

using the Regional Information Extension Officers' assistance in arranging meeting halls, setting up equipment used in the presentation and passing out the different manuals, thus helping the speaker by allowing him to concentrate entirely on the teaching of the course.

HUNTER SAFETY TRAINING AS A PART OF I & E IN NORTH CAROLINA

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"One of the finest things the Commission has done in behalf of the sportsmen of our state," is the reply most often heard when a hunter in the field, familiar with the Hunter Safety Training Program, is asked about this program. With such reports as this it is no wonder the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission takes pride in participating with the National Rifle Association in its Hunter Safety Training Program.

Safety is as much a part of shooting as the gun itself, and is strengthened by the individual who recognizes this and performs his responsibility.

The hunter safety program started in New York, in 1949, was revised for nationwide use in consultation with units of the National Education Association. It teaches proper gun handling in circumstances related to hunting. Basic information about ammunition and guns, especially as applied to their safe use, is also included. Sportsmanship is stressed too, because safe hunting and sportsmanship go hand-in-hand. There is no intent to teach marksmanship in this minimum four-hour course—that is a separate subject requiring considerably more training and practice. The sole aim is to give the new hunter, and refresh the old hunter, with basic information which should enable him to avoid hunting accidents.

As of August 1, 1961, there is a staff of 32,395 Hunter Safety Instructors in 50 states, D.C., and 8 Provinces of Canada. Since 1949, 1,160,341 students have graduated from a hunter safety training course.

Here in the twelve states of the Southeastern Association 32,208 students have been trained by 1,441 instructors.

		<i>Instructors Approved Students Graduated</i>
Alabama	49	839
Arkansas	38	138
Florida**	184	1,926
Georgia	70	1,817
Kentucky	44	11,882
Louisiana	32	1,218
Maryland	195	3,505
Mississippi	22	2,306
North Carolina*	465	2,498
South Carolina	21	204
Tennessee	101	329
Virginia*	220	5,546

* State-wide program as of August 1, 1961.

In estimated comparison with the total program nationwide we have trained in the southeast only 2.8% of the students and have but 4.4% of the instructors, though 23% of the nation's hunting population is in this region. Safe hunting provides a real challenge to the sportsmen and organizations of the Southeastern Association area.

North Carolina has been in the program for only one year on a state-wide basis. Beginning on September 1, 1960, there were 82 certified hunter safety instructors who dealt directly with the N.R.A. On September 1, 1961, the cooperative staff is now 465. We initiated the voluntary cooperative program with the belief that quality of instruction would be more effective than quantity. We propose to put a ceiling on

the number of instructors so that those not doing their share will be replaced with those more willing to participate.

I would like for you to know how we went about this program in our state, and together, with your experience, we may be able to discuss ideas and programs that can do much toward making hunting in the South safer than it already is.

Early in 1960, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission looking toward the cooperative National Rifle Association's Hunter Safety Training Program, liked what it saw; and after an exchange of correspondence, arranged for a training session to provide a nucleus of instructors who would initiate the training program within the Commission.

On May 10-11, 1960, at the Institute of Government, University of North Carolina, Mr. Stanley A. Mate, Director of Training with the N. R. A. taught and certified nine wildlife patrolmen and two education representatives of the Commission. By August of that year these eleven instructors trained and certified the remaining 127 members of the Commissioners' wildlife protection division. At the present time all members of the protection division are instructors; and, when new men are assigned to fill resignations or replacements, they too are taught, examined, and certified. This in effect makes available at least one certified hunter safety instructor in each of our 100 counties. Considering the multiplicity of duties and the work load each protector has, it was deemed advisable to interest citizens of each county in the program.

At the Commission meeting June 7, 1960, a resolution was adopted that instituted the Hunter Safety Training Program. The Commission felt it had a moral responsibility to the hunters and other citizens of the state with regard to their safety.

The N. R. A. named the Commission as its clearinghouse for the hunter safety program in North Carolina. Now, all instructor examinations and their subsequent student reports are sent to the Raleigh office for appraisal and compilation. Here began our state-wide program.

To build up our present staff, a prepared letter with an appropriate invitation was sent to members of the N. C. Recreation Commission and the city recreation departments of the state; to each of the thirteen Boy Scout Councils; to the president of the wildlife clubs affiliated with the N. C. Wildlife Federation; to the Vocational Agriculture Division of the State Department of Public Instruction; and to the State 4-H Club office. Needless to say, the response from each of these organizations was representative and gratifying. We now have a corps of volunteer instructors in 83 of our 100 counties.

At the 1960 N. C. State Fair the Commission's display was on hunter safety. This display was a quiz contest based on the principles of hunting safety.

During the fall and winter months a corps of instructors were trained in five Boy Scout Councils. This group in turn trained the other Scoutmasters and Explorer advisors in their Council. Throughout the state this summer each Council camp provided instruction on hunter safety to those scouts in attendance.

Over 400 boys and girls at the 4-H Camps took advantage of optional training in hunter safety during their week in camp.

For this first year, we have used suitable material recommended by and obtained from the N. R. A.

An inquiry to become a volunteer instructor is answered with a "thank you for your inquiry" letter, plus an instructor's examination blank and an order blank for materials. When the examination is returned it is graded and the personal information evaluated. We set a high standard for passing; over two questions missed, and the examination is returned to the applicant for correction. The correct answer is marked for each of the questions missed and the applicant is asked to write a paragraph or so explaining why the answer we indicate to be correct *is* correct. In only one instance have we had the applicant fail to make the correction and resubmit.

The successful applicant to become an instructor receives from the Commission a letter of congratulation, four student report forms, two order forms, one ID card filled out, one instructor brassard, one hunter safety handbook, and one instructor's guide. At the present time the

instructor's kit is supplemental with an instructor's manual prepared by the Commission.

At the end of our first year in this program, we have a ratio of one hunter safety award for every 200 licensed hunters, and one reported hunting accident for every 8,000 licensed hunters.

As you may know, 13 states now require a certificate of competence or a certificate of proficiency in safe hunting for those who are purchasing a license for the first time. Basically, the *volunteer* program is more effective among the sportsmen than the *mandatory* program. At first it seems that the mandatory approach will settle all the problems of hunting in a safe manner, but it just doesn't work that way. Administrative details soon encumber the program and impair its efficiency. A sound, voluntary Department—sportsman relationship will serve the interest of both in a more effective manner.

A LESSON FOR WILDLIFE MANAGERS FROM VIRGINIA'S WILDLIFE ESSAY CONTEST

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From among the thousands of papers received each year in the Virginia Wildlife Essay Contest, preliminary screening results in the selection of the finalists of the 8 eligible grades, the judges, representing the State Board of Education and the contest's co-sponsors, the Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League and the State Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, then select the scholarship, grand prize and other cash award winners.

While reading the essays in the capacity of final judge for the Commission last spring, I was impressed on the one hand by the youthful essay writers' great awareness of natural resource conservation problems and yet, on the other hand, by the great gaps in their understanding of the basic principles of wildlife management.

The widespread acceptance of the need for protecting forests from fire and the desirability of reforestation and management was evident, reflecting the effective campaigning of the Virginia Division of Forestry and the U. S. Forest Service.

Most of the children expressed considerable knowledge of the soil in their communities and how it should be used and protected. Here, years of effort by the U. S. Soil Conservation Service and V.P.I. extension workers have "gotten the story across" to the youth of today—and the adults of tomorrow.

The same conservation consciousness was reflected in most of the remarks on pollution control and watershed development. Excellent progress has been made with young people in these areas.

Their writing on the subjects of wildlife and wildlife management left much to be desired, however. I do not mean that progress has not been made in this field, because it has. There was very much in evidence the knowledge that wildlife is a product of the soil, plants and water found in any community. The children knew that the word "habitat" means the "home" of a given bird, animal or fish and that each species demands certain combinations of food and cover in order to produce young, raise them successfully and then survive through the months of cold and hunger.

The fact that shortcomings in their knowledge remain is dramatically shown by their placing too much faith in the setting up of refuges, preserves and sanctuaries; in the belief that winter feeding makes things all right again after a heavy snow; that restocking desirable species is the answer in game-short areas; that all we need is more game wardens or protection; that hunters and fishermen have caused all the shortages; that our forefathers started all this by being so greedy. These are the statements which worry me, which indicate that modern wildlife management concepts are not understood, that reflect the inadequacy of the available printed explanations these children have.

* Address now—Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, Maryland.