



Hunter Information & Training Program News

Fall 2020

Coordinator's Corner-Ginamaria Smith

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Gustavus hunter ed class

We're approaching the home stretch of not only 2020 but our certification course offerings for the year as well. While 2020 has been quite a doozy, it has just continued to reinforce how amazing our HIT Program volunteers are. So many of you stepped up in a huge way by instructing certification classes this year, and those not comfortable in social situations, communicated and reached out to HIT Program staff to let us know you're still there which is also greatly appreciated.

In a typical year we would be prepping and getting excited to meet with everyone at our annual instructor meetings. Unfortunately this year our meetings will be held via teleconference rather than in-person, however I strongly urge you to join us. We'll be sharing HIT Program updates, recognizing individuals who went above and beyond, acknowledging instructor longevity pin recipients, and planning for 2021. There will even be "Door Prize" drawings! The meetings are scheduled for the following nights:

- **Rural-Tuesday, November 17th at 7:00pm**
- **Southeast-Wednesday, November 18th at 7:00pm**
- **Interior-Thursday, November 19th at 7:00pm**
- **Kenai-Tuesday, December 1st at 7:00pm**
- **Mat-Su-Tuesday, December 8th at 7:00pm**
- **Anchorage-Tuesday, December 15th at 7:00pm**



This little guy really wanted to be a part of the Juneau hunter ed class

Your regional coordinator has sent out an email invite or will be sending an email invite out shortly. If you don't hear from them and want to attend, check your spam email inbox or give them a call to find out the teleconference details.

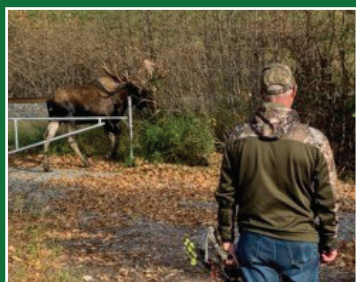
While reading the most recent IHEA-USA e-newsletter, I read a thought that really resonated and I thought it would with most of you as well:

"As we continue to plan for next year, ask yourselves, "what will your impact be next year to continue and improve upon the education of participants entering hunting and the shooting sports? What role will you play?"

As we approach the holidays and 2021, the HIT Program Staff wishes you and your family a wonderful, healthy holiday season and a happy new year!~Gina

DID YOU KNOW?

Live animals make a great addition to all certification classes. This bull moose visited an Anchorage bowhunter ed class at the start of their proficiency shoot.



Farewell from Bob Hunter, Northern Region Coordinator



**Bob and his daughter's
Brenna and Erin**

I began volunteering with ADF&G in the Fall of 1983 working on caribou and on Public Information services out of Fairbanks.

I finally hired on as a Wildlife Tech III with the Game Division on the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill in Cordova in May of 1989 after the Alaska recession of the mid-80's. I worked as the logistics coordinator and primary Wildlife Tech for all the Wildlife Research Projects in PWS Sound and Gulf Coast including Sea Duck, River Otter, Sitka Black-Tailed Deer, glaucous winged gulls, and occasional support for marine mammals and peregrine falcon monitoring. The rest of my duties were Tech support for management research projects and general management support for Sitka black-tailed deer, mountain goats, moose, beaver, dusky Canada geese, both black and brown bear, nuisance wildlife response, sea duck die off, etc.

With Oil Spill funding drying up, I took the Wildlife Tech V position back in Fairbanks in January 1991 working on caribou, moose, grizzly, wolves, furbearers, etc research and management projects and surveys. I became the primary public information person for the Wildlife Division (changed names about then) in the Regional Office and developed the Fairbanks Frontline Information Center model utilizing and supervising tech and intern staff. I began supervising the part-time Hunter Ed position starting in 1992, directly taking over those duties about '95, and saw it morph back and forth to a full-time Regional Hunter Ed- Trapper Ed Program coordinator by about 1996.

About 2000 I transferred to the Statewide HIT Program and continued service for Regions 3 and the northern portion of Region 5. Highlights of my tenure have been the work on the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Research Projects; the diverse wildlife work in Regions 3 & 5; development of the Frontline Info Services model and Info Center here in Region 3; co-development of the Alaska Conservation Camp that we ran for 8 years for over 500 campers; and 28 years of contributions to the Hunter Education Programs of Alaska.

My best memories with the HIT Program include the get-togethers with staff, volunteer instructors, and guest presenters at the Alaskan Instructor Conferences that we used to hold; get-togethers with instructors and staff for our Spring Barbeque and Fall Potluck Dinner meetings; working with the kids at the Alaska Conservation Camps; conducting NASP trainings and NASP introductory sessions with students around the Interior Schools; travel to and working with many of our rural communities; and the travel to national professional conferences.

My retirement plans at present are to spend as much time with my family as possible before the kids disperse; HUNTING; training our new Labrador pup; dusting off and mastering my GH Bagpipes; house and yard plans; having the time to go into debt actually running my trapline; HUNTING; maybe a little fishing; volunteering with the department; HUNTING; and travel for starts. We'll see what Chapter 2 looks like if a fun job presents itself, but I'm in no rush.

Honestly, I couldn't have asked for a better and more diverse career with a better organization, the best colleagues, and fantastic work locations than what I have experienced over the past 31 years.



**Bob instructing a
beaver trapping clinic**

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Welcome to Our New Volunteer Instructors

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all new volunteer instructors who have joined us since the publication of our last newsletter. Congratulations and welcome aboard!

Hunter Education:

Anchorage: Anthony Henry, Michael Jensen, Jason Knier

Auke Bay: Joseph Reeves, Fredrik Thorsteinson

Douglas: Jeff Defreest

Juneau: Amy Moselle, Tom Weske

Ketchikan: Zachery West

Palmer: Laura Reid, Daniel Gunderson

Petersburg: Josh Spann

Shishmaref: Barret Eningowuk

Thorne Bay: Sean McRae

Valdez: Isaac Deaton, Hairl Homes

Wasilla: Jon Buchanan, John Miller

Bowhunter Education:

Fairbanks: Mike Bradley, Cordell Gray, Rachel Ann Mitchell

Homer: Douglas Baily

North Pole: Isaac Lampe, Katherine Mattingly

Palmer: Daniel Gunderson, Roy Hartz

Muzzleloader Education:

Anchorage: John Olson Jr.

Douglas: Daniel Gutierrez

Kasilof: Wayne McManus, Shilo McManus

Palmer: Steven Unfreid

Crossbow Education:

Anchorage: John Olson Jr.

Douglas: Daniel Gutierrez

Homer: Joseph Brewer

Kasilof: Wayne McManus, Shilo McManus

Palmer: Steven Unfreid

Soldotna: Laura Huling

Wasilla: Clifford Kaltreider, William Kubik III

Welcome to New Steering Group Member

The HIT Program's Steering Group has proven to be a great advisory resource in advancing HIT Program goals and objectives. Please join us in welcoming the newest member who will serve a two-year term. Andy Finke of Kodiak has volunteered to remain the Rural representative for another term as well.

Cordell Gray (Interior)

Fairbanks

cords180@yahoo.com



Cordell is a new hunter ed instructor who started in February 2020, and has taught multiple courses over the last 9 months. He has an extensive background as a teacher, instructor, and facilitator,

and has built and managed training programs for small and large groups. He is a retired Veteran and spent most of his career flying and instructing in fighters and transport aircraft for the USAF. He is also an Alaska certified High/Middle school teacher, an NRA Pistol Instructor, and a civilian pilot. Alaska has been his permanent home since 2000 and all three of his children went through the HIT Program. He always emphasizes to the certification class attendees to not only strive to be a safe hunter, but to coach others to be safe as well.

I'd also like to thank Lyle Shelnut of Fairbanks who played an instrumental role on the HIT Program Steering Group for the past two years. He gave great feedback on a variety of certification course topics and represented the instructors in his region well. The years of teaching experience, expertise, and enthusiasm he brought to the Steering Group greatly assisted the HIT Program in ensuring well thought out course offerings.

HIT Steering Group

Cordell Gray (Interior) cords180@yahoo.com

Andy Finke (Rural Alaska) bdaf@ptialaska.net

Larry Boyle (Southcentral) larryboyle@alaska.net

Rich Graham (Southcentral) richgraham.ek@gmail.com

James Plosay (Southeast) jrplosay@gci.net

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Instructor Notes

2020 Instructor of the Year Awards-Nominations Needed

Every year the HIT Program recognizes volunteer instructors who have made significant contributions to the HIT Program. We want to recognize those instructors who have gone above and beyond to advance the cause of safe and ethical hunting.

The nomination form has been emailed to each instructor and an electronic copy is available online at www.huntereducation.alaska.gov (located on the Volunteer Instructors page). Please take the time to nominate one of your co-instructors who has given extraordinary service to the HIT Program.

Awards are given out for the following categories:

- **Hunter Education**
- **Bowhunter Education**
- **Muzzleloader Education**
- **Crossbow Education**
- **Rural Instructor**
- **Lifetime Achievement**
- **Outstanding Educator of the Year**
- **Apprentice Instructor**

Feel free to contact HIT Program staff for teaching statistics and contact information. Try to gather information about your nominee from their co-instructors, significant others, and friends. **Nominations must be postmarked by January 15, 2021** which gives you plenty of time to help ensure a fellow instructor is recognized for their dedication and willingness to share their passion with others.

2021 Schedule

The 2021 certification class schedule and volunteer instructor training dates are all posted on our website

www.huntereducation.alaska.gov

Please help direct friends and family members to the website for information about our classes and additional education opportunities, and keep an eye out for folks who would be good instructors.

REMINDER

The Alaska Draw Permit application period is currently open. The six-week application period extends from November 1st to December 15th at 5:00pm this year. For more information on the draw hunts, visit www.adfg.alaska.gov or stop by your local ADF&G office for printed copies of the Drawing Permit Hunt Supplement. Results are expected to be available online on Friday, February 19th.

HIT Staff

Contact Information

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Recent hunter ed graduate Caden Schwanke with his first draw permit caribou