

# Kurt Hovanec

## 2023 BOWHUNTER OF THE YEAR

COLORADO BOWHUNTERS ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE BY JOHN GARDNER



### WHO IS KURT HOVANEC?

I was 9 years old when my father returned from Vietnam, he retired from the Army at Ft Lewis and we moved to LaPlata, Maryland – a small town of about 1,400 then. Everyone hunted deer there and after watching Fred Bear on the “American Sportsman” TV show, I got a Ben Pearson recurve and started to bow hunt small game and then whitetail. I had many misses on deer but was successful on squirrels, rabbits and quail. Bowhunting gave me an extra season plus I was able to walk through town with my bow in hand from our house to where I hunted. I continued to bow hunt some while at college in the mountains of North Carolina until I went on active duty in the Army in 1973.

### KURT’S NEXT TWENTY YEARS

“Army assignments stateside and abroad gave me very few bowhunting opportunities - the mission always came first. After basic and parachute training at Ft Bragg and Ft Benning, assignments at Ft Carson, Germany, Ft Riley, and the Korean DMZ gave me little or no opportunities to bow hunt - but I did buy my first compound bow, a Fred Bear “Whitetail Hunter” in Germany at the Rod & Gun Club for about \$99 - in 1977, I think. Throw in deployments and short trips to military schools and advisor/training trips to Israel and Thailand and you get the picture.

Then I got lucky – I got assigned to the Defense Mapping Agency at Ft Belvoir, VA to teach, and a group of us started a club and a hunting program - the post had too many whitetail deer. We built a range, started the Belvoir Bowhunters, part of the Virginia Bowhunters Association. Between Maryland and Virginia, I started harvesting Whitetails. There I served as Belvoir Bowhunters Club Vice President, Activities Director and National Bowhunter Education Foundation instructor for several years, working about every 3D shoot and Banquet. We had 500 members then – it was a lot of work, but I enjoyed it. Just to get out of work I volunteered to take an assignment with the 2nd Infantry Division as the 3rd Brigade Engineer working patrols, minefields, and other great Army stuff. The DMZ was full of vegetation, rice paddies, mines and deer – at least one deer that I can attest to was killed by one of our antipersonnel mines! After Korea I finished my Army career at the Pentagon where I continued to hunt and harvest Whitetails in Virginia, and guess what, I was back on the Board of the Belvoir Bowhunters as VP.”



COLORADO - ELK PACK OUT



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### THEN COLORADO CALLED

“In 1998 I made my first road trip from Virginia to Colorado for Elk archery and harvested a Cow Elk. Then again in 2000: I hunted with my three sons where my