

We believe that through this program, we will help future generations of Georgians...whether they hunt or not...understand and appreciate a diversity of human experiences with wildlife.

This is the challenge we send from the classrooms of Georgia to the anti group.

## **HUNTER SAFETY GOES TO SCHOOL (A Classroom Challenge to the Anti Crowd)**

### **Part II**

*by*

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The major thrust of Missouri's Hunter Safety efforts are in the school classrooms of our state. This is not to say that we train exclusively through the school systems... quite the contrary, we still employ all of the standard approaches that have served the program so well for so many years....4-H Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, F.F.A., Conservation Clubs, etc.

We have learned, however, that by working cooperatively with the classroom teacher, our training efforts reach a much broader cross section of Missouri's youth.....not just those interested in hunting. The classroom approach allows us to reach considerably larger numbers of the fairer sex.....a must if the sport of hunting is to survive and the right of private ownership of firearms is to continue. Recent studies have proven that the majority of females of college age are opposed to both hunting and the use of firearms.

The Missouri Department of Education officially recognized hunter safety as an accredited course of study for Missouri schools in 1969....Since that beginning the program has been broadened to include recreational shooting.

In my ensuing remarks when referring to hunter safety you should also think in the general terms of firearms safety and when referring to the shooting sports the term recreational shooting should be considered as synonymous and both terms should be considered to include archery. I point this out because of the nature of our program.

Perhaps the best over-all definition of our program has been supplied by the Missouri State High School Activities Association as a "Sequential instructional and competitive shooting sports program beginning with hunter safety training and skill development in the physical education program and culminating as an inter-scholastic school sponsored activity."

Developed jointly by the Missouri Departments of Conservation and Education, this course is founded on the rationale that.....

"The shooting sports program is a sequential educational process designed to begin with basic hunter safety instruction and culminating in a lifetime of recreational and competitive sports. There are several important fundamental reasons for schools to support this program, beginning with our state and national heritage, the citizens' constitutional rights and the furtherance of ones ability to get along in society with his peers. The development and use of firearms have been synonymous with the expansion and growth of our state and nation.

Shooting is a lifetime sport. It is a sport that should be available to members of either sex and offers a multitude of co-educational possibilities. Competitive shooting lends itself to the development of sportsmanship, teamwork and self-discipline. Age, sex and physical size are not limiting factors for the participants in recreational shooting. The shooting sports can be enjoyed and safety participated in by the handicapped as well as the physically fit. For some participants this shooting sports program could lead to the

olympics or international competition. But for the multitudes it will yield personal satisfaction and become a rewarding educational activity.

Hunter Safety is the instructional basis for the course, and is required before a student can participate in any of the shooting phases of the program. The basic course requires a minimum of eight classroom hours and includes considerable emphasis on hunter/landowner relationships and sportsmanship in general; in other words—ethics. Additional areas of study includes such kindred subjects as survival, bow-hunting, target and field archery, basic aquatic safety, etc. Many instructors choose to develop their own optional outdoor education program, in accordance with their particular needs.

Basic marksmanship utilizing BB and pellet equipment within the classroom is the first step in skill development and is generally conducted as a part of the junior high school program. Because of the nominal cost of the equipment involved and the relative ease with which the projectiles can be controlled, no special facilities are required.....therefore; there is no logical reason for a school not participating in the program. It is my understanding from past conversations with other Hunter Safety Coordinators (particularly those with large eastern metropolitan areas within their state) that in-school shooting has created problems as far as the school administrators are concerned. Thus far, our program has met with little resistance from principals and superintendents. In fact in many cases they are the ones that have insisted upon this training in their districts.

It is important that when working with junior high school age students the emphasis be placed upon skill development and enjoyment of the sport rather than competition.

High School brings with it the maturity needed for earnest competition. Postal and shoulder to shoulder matches are the order of the day. Competition is offered to the high school students in precision air, small bore, trap, skeet, target and field archery. Tentatively approved by the State's Activities Association, participants are eligible for school letters.....the same as in football, basketball, baseball, etc.

Considerable time is presently being spent and will continue to be required for some months to come.....For the training of teachers to implement this program. To date all universities in the state university system offer courses for preparation of the young teacher in this field. The cooperation received from industry and particularly the Daisy Company has been most gratifying.

Because of the wide diversity of costs and facility requirements.....and because of such programs as the D.C.M. (Director of Civilian Marksmanship Programs that will loan equipment and ammunition at no cost), and because of the support offered by industry, a shooting sports program of some type is within the reach of virtually every school.

As stated in the panel's introductory remarks, the opposition has chosen the school classroom as one of its battle grounds.....Therefore, if we are to survive, I personally feel that it is imperative that we meet our foe head on.....on his chosen ground; and prove to the young people of this nation that guns *are not* inherently dangerous.....nor hunting the evil pass-time that they have labeled it as being. Lest we not lose sight of the fact that under new state and federal laws...THESE YOUNG PEOPLE STEP DIRECTLY FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION PLATFORM TO THE VOTING BOOTH.