

# ALABAMA HUNTER EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS NEWSLETTER



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M. N. Pugh, Director  
Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division

Gary H. Moody, Chief  
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## 2009 GOVERNOR'S CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The recipient of the Governor's Conservation Achievement Award sponsored by the Alabama Wildlife Federation for hunter education in 2009 was Mr. Barry Hagan of Childersburg, AL. He received his award at the AWF banquet in Prattville on August 7, 2009. Mr. Hagan is a member of the Talladega County team and has promoted safe, responsible hunting through the Alabama Hunter Education Program for several years. Barry has served on the board of directors of the Alabama Hunter Education Association for several years and been in the president's position since February, 2009. His efforts and those of all instructors that promote safe responsible hunting through the Alabama Hunter Education Program are sincerely appreciated.



Mr. Matt Bowlen, Alabama Power Company; Mr. Lee Thuston, Alabama Wildlife Federation; Mr. Barry Hagan, Talladega County Hunter Education Instructor; Commissioner Barnett Lawley; Mr. Horace Horn, Power South Energy

### WFF Hunter Education Staff

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Most people spend more time and energy in going around problems than in trying to solve them.

Henry Ford

Become a possibilitarian. No matter how dark things seem to be or actually are, raise your sights and see possibilities - always see them, for they're always there.

Norman Vincent Peale

## IHEA Peer Review

The International Hunter Education Association (IHEA) conducted a peer review of the Alabama Hunter Education Program during the week of August 24-28, 2009. The review team consisted of Wayne East, EVP of IHEA; Tom McCoy, Federal Aid Program in Washington D.C.; Christine Willis, Federal Aid Program in Atlanta, GA; John Sturgis, Louisiana Hunter Education Coordinator; and Marilyn Bentz, EVP of the National Bowhunter Education Foundation. The peer review was funded through a multi-state grant coordinated through the IHEA.

The Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries (WFF) sincerely appreciates the cooperation and assistance of all instructors that provided information to the peer review team. Many of you provided written comments to the review team through a written survey that was mailed to you in May, 2009. The review team also interviewed many Division employees while they were in Alabama.

The review team presented their initial findings to a group of WFF administrators on the morning of August 28, 2009. Overall, the review team spoke positively of our program, instructors, and staff. A suggested area for improvement was in our use of volunteer instructors throughout the state. Director Pugh recognizes the importance and value of volunteer instructors and accordingly has requested our employees to focus on the recruitment of additional volunteer hunter education instructors. We sincerely request all instructors to assist with the recruitment of additional volunteer hunter education instructors. Increased utilization of volunteers might allow our staff to more effectively manage their time and achieve the goal of maintaining the integrity of course content in order to produce safe, responsible hunters with legitimate certification meeting national standards. Volunteers represent a group of highly motivated individuals that are committed to the hunter education program. The goal of this effort is to develop teams of volunteer instructors that provide the bulk of hunter education instruction in a given county with limited input from local Conservation Officers and Wildlife Biologists. Regional Hunter Education Coordinators will be responsible for communicating and coordinating efforts with the identified volunteer teams.

Two other items identified during the peer review process was the need for standardized evaluation of instructors by staff members and inconsistent delivery of hunter education courses on a statewide basis. Hunter education staff members have discussed both of these issues and hope to implement a process that allows us to adequately evaluate instructors and consistently deliver a standardized quality hunter education course.

The review team is in the process of preparing a detailed final report to present to our agency within the next few months.

**Creative thinking may simply mean the realization that there is no particular virtue in doing things the way they have always been done.**

Rudolph Flesch

## Attention Vocational Agri-business Instructors

By Ray Metzler



The Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries developed a partnership with the Department of Education to begin implementing an exciting, new archery curriculum in the public school system. The program entitled "Archery - On Target For Life" involves a two week curriculum geared toward 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. As part of this program, our agency is providing schools a storage box for use in the gymnasium. Several Vocational Agri-business Teachers have built these boxes in the past. The success of the program has created a need for additional boxes. These boxes make great projects for students and Boy Scouts. The Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries will pay for all building materials for the boxes. Please contact me at 1-800-245-2740 if you or someone you know is interested in constructing some of these boxes for use in the archery program.

## Vo-Ag Professionals Enjoy Auburn Workshop

The annual advanced hunter education workshop for Vocational-Agribusiness teachers was conducted at Auburn University on June 16-18, 2009. Activities included discussions on the Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Act, Conservation Advisory Board, hunting accident trends, shooting range development, changes for the upcoming hunting season, and other items of interest to hunter education instructors.

The group took a trip to the Auburn Police Department firing range for instruction on the use and operation of many common types of hunting firearms. Scores were recorded for a shotgun and archery event for inclusion in the overall top gun score. A written test regarding all of the instruction provided was given on the last morning of the workshop just prior to departure.



Brock Nolin, Vocational Agri-business teacher at Tallassee High School, was the recipient of the top gun award at the 2009 workshop in Auburn.

The overall top gun was **Brock Nolin** from Tallassee High School in Elmore County. Mr. Nolin received a custom handmade knife made by Mr. John Harbuck, retired Vo-Ag teacher at Florala High School. We appreciate Mr. Harbuck's interest and generosity for providing such a gift as an award for this workshop.

We sincerely appreciate **Dr. Gordon Patterson** at Auburn University for his assistance and cooperation in making each of the vocational agri-business workshops a success! He has been instrumental in promoting the hunter education

program as a vital part of the vocational agri-business curriculum.

## Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Website

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources website has many interesting and informative facts regarding Alabama's vast natural resources. I encourage you to visit the site on a routine basis to learn more about what's going on in Outdoor Alabama. The Information and Media Section of our department routinely sends press releases to our employees and other interested recipients. We generally do not forward these emails to instructors because of concern regarding your privacy and what you might consider spam. The press releases are posted on the website at <http://www.outdooralabama.com/news/> and present information regarding all facets of our Departmental activities and news.

### Please Submit Your Data!

The Hunter Education Program office periodically receives requests from individuals who were unable to download a duplicate card from our website. Sometimes this situation is a result of an instructor not submitting the data to the Montgomery office. This problem is easily rectified when the course information has been collected through the online registration process. Often times we can call the instructor and easily have the data in our database the same day. However, instructors that have unsubmitted scantron forms in a desk drawer or box at their house may forget about the items and fail to submit them to this office in a timely manner. *Please submit your data to the Montgomery office no later than two weeks after the course is completed! We request all instructors to take a few moments and ensure they have no outstanding data from previous courses.*

We also recommend instructors consider using the electronic data submission process for all future courses. We have not mandated this process but have encouraged instructors to use this process when appropriate.

### Community Archery Park and Range Development Projects

Two new community archery parks at Eastgate Park in Dothan and the Demopolis Sportsplex should be christened in the near future. Construction at both sites is nearly complete and we anticipate opening these facilities in early October. Both sites are similar in design but the Dothan adult range has targets out to 80 yards instead of 50 yards. Both facilities have youth ranges with targets from 5-20 yards and elevated platforms with targets from 10-40 yards. These facilities are operated through unique partnerships with Dothan Leisure Services, Demopolis Parks and Recreation, and the Archery Trade Association.

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*All the great speakers were bad speakers at first.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson