt the year he turned 83, we hunted for a few days with no luck. Finally, we found a decent ram. It was on the opposite side of the valley almost at the top of the mountain, and it was starting to get dark. Charles asked what do you think he is? I thought he was nine years old and 33 or 34 inches long, which is not a monster but a respectable size. I asked him what he thought of him. Charles replied, "well I got a brother that has size 13AA shoes, that's a long narrow foot. My brother has a poor friend that can't afford much. My brother has these shoes he hates, and he just isn't wearing. He asks his friend what size are your feet? I have some shoes I'd like to give you. The friend says the same size as yours. It wouldn't have mattered what size his feet were, he was going to wear those shoes. He said, if you can get me to that sheep, he will fit." Charles was able to climb the mountain at 83 years and harvest a mature Dall ram, which is quite a feat."



Lainey practising showing the dog



Nate judging the Agribition Supreme Show

Nate went hunting in New Zealand once with a guide friend Braden. Braden was starting a hunting outfit in his New Zealand homeland, so they drove around looking at different areas to hunt. They explored the South Island for a month, in New Zealand there is no season or limits, so they were able to hunt ducks/geese, rabbits, chamois, tahr, stag, and wallabies.

“The last hunt I did in the NWT was for Arctic Red River Outfitters in 2019.” In the fall of 2020, Nate bought his current fishing lodge on the Quesnel Lake. In 2021, he started guiding fishing trips on the lake and surrounding rivers and lakes. His operation is called Blue Chute Cottage and Guiding, named after the blue clipping chute that he used to haul around to clip sale cattle. Nate spends most of his summers at the lake guiding anglers and fly fisherman.

Quesnel Lake is a glacial lake or fjord in British Columbia and is the major tributary of the Fraser River. With a maximum depth of 2000 ft, it is claimed to be the deepest fjord lake in the world, the deepest lake in BC, and the third-deepest lake in North America, after Great Slave Lake and Crater Lake. It is T-shaped and is 62 miles on the west-east arm and 30 miles long on the north arm. Nate’s lodge is situated right in the junction of the three arms. Quesnel Lake has lake trout, bull trout and some of the largest wild rainbow trout in the world. There is a big salmon run that travels through the lake and into the rivers that feed the lake, which makes for some of the best fall fly fishing.

Nate lives in Quesnel with Reanne Sanford, her son Jax and their daughter Lainey. Reanne has KRS Simmentals and her family have Angus and Commercial cows, they sell around 50 bulls each year privately. He spends October through April working ring and managing sales with Bohrsen Marketing. Since moving to Quesnel, Nate’s time has also been spent doing some judging, fitting clinics and demonstration days. The area feels lucky to have him as a resource and have utilized his skills.

Now Lainey is getting interested in cows. “She loves to spend time with her grandmother during calving. We were recently at the World Simmental event and Luke Lewis and Jordan Bubba, of Westbrook Ventures, had a string of cattle there on display and Lainey got to show one. She absolutely loved it and thought it was the best day ever.”

“Last year, she got to show a heifer at the IPE in Armstrong. She thought that was really great. When we got home, she spent days showing dogs with a show stick on the front lawn.”

“The hunting stories have changed to fishing stories, but the outdoors is definitely wherever Nate feels most at home. His work with the cattle industry is strong and his interest is keen. In whichever industry you meet him, you are sure to feel welcomed by his smile, knowledge and honest character.