

Program cultivates youngsters' love for outdoors

Hunting is a valued natural heritage — one that must be passed on from one generation to the next. But hunter numbers are decreasing, and younger generations are in danger of missing these treasured experiences. And fewer hunters reduces the financial, social, and political support needed for effective wildlife management.

“Pass It On” is a program designed to reverse the declining trend in hunter numbers. While the program is made up of many different subprograms, such as Outdoor Mentors, Shooting Opportunities, Hunting Access, Special Hunts, and Education and Awareness, its most valuable component is you. It takes a hunter to make a hunter, and it is critical that youth learn important life lessons in the outdoors from experienced hunters.

Anyone can become involved by simply taking a youngster hunting this fall. There are new opportunities this year to make those first hunts rewarding, quality experiences. Anyone born on or after July 1, 1957, must successfully complete an approved course in hunter education before hunting in Kansas — except that anyone 15 years old and younger may hunt without hunter education certification provided they are under direct supervision of an adult 18 or older. There is no minimum age to apply for and receive big game or turkey permits.

YOUTH WATERFOWL SEASON — In

each of the duck zones, two days will be set aside for youth waterfowl hunting (ducks and dark geese). Hunters 15 and younger may hunt under the supervision of an adult 21 or older. The adult may NOT hunt but must possess all licenses and stamps required to hunt.

YOUTH UPLAND BIRD SEASON — Nov. 5-6 is a weekend for youth to hunt pheasants and quail prior to the traditional opening day. Youth 16 and younger may hunt under the supervision of an adult 18 or older. The supervising adult may not hunt. Daily bag limits are half the regular season limits.

YOUTH SPRING TURKEY SEASON — The spring of 2006 will offer a spring turkey season for youth 16 and younger accompanied by an adult 18 or older. The dates are April 7-9. The adult may not hunt.

Other special hunt opportunities and wingshooting clinics will be available. Contact your nearest Kansas Wildlife and Parks office or local sportsmen's group such as chapters of Quail Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited and National Wild Turkey Federation.

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) is also sponsoring youth/mentor events in cooperation with local sportsmen's groups. Contact Mike Christensen, 316-263-3300 for more information on BBBS events.

For more information on “Pass It On,” contact Mike Miller, 620-672-5911.

Clinic encourages shooting sports

COUNCIL GROVE — Area youth are invited to attend a free wingshooting and gun safety clinic on Saturday, Oct. 15, at Council Grove Reservoir. Sponsored by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), the Neosho Valley Chapter of Quail Unlimited (QU), and Morris County hunter education instructors, this special event will provide participants with an opportunity to learn basic wingshooting skills. Controlled live-fire instruction and a computer hunting simulator will teach safe, responsible shooting techniques.

Participants will be provided gun safety and wingshooting instruction by National Rifle Association and National Sporting Clays Association certified shotgun instructors. All gear and supplies, including shotguns, shells, targets, and eye and ear protection will be provided by KDWP's “Pass It On” Program. Teaching techniques are designed to have students breaking targets by the end of the ses-

sion.

Anyone between the ages of 10 and 16 may participate. Participants are required to pre-register for the event. Students are not required to have completed a hunter education course, but it is preferred. The event will begin at 12 p.m. at the COE-managed area between Marina Cove and Neosho Park, approximately one-quarter mile west of the COE office at the west end of the dam. Check-in and a free lunch will be provided by QU from noon to 1 p.m. Following lunch, a KDWP law enforcement officer and K-9 (dog) companion will provide a demonstration. Shooting instruction will follow and will end at approximately 4 p.m.

The event is part of KDWP's “Pass It On” Program, designed to increase the percentage of Kansans who hunt. Those interested are reminded to pre-register before Oct. 10. For more information, contact Brent Konen, Council Grove Wildlife Area manager, at 620-767-5900.

Demonstrations, hunts, auction and games are planned for rendezvous

OSBORNE — The Kansas Fur Harvester Association (KFHA) will hold its Annual Fall Rendezvous in Osborne on Oct 7-9 this year. This allows central and western Kansas trappers and furbearer hunters closer access to this traditional gathering. This year's event will begin at the Osborne Fairgrounds at 6 a.m. Friday morning with breakfast. Activities will run through noon Sunday. Admission is free, and the public is welcome. A food stand and concessions will be offered.

The event will include a dealer trade show featuring a large selection of trapping and furharvesting supplies. Trapping methods and predator calling demonstrations will feature six well-known professional trappers from Minnesota, Texas, Iowa, and Nebraska, plus Kansas experts showing the latest in new sets and equipment. Houndsmen will hold a session on raccoon dog training at 1 p.m. Saturday and sponsor a public raccoon hunt on Saturday night.

North American Fur Auctions will conduct ongoing fur handling demonstrations both Friday and Saturday, as well as the trapping demonstrations for bobcat, coyote, raccoon and other furbearers.

Friday evening will feature a social gathering and bonfire. A field trip for kids will be held Saturday at 2 p.m. Saturday evening will feature a banquet, KFHA awards, and a fur style show, followed by a “white elephant” auction. Games for kids and a tailgate flea market will round out the event.

Ample camper and tent space is available. For motel reservations, phone 785-346-5413 or 785-454-3345. For more information and a schedule of events, contact KFHA president W. R. Brecheisen at 620-431-2772, Roger Macy at 785-346-2076, or Cleo Hahn at 785-346-2773.

CATCH *the* BIG ONE!

GOOD LUCK FISHERMEN!

Charles Worden

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