

Convention / SCI Concludes its 2023 Annual Convention in Music City

CONVENTION Feb 28, 2023

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Last week, Safari Club International hosted its 2023 annual convention, celebrating 51 years of protecting the freedom to hunt and promoting wildlife conservation worldwide. Whether it was the number of attendees who passed through the doors, the money raised to defend the freedom to hunt and promote conservation worldwide, the 853 exhibitors on the show floor, or the 140 countries represented, this landmark event, held at Music City Center in Nashville, Tennessee, was record-breaking in every metric. We extend a huge thank you to our exhibitors, entertainment, award winners, and all attendees for joining our celebration of hunting and for making it the best Convention yet!

The show floor opened on Wednesday, with Tennessee Governor Bill Lee cutting the opening ceremony ribbon. Our world-class exhibitors set up booths in the convention hall to provide attendees with exceptional opportunities to book hunting trips in locales near and far. Some of the outdoor industry's most recognizable companies showcased cutting-edge products, including firearms, accessories, optics, ammunition, archery, gear, and other tactical and hunting goods. Other notable vendors sold fine luxury goods like fur, furnishings, clothing, and jewelry.

Attendees who sought educational and informational sessions could attend presentations about hunting, fishing, shooting, and a myriad of additional outdoor activities. Seminars on everything from Wildlife and Property Management through Food Plots to The Hunter Chef's Wild Game Cooking Demo were held each day of the Convention, and rooms were packed to hear community legends like Jim Shockey and Ramsey Russell speak. There really was something for everyone, at every turn!

Each evening, SCI held dinners and live auctions, which broke all existing fundraising records for SCI's and SCI Foundation's advocacy and conservation efforts, respectively. Convention attendees were able to listen to speakers such as Michelle Curran and Johnny Morris. Following these functions, entertainers, including the Frontmen & Gretchen Wilson, Big & Rich, Lee Brice, and Lynyrd Skynyrd performed for an enthused audience. Also, Fox News' Katie Pavlich promoted women going hunting and stressed the importance of introducing hunting to new, younger generations. Another exciting event in the evening included Barstool Outdoors' Host Sydnie Wells collaboration with SCI for a late-night celebration of young hunters. We were also joined by some of the biggest names in country music, hall of fame athletes and celebrity stars, ensuring that this convention once again lived up to the hype of what Forbes Magazine has called the "Super Bowl for the hunting world."

What's more, SCI executives presented prestigious awards to distinguished international guests and legislators in Washington, D.C., who are at the forefront of fighting for hunters' rights abroad and here in the U.S. Especially notable honorees included Eduardo Bolsonaro, member of Brazil's Chamber of Deputies, who was given this year's International Legislator of the Year award, U.S Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS), who received the prestigious Federal Legislator of the Year award and Governor Mike Dunleavy (AK) who received the Governor's Award. We were also joined by honorable dignitaries from Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe and extend a special thank you to H.M. Rodney Sikumba, the Honorable Minister of Zambia's Ministry of Tourism and H.E. Elsie Sia Kanza, the Tanzanian Ambassador to the U.S. for her attendance.

"I couldn't be more excited about the setting of the SCI Convention, and to be in Nashville with my son JP," said **Johnny Morris, noted conservationist and founder of Bass Pro Shops, and winner of the prestigious Beretta and SCI Foundation Conservation Leadership Award in 2016.** "It's a vibrant community, a perfect place to bring together sportsmen and women of all ages, and celebrate our shared passions. We look forward to a bright future together."

"On behalf of everyone at SCI, I would like to say thank you to all who attended and supported the SCI Convention and Ultimate Sportsmen's Market here in Nashville, Tennessee," said **SCI CEO W. Laird Hamberlin.** "Your attendance and steadfast support of this organization allows us to continue advocating for hunting freedoms in the U.S., and around the world. We look forward to seeing you all again next year for another fantastic SCI Convention."

To those who were unable to attend this year's celebration in Nashville, SCI is excited to announce the 2024 Convention will be held in Nashville, TN at the Music City Center from Wednesday, January 31st until Saturday, February 3rd, 2024. See you there!

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