



Alaska's Hunter Information & Training Program News

ADF&G
HIT PROGRAM
Spring 2013

Coordinator's Update - Jerry Soukup

The spring sunshine combined with longer days are upon us and now we begin the anticipation of spring bear hunts and another great Alaskan summer. This is the time of year for Sportsman's Shows and the HIT Program will be well represented at each of these popular events. I hope the drawing permit system was good to many of you. I'm hearing from some lucky hunters who are making early plans for their fall hunts. Our statewide class schedule is posted online and already we are seeing class rosters filling up quickly. If you know of family and friends who need a certification course, please advise them to sign up early. If you have not yet signed up to teach a class in your area, I would ask you to take a hard look at your long-term calendar and make that commitment—we need you. A few hours given by each volunteer instructor will prevent a few of our top instructors from having to teach 8-10 classes in a year. I want to take this opportunity to thank our Steering Group for the time and effort they gave during our annual meeting, held February 1-2 in Anchorage. Please take a look on page two for a summary of the topics they discussed. I encourage you to contact a Steering Group member with any questions. We are also grateful to those of you who took the time to nominate one of your co-instructors. Many of the nomination packages were top-notch and made our decisions very difficult. Congratulations to the following volunteers for being nominated during 2012. Each of you went above and beyond in support of the HIT Program this past year and we are sincerely grateful for your efforts: **Steve Adams, Ed Bosco, Jeff Ellis, Andrew Finke, Steve Latz, Neil Moss, Bill Sobolesky, Fred Voss, and Jim Woolington.** The winner of our \$100 gift card went to Steve Lanford, as his name was randomly drawn from all nominators. I wanted to point out a great article that was in your Winter, IHEA Journal regarding the topic of "Suspension Trauma." With spring bear hunting approaching and many hunters using tree stands, even here in Alaska, this article is a must read. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, there are approximately 6,000 tree stand related injuries each year nationwide and 30% of all hunters will fall at least once in their lifetime. The articles cover in detail what to do and not to do if caught suspended. This article could save your life. There is a full agenda set for the annual IHEA Conference in San Antonio so I plan to have a full report in the next newsletter. Keep up the great work in the classroom and on the range.

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Fred Voss: (Anchorage)

Basic Hunter Ed "Instructor of the Year"



Over the years, Fred has been one of our most committed volunteers, teaching in all three HIT disciplines. In the last ten years, Fred has taught more than 60 classes donating well over 500 hours of his personal time. He was more than willing to travel to any area of the state to teach a class (from Kodiak up to Kotzebue) if there were not local instructors able to offer classes to the public. Fred takes every opportunity to promote HIT

classes as he travels the state. He is a volunteer Chaplain on Kodiak's US Coast Guard Station and at their Providence Island Medical Center. Fred has served as one of our top mentors for new hunter education instructor applicants. He will attend the IHEA annual conference this month in San Antonio, Texas a well-deserved trip for his tireless efforts.

Steve Adams: (Fairbanks)

"HIT Lifetime Achievement Award"

Few volunteers have made an impact to a state's hunter education program more than Steve Adams. His decades of volunteer service, not only here in Alaska, but previously in Wisconsin, have had a positive influence on thousands of young students and their attitudes towards firearms safety and hunting. Steve has received a number of



Bob Hunter, Steve Adams, and David James (Reg Supervisor)

HIT awards over the years for his efforts and has also attended past IHEA Conferences. He was a past HIT Steering Group member and commits time each year to the NRA's Youth Hunter Education Challenge. He continues to selflessly serve the shooting community and volunteer instructors through his work with the Alaska Volunteer Hunter Education Instructor's Association and the Alaska Interior Marksmanship Committee.



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2012 Volunteer Instructors of the Year—Congratulations!

Bowhunter Instructor of the Year—Jeff Ellis (Ft Wainwright) Jeff didn't accumulate large bowhunter class numbers for 2012, but he did something no other instructor has ever accomplished. With diligent planning, relentless efforts, overcoming many obstacles, he was able to develop and deliver certification courses to military troops stationed in a war zone in Afganistan. This amazing accomplishment brought a taste of Alaska and bowhunting to each one of those military members, who put their lives on the line each and every day.

Muzzleloader Instructor of the Year—Ed Bosco (Anchorage) Ed is one of our most dependable and versatile instructors keeping active in all three HIT course disciplines. His support over many years has been truly impressive, teaching nearly 50 classes and donating more than 400 volunteer hours in the past 10 years. He was involved with every muzzleloader class held in Anchorage this year and was still willing to step up to teach Hunter Ed or Bowhunter classes whenever needed as a last minute replacement.

Rural Instructor of the Year—Andy Finke (Kodiak) This was the first year we have awarded the Rural Instructor of the Year and Andy was an ideal recipient of this award. He is also certified to teach in all three disciplines and has been our "go-to" volunteer on Kodiak Island. Due to additional, special season hunts for youth and for bowhunters and muzzleloaders near the road system on Kodiak, a recent spike in certification courses was required. The local ADF&G office was overwhelmed with the need for more classes. Andy was instrumental in teaching and in coordinating the efforts of volunteers to meet the public's needs for classes.

ABA Supports NASP

Since 2005, the Alaskan Bowhunters Association (ABA) has been actively involved with the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP). NASP promotes student education, physical education and participation in the life-long sport of archery. The program's focus is to provide International Style Target Archery training in physical education classes for grades 4-12. School teachers undergo an 8-hour Basic Archery Instructor (BAI) training program. The core content covers archery history, safety, technique, equipment, mental concentration, and self-improvement.

Over the past 30 years, the ABA has established various accounts to fund activities to help preserve and perpetuate bowhunting and hunting by giving financial support to wildlife projects, wildlife enforcement, and to combat anti-hunting sentiment. The education fund extends beyond the bowhunter education program to include supporting NASP. Last year alone, the ABA donated around \$3K toward procuring NASP equipment for rural Alaskan schools. Various ABA members dedicate countless personal hours towards BAI programs, various youth and club activities, and community events promoting NASP. The Alaskan Bowhunters Association's purpose is: "To foster and perpetuate fair chase hunting with the bow and arrow."



Bernie Punzalan President, Alaskan Bowhunters Association

HIT Steering Group Meeting Summary—Feb1-2, 2013

We had a productive meeting with the Steering Group, yet I don't have the space here to go into great detail on all the agenda items that were covered. I would encourage you to contact your nearest HIT Steering Group member if you need the full scope of discussion on any of these topics. We received an update on how we work with non-resident Muzzleloader students to allow them to be fully certified before applying for a drawing hunt. There was also discussion on what level of marksmanship should be brought to a hunter education class by young students. To avoid any barriers to attending our course, it was agreed that we should continue to accept any new, young student, but still expect them to learn and demonstrate the basic level of proficiency we now require. We view the basic hunter ed course as only the beginning of their life-long journey of shooting and hunting. The idea to raise course fees to increase turnout rate of students was also discussed. Fee schedules are set in state regulations and any change would take an extended review process to be approved. In addition Federal Grant funding for Hunter Education allows us to charge for the packet materials; anything above that would be considered program income and becomes an accounting challenge. And the most significant reason we did not approve a fee increase, was to avoid any financial barriers for a family to take a class. There was great discussion and action taken on our Awards Program with the addition of the Rural Instructor of the Year category. We also had an update from our USFW Representative looking at nationwide hunting/shooting trends, discussed social media issues and also looked at ways to increase volunteer instructor participation rates around the state. Carl Edmiston also discussed initial plans for the new IHEA Volunteer Instructor Advisory Committee.

HIT Steering Group

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Explore Bowhunting

The HIT Program is launching a new program called Explore Bowhunting. Explore Bowhunting is a nation-wide educational program designed to help instructors, program leaders, and educators teach students ages 11-17 the basic skills of bowhunting. The Archery Trade Association (www.archerytrade.org) has created this program to spark an interest and passion for bowhunting in today's youth. Through these hands-on experiences, students gain confidence interacting with the natural environment, and strengthen their appreciation for wildlife and the outdoors.

The Explore Bowhunting program consists of a curriculum guide, a demonstration equipment kit, and an educational trunk. The curriculum contains 22 activities that teach participants about bowhunting equipment, camouflage, scent, game calls, blinds, selecting your shot, range finding, and anatomy. The equipment kit and educational trunk are full of gear to help educators lead activities throughout the program. The curriculum guide is customizable for each state agency, so we're updating pages to include information about Alaska hunter education and hunting.

We plan to implement Explore Bowhunting in Southcentral, with an initial training of instructors in late spring/summer. Once we have a handle on the training and running of this program then we will expand the program into Southeast and the Interior. Our first use of the curriculum will be at the Becoming an Outdoors Woman Winter Workshop and at a Becoming an Outdoors Family program in June. The Alaska 4-H, Girl Scouts, and Boy Scouts have already stated an interest in participating in the program. We are also working on developing a Continuing Education Credit course for teachers. We hope that this credit will entice more teachers to sign-up and incorporate Explore Bowhunting into their classroom. We plan to initially target schools that offer the NASP program and Outdoor Skills courses.

We are excited about offering the Explore Bowhunting program as it will provide another opportunity to attract new participants into the hunting and shooting sports. If you are interested in participating in an Explore Bowhunting training, or would like to learn more about the program, contact Ginamaria Smith (ginamaria.smith@alaska.gov or 267-2196).



SCTP Quickly Growing in Mat-Su

The Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) is an after-school activity with about 25 high school students from Colony High School, Houston High School, Palmer High School, and Wasilla High School participating in trap, skeet, and sporting clay shooting. Neil and Lorinda Moss are sport enthusiasts and **Mr. Moss (HIT Volunteer)** is coach for the Grouse Ridge Rangers. A Championship Shoot was held Saturday, December 15, at Grouse Ridge Shooting Club, in Wasilla.

Attending the high school championship on Saturday, December 15th, Dr. Deena Paramo, MSBSD Superintendent said, "This event was held just one day after the tragic shooting which occurred at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. I know that the personal and national sorrow from this tragedy resonates with our community and every community in the United States as the nation continues to heal." Observing students in action Dr. Paramo said, "This sports shooting competition was an opportunity for students to demonstrate their firearms safety and sporting skills. Using guns in a safe manner for sport or for hunting in Alaska is a normal activity for our families." Offering another opportunity for students to learn a physical skill, Dr. Paramo also said, "Students not only learn firearms safety, but also develop interpersonal skills in the areas of respect for others, self-confidence and self esteem building, self-reliant decision making, responsibility, teamwork, and sportsmanship. These attributes are goals for SCTP and are goals for which we want all students to strive and excel."

According to the Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation, sponsor of SCTP, the program goals include:

- Teach the safe and responsible handling and use of firearms
- Provide a supportive team-based environment, using clay sports target shooting as the catalyst for teaching life lessons and skills that emphasize positive character traits and citizenship values
- Introduce young shooters to a sport that can be enjoyed for a lifetime, one that offers a level playing field, and one that offers all family members an opportunity to play.



Neil Moss, Erick Cordero & Lynn Gattis

By Catherine Esary; MSBSD Public Information Officer



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Instructor's Corner

"Putting More Ethical Hunters in the Field"

Email: jerry.soukup@alaska.gov

On the web at:

www.huntereducation.alaska.gov



Welcome to our New Instructors!

Basic Hunter Ed

Anchorage: Alex Brown, Melba Cooke,
Bret Ledford, Thomas Pattie

Soldotna: John Bernard, David Lorrington,
Jason Okuly

Tok: Bob Gingue

Wasilla: Bob Doyle

Bowhunter:

Anchorage: Philip Asay, Julian Mason,
Thomas Pattie, David Sanderlin, Gina Smith

Eagle River: Joe Tate

Homer: Keith Kalke

Kenai: Justin Horton

Kodiak: Steve Steffensen

Kotzebue: Paul Atkins

Tok: Bob Gingue

Muzzleloader:

Anchorage: Erik Bollerud, Carl Edmiston

Dillingham: Jim Woolington

Homer: Keith Kalke

AVHEIA Board Members:

President: Steve Adams (Fairbanks)
Northern VP: Dennis Degnan (Fairbanks)
Soutcentral VP: Vikki Gross (Palmer)
Southeast VP: Bruce Bowler (Juneau)
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Basic Hunter Education in the Mat-Su, by Butch Ehmann Jr

Jehniifer and I just finished instructing our fourth Basic Hunter Education class this year at Sportsman's Warehouse in Wasilla. As we read through the comments on the instructor grade form that students fill out after class, we couldn't help but smile. The classes have been getting rave reviews from our students. Here are some of the comments we saw: "Very informative", "Friendly and knowledgeable instructors", "Great insight and PowerPoint", "Class was very enjoyable" and last but not least, "Field course was awesome, especially the part with the hunter orange!" Our goal when we became instructors was to make sure our classes were informative, but fun and interactive. So here are a few things that we do to make sure the students get the most out of the class.



First, we attribute a lot of the success of the classes to the convenience and ease of our new venue at Sportsman's Warehouse in Wasilla. Not only is it a convenient location and a great setting that sets the tempo for the class, it is also convenient for instructors. We have been fortunate to have the help of instructors like **Bob Marshall, Paul Houser, Ed Burgan, and Dave Crandall.**

The second thing we did, was to take all of the training information we received from Jerry and Gina and made a power point presentation out of it. It's all the same information; we have just adjusted the delivery a little bit. We have found that the class is more interactive and it gives them something visual to see while still paying attention to the instructors. It has also proven to be a great tool for staying on task. Before we start the class each instructor picks a chapter, so there's no confusion and the class seems to flow smoothly. We have also incorporated a short clip from the Today's Hunter Video on ballistics to play in the class. It's a short video but the students enjoy it and it's very informative.

The third thing we focused on, was our field course and so far we've gotten excellent reviews. Our advice is to put a lot of effort into setting up the field course and making it both realistic and creative. Make sure to set up the hunter orange in plain sight if possible. Ours is visible from the exit doors at 150 yds, so we use it as a distant estimation and ask if they would shoot or not shoot the animal near to it if the hunter orange was gone. What they all fail to see is the camo shirt stapled to the tree right next to the animal. Most people don't ever see the camo until they walk right up to it. It's fun and usually brings up tons of questions and comments as to why you wouldn't choose to wear hunter orange, even from the experienced hunters.

These are just some of the ways we have incorporated our own style in to the Basic Hunter Education Classes. It's important to use all the information that is available to you and if you can try to make sure you don't just "cookie cutter" the class. It's important to make it a fun learning experience for the students and for most of them, especially the kids, they will remember it forever as most of us remember taking our own hunter safety classes. You have one shot to transfer the information and make it something they will remember forever so be prepared, put your own twist on your classes and don't be afraid to teach a little outside the box!



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