EMERGENCY SHELTERS
to Survive the Challenges of Mother Nature

What’s In It For Me?
the VOLUNTEER Hunter Education Instructor

The Diverse Role
of the Volunteer
Instructor
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The International Hunter Education Association – United States of America (IHEA-USA) is an organization involving some 70,000 instructors across the United States of America. The IHEA-USA is affiliated with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The Hunter & Shooting Sports Education Journal is the official publication of the International Hunter Education Association-United States of America. It is published four times annually (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter) and distributed to more than 70,000 administrators and volunteer instructors in Canada, El Salvador, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa and the United States of America, that are responsible for education programs that total 750,000 hunters annually. The purpose of the publication is to increase the skill and effectiveness of hunter education in administrators and instructors so they can improve the enthusiasm, safety, ethics and proficiency of their students as they embark on a lifetime enjoyment of hunting and the shooting sports.

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I’m standing here on the hot pavement and the sun is incessantly beating down on me. The air temperature is 96 degrees and the humidity promptly floods one’s clothes. The noise is deafening and relentless. Why am I here?

I’m attending the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) Tennessee State Championships. This program is designed to instill in participants safe firearms handling, responsibility, leadership, teamwork, and academic excellence. It has also become a bridge for youth in becoming future outdoor enthusiasts. Over 2,200 youth shooters that have advanced from regional competitions will be competing in the week-long challenge. This competition is known to Tennessee youth as the “Super Bowl” of Tennessee youth shotgun shooting sports.

It’s quite impressive to witness these youth participate in regional, state and even national competitions. It is also impressive to realize that hunter education instructors have played a vital role in the facilitation and development of these shooters.

The success of this program can be traced back to a group of volunteer hunter education instructors that began Tennessee SCTP in 2001 with just sixteen young shooters. In Tennessee, each SCTP team is coached by a hunter education instructor.

This is just one example of the new and varied roles many volunteer hunter education instructors play. A typical volunteer instructor does not solely teach hunter education any longer. Most instructors assist with numerous other programs and competitions.

Many of our instructors have specialized skills that are put to use in the teaching of bowhunting, trapping education, marksmanship training and survival skills. These individuals have taken their expertise and have either developed programs or found existing programs in which to instruct. Along with SCTP, some of the programs that volunteer instructors assist with include NRA Hunter Education Challenge and shooting programs, National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), Scholastic Pistol Program (SPP), 4-H Shooting Sports, Boy Scouts Shooting Programs and the American Legion Shooting Sports Programs.

I am extremely proud to be counted among the ranks of these highly dedicated individuals. The volunteer hunter education instructor should be very proud of the past success of the hunter education program and should look forward to an even brighter future.
The VOLUNTEER Instructor

What’s In It for Me?

By Steve Hall, Executive Director IHEA-USA, exdir@ihea.com

Excerpts from the Recent IHEA-USA Annual Conference, Charleston, SC, June 3-5th

The VOLUNTEER instructor has been the dominant force in hunter education since its inception in the mid-1940s when NRA/State-led “Hunter Safety” volunteers comprised the bulk of Kentucky’s (1944) statewide youth camp program and other State hunter safety programs such as New York (1944), Michigan (1946), Idaho (1950) and California, Massachusetts and New Jersey (1954).

Well over six decades later, VOLUNTEERS still comprise the primary work force for the delivery of hunter education. Last count of instructors in 2013 shows 56,800, with the majority comprised of volunteers that teach hunter education in local communities throughout the United States. Add to that the number of volunteer hunter education and firearm safety instructors in Canada and Mexico and NRA-rated instructors such as Range Safety Officers, Rifle, Handgun and Shotgun-rated volunteers and coaches (many of whom also teach hunter education), and you have well over 100,000 volunteers in North America that train the public in firearm and hunting safety.

Why does one volunteer to teach “hunter safety education or firearm safety?” Asked another way, “What’s in it for me?”

The many “tangible benefits” for hunter and firearm safety instructors include pay (reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses), recognitions and awards, incentives, banquets, professional development training (e.g. enhanced leadership, team and communication skills), hunting/hunter education workshops and related types of training, information and resources.

The “intangible benefits” include notoriety, character building, representation of fish and wildlife, parks and/or natural resource agencies and promotion of true conservation in America. However, it is the many other intangibles that comprise the main benefits for instructors – motivating them to do what they do – “for life!” These intangibles involve the inner “thrill” one gets from passing on the hunting heritage and safe, responsible behaviors to future generations of hunters and shooters. They include the obligation to give back one’s knowledge, skills and passions – the sense of achievement and pride in teaching or performing one’s civic duty and to be an active, contributing member of society. Perhaps the greatest benefit is the respect given back to instructors when even one student comes back to them and says, “You helped save my life,” or “What you taught me goes way beyond hunting and firearm safety, you taught me how to be a better person!” (Actual quotes from former students).

According to research (Rao 1998) the reasons in the above chart are why people volunteer specifically for natural resource (state) agencies (e.g. teaching hunter education):

(No. Likert value in 2nd column is average value based on 5.0 “Important” to 1.0 “Unimportant” and range of instructor respondents n = 369 to 388.) Notice that it is the intangibles that compel and motivate people to teach hunter education. And these are why most continue to volunteer for such a long time. From notes I took once at a volunteer management workshop (source unknown), ‘active’ volunteers live an average of seven (7) years longer in their lifetimes. I have no doubt that giving back, freely, of one’s knowledge, skills and attitudes improves self-esteem, mental and physical capacities, sense of accomplishment and other positive attributes – character traits that significantly improve the human condition.

That ultimately must be “What’s in it for me?” I get to live long(er) and prosper! (Insert Star Trek Spock’s double “V-sign” here.)
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There may come a time when you have to spend a night out in the mountains that you hadn’t planned on. It may be because of weather, darkness, injury or more commonly, because you got lost! Regardless of the cause, you are now faced with nine or ten hours of discomfort at best and, at worst, the loss of your life because of your inability to fend off the onslaughts of the environment – cold, wind, and precipitation.

Protection from the environment begins with the choices you make at home before you depart on a trip - the selection of both the clothing you wear and have available and the equipment you carry. Think of your clothing as “shelter.” It must keep you dry and warm when you are inactive – during the long hours between sunset and sunrise! The equipment you carry must include the means to shelter yourself from foul weather and other environmental hazards such as insects, which could threaten your life. Fundamentally your clothing and equipment must enable you to maintain 98.6° F. through the night.

Survival experiences begin at the end of the day as the sun is setting leaving you little opportunity to find or build a shelter. It takes time, skill and natural resources to construct a windproof, waterproof shelter from natural materials. It takes a fully functional person! Any injury will make constructing a shelter difficult and time consuming – if it’s possible at all!

To be valuable, an effective emergency shelter must be quick to erect with a minimum expenditure of energy, provide protection from the elements and be rugged enough to withstand a night or two of use. Rather than advocate the building of emergency shelters, I encourage people to always carry waterproof, windproof sheltering material to crawl into or crawl under when protection is needed.

So what is available to meet this need?

**SPACE BLANKETS**

Ever since NASA’s Luna Lander, with its “space blanket”-like skin, set foot on the moon’s surface space blankets have been touted as the solution to the survival shelter problem here on earth. The manufacturers of space blankets would have you believe that this lightweight, inexpensive material will provide you the protection you need in order to survive, however the reality is something very different!

Space blankets and bags are made from Mylar plastic or Aluminized Polyester and while the fabric is very effective at reflecting radiant heat, they are not very durable. Blankets are usually about 52”x82” in size while bags made from the same material are 36”x84.” These products are packaged in everything from heavy-duty vinyl plastic to cardboard boxes. According to the information given on the packaging the material is wind and waterproof and “reflects back 90% of the body’s heat!” Sounds good so far!

Let’s look at the pluses and the minuses.
**PLUSES:**

**Light weight.** Where weight is an issue, and it always is, the ounces that a space blanket weighs is often the factor that tips the scale in its favor when you are shopping for an emergency shelter.

**Compact.** Space blanket material is very thin and can be compressed into a small package that is easily carried in a survival kit, vest or jacket pocket.

**Barrier.** The fabric does make a good barrier as long as it is intact.

**Versatile.** It can be used for purposes other than sheltering

**Insulation.** Space blanket material enables the survivor to trap some of the heat that the body is producing within the cocoon created by the blanket.

**Reflects body heat.** The material does a very good job of reflecting radiant body heat.

**MINUSES:**

**Light weight.** Because it is made from a very thin material, it punctures and tears easily.

**Compact.** The thinness of the material and the many folds needed to make it as compact as possible, create a problem for the survivor – the need to use both hands to open the blanket and unfold it. A cold, injured survivor with only the use of one hand or arm would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to open the packaging, spread out the material, wrap it around their body and then hold it in place.

**Size.** Space blankets are too small to provide an adult, especially a large adult, adequate protection.

**Thermal Blankets** are made from “reinforced layered construction of Aluminized Polyethylene” and are much tougher than space blanket material. They come in a variety of colors: blue/silver, red/silver, camouflage/silver etc., and have grommets in each corner. Fiberglass threads reinforce the fabric making it much more resistant to tearing if punctured. As with all “blankets” thermal blankets require the use of both hands to pull the fabric around your body and the use of at least one hand to hold it together. Once again thermal blankets are not large enough to provide the average sized adult sufficient protection from wind and precipitation.

**Insulation.** Space blankets provide no inherent insulation.

**Noisy.** The material used to manufacturer space blankets is very noisy when moved. So much so that when the blanket is placed over your head, as it should be to minimize heat loss, it becomes impossible to hear because of the constant rustling of the fabric as it is moved either by the survivor or by the wind. Survivors have reported not hearing the approach of rescue aircraft because of this noise.

So if the traditional space blanket isn’t the answer what other commercial options are available?

**SOL (Survive Outdoors Longer) Emergency Blanket.** The SOL blanket is similar to the standard space blanket but larger and much tougher. One side of the blanket is silver and the reverse side is international orange. If size, space and weight are important in selecting an emergency shelter then this blanket, or better still the SOL bag made from the same material, is the one you should choose. Survival and first-aid instructions printed directly on the blanket are an additional useful feature of the SOL blanket.

**Plastic Tube tents** are available in two thicknesses and can be used either as a “pull over” shelter or can be used as a tent by running a line through the tube and tying the line off at each end to an anchor. The one-mil thick yellow variety often found in commercial survival kits is very flimsy and tears easily – they are best used as a pullover shelter. The larger, heavier variety sold under the Coghlan’s brand name can be used as either a pullover cover or as a pup-tent style shelter.

**Thermo-Lite Emergency Bivy Sacks** are made from “a strong polyolefin, non-woven fabric combined with a protected thermal reflective layer.” This is a paper-like material that had its origins in hospital operating...
rooms where it was used to keep patients warm. Both bags and blankets made from this material are available. This material is tougher than aluminized polyester but will not stand up to hard use.

**International**

International orange or royal blue, heavy-duty plastic bags make very good, inexpensive emergency shelters. The Coughlin’s company markets these bags through such outlets as Sportsmen’s Warehouse, Kmart, Walmart and other similar stores. They are also available from www.outdoorsafe.com.

**PLUSES**

Tough enough to withstand a lot of abuse
Visible to searchers – especially the blue bag
Inexpensive – usually $2 - $3 each
Large enough to cover an adult
Quiet
Waterproof and windproof
Versatile – the bag can be used for many uses other than shelter
Lightweight
Hands-free once the bag is on
Quick to put on – even one handed!
Less clothing (insulation) is required when inside the bag

**MINUSES**

Waterproof – which can result in condensation forming on the inside of the bag if the user breathes into the bag rather than out through a hole cut in one side.

Bulky than a space blanket
Heavier than a space blanket.
Transmits more radiant heat than space blankets

The key to using a plastic bag effectively is to cut out a hole 4 - 5 inches below one corner of the sealed end that is just large enough to slide your head through when it becomes necessary to dump heat. It is important, when this hole is created, to cut across the fold at 90° at the entry and exit points. Doing so minimizes the chances of the bag tearing along the fold. The primary purpose of the hole is to allow the user to breath to the outside which significantly reduces the amount of condensation that collects on the inner surfaces of the bag.

Regardless of what you carry for sheltering, make sure it works. Make sure it provides you protection from wet and windy conditions. Test the shelter in your backyard the next time you experience some stormy weather. If it works there it will probably work well when you really need protection. If it fails in your backyard then you can bet it won’t work when your life’s on the line!

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Hunter Education programs are often administered on evenings and weekends in order to meet the needs of the patron’s busy schedules. The volunteer instructors across the country meet the needs of numerous hunter education students with varying schedules, internet field days and hybrid courses. One method that once was common was teaching hunter education in the schools. This method started to fade with numerous mandates, standards, and fears of guns in schools. However, there is a great value to teaching hunter education in a school environment. There are many ties to the curriculum and the common core standards. Perhaps my advice and experience from implementing hunter education in two different schools and two different states may assist others in implementing it in their schools.

Why would anyone want to have hunter education in the schools?

This is a question that I have heard over and over once I embarked on my journey to teach hunter education as a part of my curriculum in my classes. It’s an easy question for me to answer. The first reason is that hunter education at its core teaches responsibility. The responsibility topic can be revisited throughout the year as needed when students forget rules, forget homework, etc. The second reason that I enlighten people with when they ask this question is that hunter education provides a platform, a method to meet many standards. Hunter education helps to meet standards on carrying capacity and population dynamics, identification and classification, wildlife management, and interactions of species.

Meeting the requirements of the Common Core State Standards is a reality that teachers across the country are dealing with and worrying about on a daily basis. Implementing hunter education allowed me to help meet some of these standards. Part of the Common Core focuses on reading informational texts and students being able to interpret them by taking facts from those texts and answer questions. The hunter education curriculum is able to do this as we have students read the state regulations and answer questions. Each state’s hunter education manual is...
an informational text as well, with questions at each chapter. There are specific Common Core standards that are addressed for subjects such as science as well. For example, students look at population dynamics through hunter education. This exploration allows students and teachers to meet multiple science standards with regard to populations and ecosystems with some questioning and further study.

What about teaching students about guns?

Many students will encounter a firearm outside of school, even if there are no firearms in the home where they live. Students may be a babysitter for a family that has firearms, they may find a firearm somewhere, or have a friend that has a firearm and wants to show it to them. If we teach students responsible behavior around firearms, students will know how to react and will know what to do in a home and how to handle a firearm should the need to handle one arise.

I have been extremely lucky in the aspect of teaching students about firearms. While teaching Agriculture Education in Ohio, I utilized wooden “dummy guns” that we built in our shop. We also built some of these guns as a community service project and sent them to the Ohio Division of Wildlife. As a science teacher here in Wyoming, I have been able to utilize a set of inert guns from Wyoming Game and Fish. A special note to teachers and instructors about the utilization of these guns in schools: always ensure that the administrators of the building are aware and support the activity. It is wise to also inform local law enforcement of the activity as well to avoid surprises when a student goes home and says “we were using guns in school today.”

Are there advantages or disadvantages?

Hunter education in a school setting certainly has its advantages. Most of the time there is more time available to devote to hunter education. With more time, more depth and detail can be given to the material. The students in a
school setting are seen daily. It is easy to schedule the time and the dates that will work into the curriculum. Most schools have technology available to accommodate DVDs, projectors, and other materials that you may want to utilize.

There are disadvantages – it’s not all sunshine and rainbows. Some of the disadvantages can include scheduling – when to fit it in the schedule. Student schedules have to be taken into account. Field trips and sports trips may require students to miss class. A longer class will allow students to have make-up time, and schools will have different policies. It can be difficult to register students with the online registration that many states are moving towards. It can be difficult to perform live-fire with students. Finding a place to do live-fire may be difficult and require a field trip.

**What do students say about having hunter education in school?**

I have had students that have run the gamut on opinions of hunting. I have had students that have already passed hunter education and were avid hunters and students that were proclaimed vegetarians and anti-hunters.

I approach the hunter education course in class the same way with every student. We start the study by looking at ecosystems, wildlife and wildlife management. We start looking at tools of wildlife management and see that hunting is a tool that managers utilize to manage wildlife. We would then study the hunter education course before returning to our discussion of wildlife management.

All of my students have appreciated the hunter education course. The students that had already taken it appreciated a new view of hunting as a tool and a look at why they may hunt. Those that were anti-hunting never changed their mind that they would hunt, which I never asked them to do. However, they did change their mind that hunting was a bad thing. In my opinion, that is just as important as those that were certified and were planning on taking to the field. Those students will be voting some day. With the information they gained, they will be informed on the value of hunting.

I’ve never had a student that participated that was not happy with having it in the school. Parents have been happy to have it offered as well. Many have commented that it is great to have it available. They have wanted to get students in a course, but with busy schedules, have not been able to get to a course.

Overall, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. There is a great value to incorporating hunter education in school systems. It meets standards and helps teach students responsibility. Hunter education is a great tool for teachers to utilize to help students relate to the curriculum and meet the needs of their standards.
Volunteering as a hunter education instructor is a personal commitment and sometimes challenging. Obtaining quality hunter safety and educational materials shouldn’t be. The National Shooting Sports Foundation® has been supporting hunter education instructors for more than 50 years.

A longtime supporter of the International Hunter Education Association, NSSF has been in the forefront of developing multimedia hunter safety and education materials. We provide printed and electronic materials for volunteer instructors—most of which is free. And when your students graduate and are looking for places to hunt or for additional information to develop their skills and knowledge, the answers are simply a click away!

Log on to nssf.org and order your materials today. All the help you need is at your fingertips.

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If anyone has ever ventured into extensive and rugged mountains or spent time scouring over the wide open grassland prairies and desert terrain of the West, the real appreciation of a premium spotting scope and its benefits will never be forgotten or go unnoticed. Let’s face it, when the longing to push for days on end in the pursuit of elk, mule deer or sheep suddenly turns into the reality of finding yourself in the arena with heavy legs of lead and burning oxygen-deprived lungs, a premium spotting scope is a welcome friend to have in your backpack. Good optics allow you to clearly and comfortably judge antler size or legal curl, while sparing valuable time and preventing unnecessary miles.

A premium spotting scope in your arsenal will greatly increase your chances of success. Try to choose something with a variable magnification range that offers a wide range of magnification and a lockable eyepiece. For those backcountry trekkers who wish to lighten the load, choose a smaller objective size in the 65mm configuration. Smaller objective sizes will also slide in and out of a backpack much easier and help keep unwanted weight to a minimum. Look for something with a durable rubber armoring or finish for those slick and rocky spots. The combined benefits of exceptional lens designs and optical coatings to increase light transmission are critical with high magnification observation. A quality hydrophobic lens coating to repel the usual nasty inclement weather and grime that wilderness hunting conditions throw at you will make your quest for a trophy more enjoyable and help keep those lenses maintenance-free. Most importantly, with frequent or rapid elevation change and daily operation in damp conditions – the unit must be fog and waterproof.

If you are heading into the backcountry for the potential hunt and trophy of a lifetime, try to remember that a premium spotting scope or field spotter like those offered by Carl Zeiss Sports Optics will not only allow you to clearly observe and assess distant game, it will save you the valuable hours of shooting light that we cherish so much during limited days afield and also do your legs and lungs a favor by preventing unnecessary stalks. Before “go-time,” make certain that “maybe” buck, bull or ram is in fact a shooter. Be safe, shoot straight and get out there!
The 100% American-made Ruger American Rimfire® bolt-action rifle builds on the enormous success of the centerfire Ruger American Rifle®. With many of the standard Ruger American Rifle® features, this new line also combines several design innovations from the popular 10/22® rimfire rifle. This combination, along with the rifle’s adaptability, will appeal to all bolt-action enthusiasts – young or old, novice or experienced.
Now What?
Where do I go after Basic Hunter Education?

You just completed an introductory hunter education course that covers the basics of being safe, responsible and knowledgeable hunters and shooters!

Below are just a few opportunities that exist for you and your family to explore — in hopes that you continue on the pathway to a lifetime of adventures as a hunter and shooting sports enthusiast!

By purchasing a hunting license and paying excise taxes on sporting arms and ammunition, YOU pay for conservation in North America! YOU pay for wildlife management efforts that increase habitat and populations of both game and non-game species! YOU bolster local, state and national economies and the livelihoods of millions who depend on hunting for their paychecks! YOU donate millions of pounds of healthy meat to the needy! YOU introduce others to the wonders and joys of the outdoors and to the hunting heritage! THANKS to YOU — a hunter and shooter!

State Fish and Wildlife Agency Programs
ihea-usa.org/hunting-and-shooting/requirements/state-provincial-information
• Advanced Hunter Education
• Outdoor Family
• Youth Hunting
• Partner Programs – SEE BELOW

Hunter Education, Hunting & Shooting Sports Programs & Opportunities
• 4-H Shooting Sports – National/State Contacts – 4-hshootingsports.org
• ATA – Amateur Trapshooting Association – shootata.com
• ATA – Archery Trade Association – archerytrade.org
  – Archery Academy and Parks
  – Bowhunting and Explore Bowhunting
• Becoming An Outdoors-Woman – uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/bow
• BSA – Boy Scouts of America – scouting.org
• DSC – Dallas Safari Club – biggame.org/def-education
• DU – Ducks Unlimited – ducks.org/how-to-help/greenwings
• Faith-based Camps/Programs – Local/City/State Clubs & Organizations
• HSC – Houston Safari Club – houstonsafari-club.org/giving-back/youth-programs
• Hunting & Fishing/Woods and Waters Clubs – Local/City/State Organizations
• IHEA – International Hunter Education Association-USA – ihea-usa.org
• Izaak Walton League of America – iwla.org
• MDF – Mule Deer Foundation – muledeer.org/muley/youth-family
• NASP – National Archery in Schools Programs – naspschools.org
• NBEF – National Bowhunter Education Foundation – nbef.org
• NFAA – National Field Archery Association – fieldarchery.org
• NRA – National Rifle Association Programs – nra.org
  – NRA Sports, Eddie Eagle®, Hunter Services, Firearms Training, Youth and Women Programs, Range Services – programs.nra.org
• NHF – National Deer Federation – nhf.org
• NSSF – National Shooting Sports Foundation – nssf.org
  – Collegiate Shooting Sports Initiative – nssf.org/cssi
  – First Shots Program – nssf.org/firstshots
  – Families Affield – nssf.org/hunting/youth
  – Shooting Ranges – wheretoshoot.org
  – Hunting Opportunities – wheretonhunt.org
• NYSF – New York State Fish & Wildlife Service – nysf.org
• NYHHA -National Youth Hunting Association – nnyouthhunting.org
• Outdoor Industry, Range & Outfitter Programs – Local/State Organizations
• PF – Pheasants Forever – pheasantsforever.org/page/1/pheasant-hunting
• QDMA – Quality Deer Management Association – qdma.com/corporate/national-youth-hunt
• RMF – Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation – rmef.org
• SSCI – Safari Club International – scifirstforhunters.org/membership/education
• SSSF – Scholastic Clay Target and Pistol Programs – sssfonline.com
• USA Archery – teamusa.org/USA-Archery
• USA Shooting – usashooting.org
• USA YESS – Youth Education in Shooting Sports – usayess.org
• USSA – United States Sportsmen’s Alliance – trailblazeradventure.org
• Whitetails Unlimited – whitetailsunlimited.com
• Wounded Warriors/Healing/Recovery Programs – Local/State/State Clubs & Organizations
• YSSA – Youth Shooting Sports Alliance – younthsightingsusa.com
• *OTHERS – National Hunter Education, Hunting & Shooting Sports Programs we missed!
Shooting Glasses: They Are Not One Color Fits All  By C. Douglas Nielsen

Every time a shooter raises his firearm and squeezes the trigger, there is always the chance that a piece of metal or dust from the expended round could hit the shooter in the eye or that a ricochet could do the same thing. Such an event could, of course, result in a serious eye injury or even the loss of an eye. Or both.

Thanks to the advent of shooting glasses however, it doesn’t have to be that way, and long gone are the days when shooters wore bulky and unfashionable industrial safety glasses. Modern designs and equally modern technology have opened the door of choice. Choice not only in the level of protection, but also in the color of shooting lenses.

To the inexperienced shooter, colored lenses may appear like nothing more than a fashion statement. To the shooter who has been around the block a time or two, lens color can mean the difference between a hit and a miss because the proper lens color can make it easier to pick out a target. Not convinced? Think of that time when you lost sight of the clay pigeon, or your game bird of choice for that matter, when it passed that clump of trees in the background.

Ultimately, the lens color(s) you choose to wear while shooting is really a matter of personal preference, but with some experimentation you will find that some colors can give you an advantage at the shooting line and in the field.

Some manufacturers, like Smith Optics, offer glasses with interchangeable lenses so you can match the lens color to the settings and conditions where you are shooting.

Here’s a list of suggestions from the folks at Smith Optics:

– Clear: Ideal for low light conditions or nighttime use. Also good for indoor ranges where lighting is not the best.
– Polarized Gray: For bright conditions. Sharpens details while maintaining true colors.
– Gray: For bright conditions. Provides true color perception and soothes the eyes in bright or sunny conditions.
– Ignitor (Vermillion): Especially helpful at the shooting range. Can be used in a variety of light conditions. Maximizes definition and enhances depth perception.
– Yellow: For overcast conditions. Increases visual acuity by increasing contrast in low or flat light.

While shooters have many options when it comes to lenses, most choose only two or three colors and use them as the situation warrants. Of course the most important thing to consider is lens material and whether your lenses meet ANSI or Military (MilSpec) standards.

Send Us Your Stories!

One of the main goals of the Journal is to provide a platform for the exchange of ideas and teaching experience that can help improve the education process of the more than 700,000 new hunters annually.

In order to fulfill that goal we need the input of instructors in the field. Please submit your stories and/or photos about teaching techniques that work for you, thoughts about the state of our hunting heritage today, anecdotal stories about “it happened to me” in class, visual training aids, etc... don’t worry about spelling or grammar.

Every submission that is chosen for print receives a gift from supporting manufacturers.

Send your submission to Susie Kiefer at susiekiefer@msn.com. No computer? You can mail your submission to: IHEA-USA Journal, PO Box 432, Wellington, CO 80549.
HEA-USA held its annual conference and business meetings in the famous port of Charleston, on the coast of South Carolina. In true “Southern Hospitality” spirit, Captain ‘Billy’ Downer and the hunter education staff at South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (DNR) put on quite a show. Conference participants enjoyed great weather, excellent presentations, productive meetings, and off-site visits to downtown sites as well as the famous Boone Hall Plantation for a “Low Country Shrimp Boil” hosted by DNR law enforcement staff and sponsored by Kalkomey Enterprises. Travis Casper, North Carolina Hunter Education Administrator and new IHEA-USA Board Zone 4 Representative, “had to swallow hard,” as he put it, and let his rivals to the south know what a tremendous effort they put forth and a “Job Well Done!”

IHEA-USA is a professional non-profit organization comprised of the 50 state administrators and their staffs, and 58,000 hunter education instructors, most of whom volunteer their services to train 670,000 students each year. Hunter Education programs have helped reduce hunting incidents by three fourths in the last 30 years and greatly improved hunter behavior, responsibility and ethics.

WELCOME — South Carolina Dept. of Natural Resources Director Mr. Alvin Taylor, and National Wild Turkey Federation’s CEO Mr. George Thornton, welcomed everyone and opened the ceremonies at the 2014 IHEA-USA Annual Conference.

Host Captain John “Billy” Downer welcomed participants to the annual IHEA-USA Annual Conference & Business Meetings in Charleston, SC. He later accepted the “Host State” Award from IHEA-USA Executive Director Steve Hall, and Awards Chairman John McKay (NV) at the annual IHEA-USA Awards Ceremony. The conference was a “total blast,” according to one participant and IHEA-USA wishes to thank and acknowledge the outstanding job South Carolina staff did in hosting the 2014 conference. True Southern Hospitality was showcased throughout the conference and made for a most wonderful experience by all participants. THANKS SC – you outdid yourselves!
IHEA-USA 2014-2015 Executive Board Members: Back Row: (l to r) Randy Huskey (TN) - President; Melissa Neely (NY) - Secretary; Travis Casper (NC) - Zone 4 Rep.; Larry Morrison (IN) - Zone 2 Rep.; and John Sears (IA) - Instructor Advisory Committee Rep. Front Row: (l to r) Megan Wisecup (IA) - Vice President/Treasurer; James Reed (OR) - Zone 1 Rep.; and Josh Mackay (NH) - Zone 3 Rep. Not Pictured: Nick Wiley (FL Exec. Dir.) - Assoc. of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Representative to the Board. IHEA-USA Business Meeting - Hunter Education Administrators (IHEA-USA State Members) from more than 40 states were present to handle the business of the Association.

IHEA-USA AWARDS CEREMONY — The Awards Ceremony included a selection of top volunteer instructors throughout the United States, several volunteer “Hall of Fame” recipients, partner organizations, and individual and group awards that honored achievement in the Association and throughout the United States in 2013.

FEDERAL’s “VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR” and NRA’s “PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR”

(Left Photo) North Carolina’s Floyd “Link” Grass (Denver, NC) was selected Federal Premium’s Volunteer Instructor of the Year! As presented and stated by Ryan Bronson, ATK Sporting – Conservation, “Grass has been an active member in the North Carolina hunter education program for more than 15 years. In 2013, he organized and taught 56 hunter education courses that certified 811 students. He also recruited 11 additional volunteer instructors. Grass has received multiple “Instructor of the Year” awards at the state and local level, and has been recognized for special achievement and dedication to North Carolina’s hunter education programs.” Congratulations Link!

(Right Photo) Thomas Baumeister (MT) received the National Rifle Association-sponsored Professional of the Year Award for his service to IHEA-USA as a department representative that is a non-HE Administrator. As a former administrator, Baumeister continued to stay involved nationally and, in this case, as chair of the IHEA-USA Standards & Evaluation Committee. Presenting the award was long-time IHEA-USA partner and Youth Hunter Education Challenge/Hunter Services Manager, Bob Davis, working with the new “NRA Sports” programs.
IHEA-USA “INDUSTRY” and “INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY” Awards

(Left Photo) Jeffrey Post with Customer Service at Henry Repeating Arms, was on hand to accept the Industry Award from John McKay, IHEA Awards Chairman, on behalf of Anthony Imperato, Henry President & Owner, who was honored for his many years of donations and service to IHEA-USA and hunter education administrators and instructors from across North America.

(Right Photo) Kurt Kalkomey president and co-founder of Kalkomey Enterprises and Hunter-Ed.Com accepted IHEA-USA’s Innovations in Technology Award for his many years of innovation with hunter education products, manuals, Internet sites, registration and certification systems used throughout the country.

(Left Photo) Allen Basala (NC) was presented with the Volunteer Hunter Education Hall of Fame Award by Travis Casper, NC Hunter Education Administrator. Basala was honored for his work partnering with NC in every aspect of hunter education including certifications teaching many of the different programs, working on legislative issues, and serving as a Master Volunteer instructor since the 1980s.

(Right Photo) Jerry Brown (AL) was also presented with a Volunteer Hunter Education Hall of Fame Award by Marisa Futral, AL Hunter Education Administrator. Brown was lauded for his many years of service since 1979, putting together a top-notch team (some who joined him at the ceremony), developing a hunter skills trail and even building a range on his property to enable live-firing exercises and training.

(Left Photo) The IHEA-USA Standards & Evaluation Committee was presented the “Ed Kozicky” Award by IHEA-USA President Randy Huskey (TN) for the outstanding work they put in throughout the year to revise the standards and set the stage for unity and success in national delivery and assessment. Committee Members (l to r): Charles Bruckerhoff (CT); David Dodson (VA); Thomas Baumeister (MT) - Chairman; Kent Barrett (KS); Jason Kool (SD); and John McKay (NV). Not Pictured: John Sturgis (LA); Susan Langlois (MA); and Mike Streeter (NE). Each received a Silver Stag Custom, Limited Edition Knife along with the “Coyote” Award.

(Right Photo) Brian Thurston, President of Focus Group, Inc., and Leaha Wirth, National Sales Manager, were presented the “Executive Director’s Award” by IHEA-USA’s Steve Hall, for their continual hard work publishing both the quarterly Hunter & Shooting Sports Education Journal and the annual Hunter’s Handbook and for coordinating and sponsoring the IHEA-USA Heritage Hunt for three lucky hunter education students and their parents/guardians, and two lucky instructors also drawn for the hunt.

(Left Photo) Bill Balda (KY), received a “Board Member Award” from IHEA-USA President, Randy Huskey (TN), honoring his years of service to the executive board of the Association.

(Right Photo) Eva Shockey, daughter of Jim Shockey, celebrity hosts of Jim Shockey’s Hunting Adventures recounted hosting the annual “Dream Hunt” that takes hunter education students on “hunts of a lifetime.” Students were selected randomly in a drawing conducted and sponsored annually by Fresh Air Educators (www.huntercourse.com) and received an all-expense-paid trip with Eva and her dad (previous hunts). This past year’s hunt featured a female hunter education student and her instructor from MN – “a real treat,” according to Ms. Shockey, “to host these outstanding young women in a traditionally male activity.” Shockey relived their memorable hunt saying, “They shot their first turkeys and we all had a fantastic time!” Giggling, she concluded, “I can’t wait until next year when we get to host more lucky winners!”
SILVER SPONSORS ($10,000+): National Wild Turkey Federation

BRONZE SPONSORS ($5,000 - $9,999): Federal Premium Ammunition; Harry Hampton Fund; Kalkomey Enterprises (hunter-ed.com); Likhulu Safari; National Rifle Association; National Shooting Sports Foundation

BOONE PLANTATION TOUR & DINNER: Kalkomey Enterprises (hunter-ed.com)

MEAL/HOSPITALITY SUITE SPONSORS: Dave Oakes Seminars; Federal Premium Ammunition; Fresh Air Educators (HUNTERcourse.com); Hunter Ed Course (HunterEdCourse.com); Kalkomey Enterprises (Hunter-Ed.com); National Archery in Schools Program; National Rifle Association

BIG HORN SHEEP SPONSORS ($2,500 - $4,999): Outdoor Tracking Systems

BEAR ($1,000 - $2,499): Be a Safe Hunter (beasafehunter.org); Council to Advance Hunting & the Shooting Sports; Fresh Air Educators (HUNTERcourse.com); Hunter Ed Course (HunterEdCourse.com); Lasershot; National Archery in Schools Program; North American Crossbow Federation; Promatic; Outdoor Edge; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Whitetails Unlimited

ELK ($500 - $999): Ammo Camo; Bass Pro Shops; Cabela’s; Cartridge Comparison Guide; Conservation Leaders For Tomorrow; Crosman Corp.; National Bowhunter Education Foundation; Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation; TMS Outdoors

THANKS to the Many AUCTION DONORS including the companies above, PLUS the following: 3Point; Albert Crowley & Mark Banard; Alpen Optics; ATSKO/Sno-seal; Birchwood Casey; Black River Marine; Browning; Buck Bomb; Buck Knives; Chamber View LLS; Clinton House; Crimson Trace; Daisy; Deadeye Supply; E-Strike Systems; Eagle Claw; Gander Mountain; Haydel’s Game Calls; HiViz; Hunter’s Specialties; Izaak Walton League of America; LaCrosse; Leatherman; Lowcountry Field of Dreams; M7 Business Systems; Midway USA; Mossberg; Ruger; Sellmark; Shoot Where You Look; Silver Stag; Sportsman’s Warehouse of Columbia; Sun Optics; Temple Fork Outfitters; ThermacELL; White Flyer Targets; Winchester; Woody’s Pawn Shop.

STATE Fish and Wildlife Agency MEMBERS

(Left Photo) Paulette Lubke, IHEA-USA Office Manager, once again organized and served as registration chair for the conference, but found some time to join former administrator Rod Slings with Hunter and Shooting Related Consultants, LLC, on a Boone Hall Plantation Hay Ride to tour the historic site. “Paulette is the brains of IHEA-USA!” said IHEA Executive Director Steve Hall later, as he presented her with “yellow roses” at the annual IHEA-USA business meeting.

(Left Photo) United States Fish and Wildlife Service staff, who coordinate hunter education and target range grant projects in their regions, were on hand to address the many questions and issues states have in administration of their programs. Regional staff did take a time-out to join other conference goers at an evening hosted by SC Dept. of Natural Resources at the Boone Hall Plantation Historic site.

(Middle Photo) SC Dept. of Natural Resources staff put on quite a feed, a “Low Country Shrimp Boil,” at the Boone Hall Plantation.

(Right Photo) Vendors, sponsors and partners were on hand for the conference – and hosted meals and provided sponsorships to ensure conference success. IHEA-USA would like to THANK the many sponsors of this year’s event!
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7. Exclusive “Member Only” opportunities to purchase significantly discounted merchandise and closeouts offered by hunting and firearms manufacturers and distributors ( www.ihea.com ).
8. Liability Insurance-Individual memberships of the IHEA-USA are provided with Volunteer Liability Insurance up to $1,000,000 per occurrence. This policy provides protection for a bodily injury or a property damage liability claim arising out of the performance of the registered volunteers’ duties. Applicable to USA Only.

In addition to the benefits listed above, each new IHEA-USA Lifetime $450 “Membership will include:
• $100 Cabela’s Gift Certificate
• Recognition on the IHEA-USA website as a Lifetime member.
• Certificate signed by the Executive Director of the IHEA-USA.
• Continuing the Heritage #2 Print (16” X 20”)
• Getting Ready for the Hunt Print (16” X 20”)
• “Lifetime Member” Lapel Pin
• Cabelas’s branded Duffle Bag (29”L X 16”W X 14”H) embroidered with “Lifetime Member”

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340 FPS FOR $599

Shoot the Mission® Blaze™ today at your local authorized retailer.
In appreciation of outstanding and uniquely committed volunteer efforts of Hunter Education instructors around the United States, Gallery of Guns is excited to recognize the first two of six instructors crowned Champions of Hunter Education for their outstanding work in the Hunter Education field.

These instructors break the confines of average teaching, giving tirelessly to the future of hunting and setting standards in their state for safe and ethical hunting teachings, and recruitment and retention of thousands of students.

**Tim Boxberger**

From Great Bend, Kansas, Tim has 23 years experience as a Kansas Hunter Volunteer Instructor. He has been instrumental in developing Internet-assisted classes in the state, and his volunteer time commitment to Kansas programs is noteworthy and remarkable.

Giving not only of his time but also of his own experiences, Tim has traveled around Kansas helping instructors efficiently structure their specific programs many times with space limitations and minimal field day assets in an effort to help them offer the best Hunter Education learning experience possible in their areas. Because of these efforts, he has been invaluable to the continued growth of Kansas programs.

As President of the KHEIA, Tim also developed an essay program for young hunters that took retention into hunting to a new level. Three winners of the...
essay would receive a new semi-auto CZ youth shotgun, and an opening day pheasant hunt. All costs were covered by KHEIA and has been a proven outreach, recruitment, and retention device confirming the students in these areas as hunters.

Tim is known statewide for his availability and consistency. He is a man that “practices what he preaches” in the field, and is always willing to help new hunters begin their lifetime of hunting.

Kent Barrett, Kansas Administrator states, “Tim grew up in a small community and loves to hunt. He wants other people to enjoy the same opportunities that he enjoyed as a youth. He simply wants to give back what he was blessed with as a young man: experience outdoors with nature.”

Thank you Tim, for giving back.

Highlights:
1991-Present: Kansas Volunteer Hunter Education Instructor
1998-Present: KS HE Area Coordinator
2003-Present: KS HE Board of Directors
2007-Present: KS HE Instructor Advisory Committee
2008-2010: President of KS Hunter Ed Instructor Assn.
2011-Present: Regional Representative and Liaison to HE Programs
March 2014: Kansas Statewide Instructor of the year
Other organizational involvement: Pheasants Forever, NRA Youth day events

Jack Truesdale, Lugoff, SC

Currently an eight-year instructor for South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDMR), Jack teaches in over seven counties with travel times to teach totaling over 200 hours for the year.

He has overcome a number of barriers both inside and outside the normal confines of teaching a Hunter Education course in his short career as a volunteer for Hunter Education. Building relationships with the Kershaw County Soil Conservation Board, Jack obtained a free site for classes with lunches provided.
Outside of the classroom, Jack serves as line judge at the State Final NASP program in Columbia, and is a huge contributor and coordinator of the Take One Make One (TOMO) youth hunting events. He’s set up two deer hunts and one turkey hunt for a total of 150 students. Jack has started other hunting clinics to teach new hunters about the different types of game that can be hunted. Already this year he’s planning youth turkey hunts with NWTF Wateree chapter.

Jack was also instrumental in working on a committee with SC State House of Representative’s Laurie S. Funderburk to help organize the start of a shotgun shooting team at North Central High School. In his position as Member of the Wateree Chapter Friends of the NRA, he was instrumental in getting this new sport adopted into the schools.

Captain Billy Downer of South Carolina states, “Jack uses hands-on techniques to really ingrain safe product and firearm use in the field. He is a major contributor to teaching our students safe and ethical hunting in the field, and he makes every effort to have his live range experiences meaningful and impactful. Jack is a trend-setter, and a consistent dependable asset to the state of South Carolina and its Hunter Education programs.”

Thank you Jack for going above and beyond for all of the newcomers to this fantastic sport of hunting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highlights</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HE Volunteer of the year</strong></td>
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<td>2011, 2013, 2014</td>
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<td><strong>Region 2 HE Instructor of the year</strong> for the last four years</td>
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<td><strong>Averages 1 education class per month</strong> in addition to the hands-on hunts that he hosts</td>
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<td><strong>Other organizational involvement:</strong> TOMO pacesetter, DU clinic teacher, Sets up youth turkey hunts with the NWTF Wateree chapter, NRA Instructor, NWTF Jakes Program Coordinator</td>
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Both of these Davidson’s Champions of Hunter Education will receive a Ruger American rifle from Davidson’s, and a hearty “thank you” from all of us who love the great outdoors and building safe, wonderful experiences in them.
Y ears ago, I found myself on a hunt listening to the horrifying sound of bullets flying over my head. I was in the middle of a big parcel of private land in Wyoming. There should have been NO ONE there, yet as I searched for the source, I found a couple of hunters below working on an antelope in between us. Thinking that they were on BLM land, they made a pretty grave mistake. None of this would have occurred if they were using onXmaps.

Knowing where you are when you are hunting is a responsibility that, for many hunters, can be a tricky challenge. It can be easy to get lost and confused about where you are, where property lines lie, and sometimes, even when you think you know where you are when you look at a map, you can be mistaken.

onXmaps offers preloaded chips, which are state-specific, that you can add to Garmin GPS, computers and mobile devices. This data is consistently updated offering you the most up-to-date intel on where you are in the field so that straying into an area in which you don’t belong simply doesn’t happen. Let me tell you, it is some pretty awesome stuff!

This super-cool software offers active GPS plug-and-play maps, and shows you EVERY parcel of land that you are near – in a color-coded and obvious nature. Private land is white, and actually even shows the landowner’s name, information and property boundaries. In color, you will see federal, state, and county property in different colors.

Not only that, you can even dial down the elevation, topographical features, section numbers that you may be hunting within, county and even specific hunting unit information. It basically offers you absolutely no reason why you should be hunting in an area that you are not authorized to be within. It also shows road and trail numbers, and can even help you navigate as you drive out to your area.

Prior to your hunt, this technology can also be connected to your home computer for plotting your own adventure.

Let’s face it, hunting is a HUGE responsibility. Lighten your load and educate your students on this critical aspect of safe hunting. onXmaps can make the difference between losing licenses, receiving fines, and even potentially hurting people by giving you exact, up-to-the minute intel on where you are standing when you are hunting. Check them out at onxmaps.com.
Daisy’s popular inflatable range program is going strong with the NWTF, RMEF, Cabela’s, Bass Pro and numerous 4-H and other programs across the nation, reaching over 1 million young people annually. Rental or purchase information can be found at www.daisy.com
We purchase quality equipment but often seem to forget that proper care and maintenance is also a contributing factor to success and safety afield. Mechanical failures that cost hard-earned opportunities at a trophy or lower match scores are difficult lessons learned.

Keeping your firearms clean and properly lubricated is critical to function, reliability and accuracy. Let’s focus on cleaning the bore and accuracy. Fouling build-up can quickly cause an unwanted increase in group size. When the grooves of the rifling become filled or “fouled,” consistent bullet placement becomes impossible.

Neglect is often due to the time, labor, mess and the expense involved to restore a bore back to mirror-bright condition. Procrastination or total evasion of bore maintenance reduces accuracy and increases the risk for corrosion. However there is good news…

Innovation in gun care is allowing shooters to get a bore cleaned faster, with less mess and without unpleasant smells. New methods can save you time and money by eliminating the need for multiple patches. The Remington® All-In™ Bore Cleaner applied to a brush will easily scrub and chemically remove unwanted fouling. Use in combination with the Remington® Squeeg-E™ to steadfastly pull debris out from chamber to muzzle for a mirror bright bore. For clean up – simply rinse your gun care gear with water by design of this new water-based bore system. Visit www.shopremingtoncountry.com to view more innovative solutions in firearms maintenance.
Traditions™ Performance Firearms, known for their extremely accurate and dependable muzzleloaders, is proud to introduce the next innovation in muzzleloading — the patent-pending Vortek StrikerFire™ LDR.

The Vortek StrikerFire™ LDR can go the distance when you need that long range shot. With a 30” barrel, you get a more complete powder burn translating to increased velocity, better consistency, and better downrange accuracy. Outfitted with a Chromoly barrel, this barrel material is known among centerfires as being extremely strong and accurate. With no external hammer, the Vortek StrikerFire™ LDR has a patent-pending internal striker fire system. Slide the striker button forward until it locks and the rifle is cocked. The striker fire system allows for quicker and quieter cocking of the rifle, faster locktime, and gives you the ability to mount your scope closer to the bore.

The rifle is also equipped with a one-piece stainless steel Accelerator Breech Plug™ that allows you to fire both loose and palletized powder without changing the breech plug and the Stow-N-Go Removable Butt Pad for storage.

For more information visit their website traditionsfirearms.com, find them on Facebook and Twitter, or call 860-388-4656.

KWIKEE KWIVER HI-5 Five Arrow Quiver

The new HI-5 Quiver is an advanced, well-designed and distinctive quiver. With a new unique bracket system, the quiver
can be effortlessly attached or removed with a one-handed movement, and the HI-5 quiver is compatible with other Kwikee quiver mounting brackets. The versatility of this quiver also allows for a 6” vertical adjustment for shorter parallel limb bows.

The HI-5 quiver holds 5 arrows from the smallest to the largest shafts due to the double placement arrow holders and conveniently transitions for the right- or left-handed shooter. The Hi-5 quiver has duo arrow holders and will accept mechanical or fixed broadheads, and stays pliable in cold weather. Can be used with crossbows or compound bows.

For more information, check out www.kwikeekwiver.com.

Prepare yourself for the BLOCK® Invasion

BLOCK®, manufacturer of the world’s toughest line of archery and crossbow targets, upholds their outstanding reputation as a target innovator with yet another addition, the BLOCK® Invasion.

The BLOCK® Invasion offers 4-sided shooting for increased target life. Offering a simple yet revolutionary conceptualized product that has changed and set the standards for the way archers practice, the front and back of the BLOCK® Invasion target has an open-layered design that stops arrows with friction, not force. The patented friction-layered design allows arrows to enter between open, unglued layers of friction foam. The heat generated by the arrow penetration, along with friction, causes the BLOCK® Invasion to grab the arrow shaft. In just a few seconds, the heat dissipates and releases the arrow shaft, allowing for easy removal. Designed with high contrast graphics, broadhead (fixed or expandable) and field tip arrows, the BLOCK® Invasion archery target offers both easy arrow removal and long target life, for practice all year long.

MSRP: $109.99
I feel “Hunting Hours” can make it clearer than “Shooting Hours” that our students’ firearms should not be loaded after hunting hours are no longer in progress for the game they are hunting. “Shooting Hours” tries to do this but falls short. If “Hunting Hours” referred to when a hunter could load at the beginning of a day and must unload at the end of the day for a species, then we would not need “Shooting Hours,” both issues would be addressed. Isn’t it just as important to protect people as it is game? Many times these regulations are in place because common sense and safety, ethics and related individual responsibilities may not occur, unfortunately!

In our classes, questions come up like, “When can I legally load and unload for a particular species and is that the same as shooting hours?” Or, “If I am hunting deer and stay on post until the half hour after sunset when shooting hours are over, do I have to unload?” I tell them, “They can legally load when shooting hours for what they are hunting begins, and they need to unload when shooting hours for what they are hunting ends.” I would not feel comfortable with answering them by saying, “As long as you take shooting hours ‘literally,’ it only refers to the hours you can shoot at game, it does not refer to your sporting arm being loaded before or after shooting hours, as long as you don’t shoot.” I would not want to send a new student out in the field thinking regulations that are safety-oriented are “unpractical.” States do have regulations in place that do address the more serious safety issues. Of course not every safety issue can be regulated, nor should it.

Hunters, when they purchase a hunting license and are in the “act of hunting,” are expected to be aware and accept the restrictions put on them. Some of which may infringe on 2nd Amendment rights by virtue of the regulations hunters need to abide by. You seemed to take issue with that when you spoke about individual rights and liberties. To name a few restrictions hunters must abide by are: ammunition, calibers, number of rounds which can be in a firearm, number of sporting arms in the field at one time, optics, lasers, firearm actions etc… Are hunters’ individual rights and liberties being infringed on? Maybe, oh well, then maybe hunting is not for them. Or should they follow the hunting regulations which we preach as being part of an ethical hunter?

You stated that “in many states, there are practical reasons to have loaded firearms before or after legal hunting hours for certain game species.” Species that can be “legally” hunted at night would be in progress so the hours would be “WITHIN” hunting hours. I feel if the hunting hours are no longer in progress for a species the hunter is hunting for, then the sporting arm should be REQUIRED to be unloaded, it should not be optional. This would protect everyone, even game. Long guns are not secured in holsters.

Our organization should be all on the same page and answer student questions in a universal way which the IHEA endorses and it should not matter geographically where instructors are and what our personal views are. I was happy about your comment and that you feel “the act of hunting” and legal hunting hours be well-defined in states’ hunting regulations. A definition should be defined for an understanding that government agencies, judges, lawyers, citizens and of course our students could go by to be clear on what it means to be in the “act of hunting.”

Sincerely, Michael DiPietro
Many years ago when the fluorescent orange requirement was initiated, I believed that I had the perfect deer hunting outfit that would keep me safe. My outfit, consisting of orange cap, coat, pants and gloves, only lacked the orange boots that they didn’t make.

It was the first day of buck season and I was hunting on a friend’s property that I never hunted before. He gave me a description of the property lines the night before and I proceeded in the woods about 1/2-hour before daylight. When I came to a little pond surrounded by big pines that were close together, I realized that I was lost, so I stopped until it was light enough to see.

The ground was covered with dry, brittle leaves that cracked like potato chips as I walked. As the woods started to get lighter, I heard something walking towards me on the other side of the pines. It had to be an elephant or another hunter, so I made an educated guess and turned my back to him and looked in the other direction. The walking stopped when I shifted my body to another position. The woods became very quiet and the hair on the back of my neck stood up as I got an eerie feeling. I looked through a small opening in the pine trees and saw another hunter with his gun up and the scope pointed right at me about 50 yards away! Apparently in the semi-darkness he only detected a movement and was ready to shoot. When I made a loud cough, he was startled and came running over to me. As he was screaming that he almost shot me for a deer I asked him how he thought that I was a buck. He told me that I was on private property and I explained to him that I was lost and waiting for daylight to get my bearings. When I informed him that I had permission to hunt on his neighbor’s property, he gave me directions and walked away.

I hope that he learned a lesson that day (don’t assume no one will be on your property, and always be sure of your target before you aim to shoot!). The lesson that I learned was that you must always be cautious and don’t assume there are no unsafe hunters out there! As a Hunter Ed instructor for over 20 years, I repeatedly stress this to my students and in addition, to be sure of your target.

Lesson Learned: It Happened to Me

By John Skirchak
Why Volunteer as a Hunter Education Instructor?

By Rowland Ketchersid, New Mexico Hunter Education Instructor

I often ask myself how I got into Hunter Education. It takes a lot of time and effort, and life can get pretty busy. But the bottom line is: it’s important to me. I like helping others, I am proud to prepare future hunters, and I enjoy the camaraderie.

Getting involved just ‘happened’ to me after I moved to New Mexico from Texas. I saw the potential for hunting here and wanted to be a part of it. I also wanted my family to enjoy hunting and to be safe so I took the whole family through the hunter education course.

A year or two later I was approached by a New Mexico Department of Game and Fish Officer during a planning meeting for a proposed gun range in my community. He informed me that the community was in need of certified hunter education instructors. I signed up and took the Instructor Training workshop, studied the material, and with the help of some veteran instructors, I set off to teach my first course.

The gun range never saw fruition, but my career as a Hunter Education Instructor really took off. I was busy all the time — finding a place to teach that met my class criteria, putting the course together, and securing instructors was just the start. Then, I worked hard at becoming proficient at teaching, grading, and completing the necessary course paperwork. Thankfully I received tons of help from the other instructors and a strong support group from the program staff in Albuquerque.

I’ve been teaching for six years and compared to some instructors I am still a rookie. I am still learning and developing a skillset. I know my weaknesses and continually work on strengthening them...even though I travel down the rabbit hole of velocity vs. the gravitational pull when explaining how far a bullet travels every time. But I like it.

I like seeing the kids actually eager to learn. I enjoy seeing the pride in a father’s eyes when his son answers a question correctly and the mother and daughter pairs who want to hunt together. I love the smiles and the pride in the faces of the folks who have passed the course and relish their patches like a badge of honor. Yes, there are tears when a child doesn’t pass a test, but we do our best to console them and always invite them back for a second try.

What we do is important in the lives of these families who love to hunt or are exploring the idea. The lessons learned may actually save their life or someone else’s. The trust they have earned through their demonstration of knowledge and basic skills with a firearm is very important. Especially in the political environment we live in today.

So why do I teach hunter education? It fits my personality in having immediate gratification of a job well done. The rewards of preparing future hunters far outweigh the work and time involved. I learn something new and improve as an instructor each class. I also have grown very fond of my fellow instructors. Surrounding myself with good people is very important, so I’ll continue to teach and enjoy the company I keep. All of this is important to me, and that is why I teach.
Hearing loss is sneaky with regard to firearms. While it may often seem like hearing isn’t impacted in the field (especially when shooting .22-caliber or small-gauge shotguns), there are dozens and dozens of hunters that can tell you about “that moment” or “that shot” that left them with a decrease in hearing loss. Getting your students educated about how critical hearing protection is WITH ALL FIREARMS is a must.

According to Dr. William Clark, Ph.D. at the Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis, the damage caused by one shot from a .357 magnum pistol, which can expose a shooter to 165 dB for 2msec, is equivalent to over 40 hours in a noisy workplace.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECIBEL CHART</th>
<th>dB Averages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conversational Speech</td>
<td>60-65 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threshold of Pain</td>
<td>140 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centerfire Rifle</td>
<td>155-170 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centerfire Pistol</td>
<td>155-165 dB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shotguns</td>
<td>150-162 dB</td>
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While most plugs and muffs work well for most calibers and gauges of firearms, there are definite pluses that electronic muffs offer over standard plugs.

As an instructor, you know that the safest live-fire ranges for anyone, much less a range with many first-time students on it, still have their challenges around hearing. There are range rules to learn, commands to listen for, and a variety of sensations going on around first-time shooters that are distracting them from hearing your voice. Electronic muffs can help you run a safer range as well as offer a higher level of dB hearing protection for your students.

When choosing electronic muffs, check for proper fit. The cups should fully cover student’s ears with no gaps between the seal and the head.

Go the extra mile for electronic muffs with needed safety features like DLSC™ (Dynamic Level Sound Compression) from Pro Ears. This technology reacts instantly to any noise levels that exceed 82dB, and reduces them by about 40dB, yet puts lower sounds like conversation at an 82dB level, so your students on the range will HEAR your voice. Not only that, but in the field, students will hear animal movement, which will contribute to not only a safe, but also successful hunt.

In the end, protecting hearing is a vital piece of a successful hunting and shooting experience. Make sure your students truly understand how to safely protect their hearing on the range and in the field.
Steeped in tradition and quality, Weatherby wants to remind Hunter Educators of fantastic discounts designed just for them on their full line of products including the cool, freshly designed WBY-X series. “The Hunter Education program sets the tone for the future of our industry,” states Executive Vice President, Adam Weatherby. “The passion and dedication of our hunter education instructors helps pave the way.”

Shop online at Weatherby.com, then head to the Special Offers for Instructors section online at IHEA-USA.com.

Sharing your passion to properly train shooters and continue to grow the sport we all love, Smith & Wesson is pleased to offer discounts on a limited number of select firearms to support safer ownership through training. “Smith & Wesson is pleased to be working with the IHEA in order to show our gratitude and appreciation to the hard working men and women who have dedicated their time and talents to hunter education,” said Paul Pluff, Director of Marketing for Smith & Wesson. “Each year, thousands of first-time hunters and shooters are positively influenced through their participation in hunter education courses, and we at Smith & Wesson appreciate the amazing efforts of these volunteers.”

For more information go to: www.ihea-usa.com/instructors/special-offers-for-instructors

Instructor Access for IHEA-USA Website

Hunter Education Instructors have the opportunity to purchase many items at a discounted rate on the "Special Offers" section of the IHEA-USA website! For your exclusive access go to: www.ihea-usa.com/instructors/special-offers-for-instructors. Just click on the company hyperlink you are interested in and, when prompted, enter "gohunt" as your password. The password has no space and is all lowercase.
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World Champion Competitive Rifle Shooter