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These boys went to the Kinsley Kids Classic shooting competition in Dodge City and Kinsley on Sept. 19 (from left): Taylor Murphy, Leighton Koel, Andrew Elling, Jay Ziegelmeier and Keegan Morgan — Photo by Carol Morgan

Students learn art of trap shooting

By **Andy Heintz**

*Colby Free Press
aheintz@nwansas.com*

A trap-shooting team made up of Colby middle schoolers has been participating in trap competitions at the Colby Trap Club since the season started last April.

The team includes Keegan Morgan, Kyle and Travis Finley, Andrew Taylor and Jay Ziegelmeier.

Dude Morgan, Keegan's dad, said the boys have improved their shooting at every meet.

Keegan said he and Ziegelmeier were the only people on the team who had much experience. He said his less experienced teammates improved throughout the season.

The team wants to stay together for next year's trap shooting season. He said there may be enough new young people to put together another team.

One of Keegan's most memorable moments this season came on a day when he hit 49 out of 50 blue rocks. He said this was the best score anyone would get all day. This is pretty impressive considering there were twelve teams competing that day.

Dude Morgan said all the guys who shoot at the trap club range are willing to help newcomers learn how to shoot.

Morgan said he took a group of kids to shooting tournaments in Dodge City and Kinsley on Sept. 19. The kids who went with him on the trip were Morgan, Leighton Koel, sophomore Andrew Elling, Jack Murphy of Oakley and Ziegelmeier.

The group first shot in Dodge City. During the event, he said, each kid got 50 single shots from 16 feet away. Keegan hit 46 out of 50 shots.

After the boys had finished in Dodge City, they traveled to Kinsley, where they participated in an event where each person was handicapped by the score they received at Dodge City. The contestants had to shoot from half the distance the number of blue rocks they hit at Dodge. This was particularly challenging for Keegan, who was forced to shoot from 23 feet away after hitting 46 out of 50 blue rocks at Dodge.

Dude said the most important thing to teach young trap shooters and hunters is gun safety. He said it's important to keep the gun on your shoulder and to keep your head down on the gun when shooting. He said having kids get into trap shooting sure beats them sitting around staring at the television or the computer.

State wildlife officials recognize the need to get kids interested in the outdoors. The Hunting Heritage Group, will be holding the fourth annual upland hunt in memory of former volunteer Darrell Brown on Saturday, Oct. 24, at a controlled shooting area called Pheasant Run, 30 miles west of Hays in Trego County.

The department said the hunt is for 36 youths 12 to 18. Each hunter will have the chance to harvest at least four chuckar partridges while hunting with pointing dogs. Participants will get instructions on how to hunt with pointing dogs, field safety, gun safety, how hunting dogs are trained, gun handling, how to clean and prepare birds, and what type of habitat to look for when hunting upland birds. The Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program is also involved in the event.

The hunt is part of the Kansas Hunter Recruitment and Retention Program called "Pass it On." The program is meant to address the need to recruit new hunters and retain existing hunters to ensure the future of the sport.

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