



N.C. Hunter Education Program Newsletter

Second Quarter 2014



The men and women who volunteer as hunter education instructors serve as teachers, mentors and coaches. The service they deliver is, quite literally, lifesaving.

IHEA Honors Two North Carolina Instructors



Floyd “Link” Grass (left), of Denver, is congratulated by Ryan Bronson with Federal Ammo, upon being named as the International Hunter Education Association Volunteer of the Year. Grass has been active in the Hunter Education Program for more than 15 years. Last year he organized and taught 56 courses and certified 811 students. He also recruited 11 new volunteer instructors. The IHEA conducted its annual meeting honoring top hunter education professionals and volunteers in downtown Charleston, S.C. on June 3-5. Those recognized have far exceeded in continuing the heritage of hunting worldwide.

Photo by Stewart Grinton, SC DNR



Allen Basala (left), of Cary, is congratulated by Travis Casper, HEP coordinator, upon being inducted into the International Hunter Education Association Hall of Fame. Allen has been an active and exemplary part of conservation and hunting safety in this state for more than 30 years. He has been recognized as instructor of the year on a local, state and national level; he also is recipient of the Governor’s Conservation Award numerous times. The IHEA is affiliated with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and all 50 states with a mission to develop safe, responsible, knowledgeable and involved hunters and shooters.

Photo by Stewart Grinton, SC DNR

Wildlife Officer Jon Evans Promoted to Colonel

Wildlife Officer Jon Evans has been promoted to the rank of colonel and chief of the agency’s Division of Law Enforcement, which includes the Hunter Education Program.

His predecessor, Dale Caveny, retired after 29 years of service. Evans will supervise hunter education specialists and wildlife officers across the state.

In 2011, Evans was named wildlife officer of the year by both the N.C. Wildlife Federation and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

He is a native of Mebane, a N.C. State University graduate and a veteran of the N.C. Army National Guard.

“The Hunter Education Program is more important than ever,” Evans said. “Our instructors are outstanding and thanks to them, conservation and safe hunting are well-served.”



Col. Jon Evans

Reloading Can Be Worthwhile for Instructors

By Hilton Best

District 3 Hunter Education Specialist

While most hunters enjoy the shooting sports in other avenues outside hunting, quite a few have not discovered the fascination of reloading.

In the early 1970s, as a young law enforcement officer, I started shooting local police pistol competitions. I ran across some used reloading equipment at the local pawn shop and began reloading .38 special loads as practice rounds. At that time, I could load a box of .38 special wad-cutters for about half the cost of buying commercial reloads. It was a great way to stretch my limited funds, and became another way for me to enjoy my shooting activities.

It didn't take long for me to discover the fascination of working up a load for my rifle, which made it much more accurate and enhanced the pleasure of shooting it.

Reloading gives you the flexibility to develop a specific load for any type of hunting or shooting activity. If you are truly interested in maximizing your rifle's potential for accuracy and performance, you should consider reloading.

There are many variables which can and do affect a rifle's accuracy. Reloading is a way of experimenting with these variables and learning what your rifle likes and dislikes. It is, in effect, a series of trial and error. Not only will you learn a great deal about how cartridge components interact to affect accuracy, you will also discover the satisfaction of watching your shot groups get smaller and more consistent. As a result, you may find yourself shooting more often, which will produce other benefits.

We all realize that practice makes us better at any activity and shooting is no exception.



Always pay careful attention to measurements.

While there is cost associated with reloading, it doesn't have to be excessive. Start out simple and work up as your knowledge and skills increase. Look around for used equipment. There are some very good deals to be had if you just look around. Reloading is like a lot of other activities. You don't have to have every gadget on the market to produce good reloads. In fact, I am still using the reloading press I purchased at the pawn shop over 40 years ago. It has served me well and I just can't bring myself to spend the money to upgrade when it is doing everything I want it to do.

Reloading, like other shooting activities, is very safe, as long as basic safety rules are followed. Gun powders are very flammable and precautions should be put in place to prevent accidents. It is very important to clean up any powder spills immediately and to avoid possible ignition sources such as open flame heaters, smoking, etc.

Never mix different powders and never exceed the powder manufacturer's recommendations for maximum loads. Learn to recognize and be aware of signs of excessive pressures.

If you have never been involved in reloading, consider giving it a try. You may discover that it is a very enjoyable experience and a great way to enhance your shooting experience in the off season.



An organized and clean reloading bench is important.



On Target with the State Hunter Education Coordinator

It has been another successful spring with the Hunter Education Program. This year's Youth Hunter Education Skills Tournaments again experienced growth with 291 teams participating. The agency has received many accolades for the well run district and state events. All the activities ran efficiently and represented the outstanding efforts of our staff and volunteers.

In the WRC's strategic plan we are tasked to feature strong partnerships with other natural resources entities to complement the mission of our agency to leverage resources. The state chapter of Ducks Unlimited has partnered with the Wildlife Commission by providing small bore shotguns for live fire ranges. We would like to thank Ducks Unlimited for the generous donation toward our hunter education efforts.

Because of Ducks Unlimited, along with other conservation partners and volunteer instructors' efforts,



Jay Taylor, state chairman-elect of Ducks Unlimited, center, presents Travis Casper, left, and Chris Kent with a .410 Browning at the Wildlife Commissioners' meeting in May. DU donated 8 smallbores to us.

thousands of people have enjoyed countless hours outdoors. This commitment has no doubt improved the wildlife and fisheries resources of North Carolina while providing pathways to participation with conservation.

The North Carolina National Guard also has become involved as a partner in recent months. They have been teaching classes in District 7 and really stepped forward to assist with the Hunter Education Skills Tournament. We have started a conversation with National Guard about future joint efforts across the state.

Bass Pro Shops in Concord recently worked with us to host a women-only hunter education course. This was the second course of this kind we have offered and allowed us to reach a new audience. Bass Pro Shops helped put these new participants on a pathway for continued involvement in conservation.

We are also very proud of Lincoln County instructor Link Grass and Wake County instructor Allen Basala for receiving honors from the International Hunter Education Association-USA. Link has been selected as the National Hunter Education Instructor of the Year and Allen has been inducted into the Volunteer Instructor Hall of Fame.

The Hunter Education Program, our conservation partners and the efforts of you, the volunteers, exemplify the agency's vision of featuring strong partnerships.

By continuing to work together we can achieve great victories for conservation. Until next time, keep your muzzles high and powder dry.

Travis J. Casper

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Advanced Workshop Set, New Time Requirements

Advanced Hunter Education Instructors Workshop

This year's Advanced Hunter Education Instructors Workshop is Oct. 3-5 at 4-H Camp Millstone near Ellerbe in Richmond County.

All certified hunter education instructors are welcome to attend this weekend of instruction and fellowship. The workshop is designed to further the knowledge level of the Wildlife Commission's dedicated volunteers in their continuing effort to promote hunter education and to sustain the hunting tradition. All courses will take an in-depth look at teaching techniques along with valuable hands-on training. Both days' curriculum should prove interesting and fun.

A registration form will be mailed in August. We hope you will join us.

Basic Course Hour Requirements Change

Beginning July 1, the minimum time requirement for hunter education courses will be reduced to six hours.

This change will not affect reciprocity with other states. At the IHEA-USA meeting held in Charleston, new standards were adopted and North Carolina exceeds these standards.

This is an attempt to allow the required field of study to be delivered in a one-day course. The justification is that the focus of hunter education should be on safe and ethical hunting, and not belabor the process with a mandated time constraint.

Your local Hunter Education Specialist will provide lesson plans for the streamlined course. We will continue to engage the public in advance courses and range days.

The Hunter Education Program newsletter is published quarterly by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission. Comments and submissions are welcomed. 2,500 copies of this publication printed by Chamblee Graphics, Raleigh, at a cost of \$.XX per copy.

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