

Summer 2017



Alberta Hunter Education
Instructors' Association

Conservation Education

The Voice of Conservation Education in Alberta

Magazine



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President's Message

“ ... we are busy as ever and we have a great deal of growth planned. ”

By Robert A. Gruszecki



Robert A. Gruszecki
President - AHEIA

It seems like each year goes by faster than the one before, leaving us looking at each other, wide-eyed, saying, “June? Already?!” So much has happened already this year that I shouldn't be surprised it's already over half done. And there is so much yet to do!

Pleasure Craft Operator Training

BOATING SAFETY INSTRUCTION PRESENTED BY



So far, 2017 is proving a busy year for AHEIA. The Pleasure Craft Operator Training (PCOT) has gained momentum, with over 60 instructors already certified and classes ongoing across the province. The online PCOT course is still in production and requires final approval by Transport Canada, but in its infancy has already won a Platinum Hermes award. More news will follow on this exciting addition to our training program soon. If you are interested in teaching this important safety program, contact us at any of our centres; your help is most welcome!

Another online course in the works is the Fishing Education Program; a much-needed course for the over three million anglers in Alberta that has been one of the many projects simmering on the back burner until recently. Soon, Albertans will be able to learn about different fish species, fishing regulations, techniques and more from the comfort of their homes or at one of our centres. This enhancement to our in-class training will provide our instructors with state of the



Photos Credit: Ken Miracle

art audio/visual aids to improve upon an already extremely successful and time-proven program.

Another exciting project we find ourselves in the midst of is a Sheep Education program which will join the “Essentials” series. This course will be for sheep hunters and non-hunters alike. It deals with judging legal rams in the field from a variety of angles, as well as dealing extensively with sheep management and physiology. This course is being designed as a Gold level course offering, that will deal with specifics of this species in a very detailed way ... a “graduate hunter program”, if you will. This advanced course should contribute substantially to the knowledge of the hunter and non-hunter alike, which should ultimately convert to an important component of sheep herd management in Alberta.

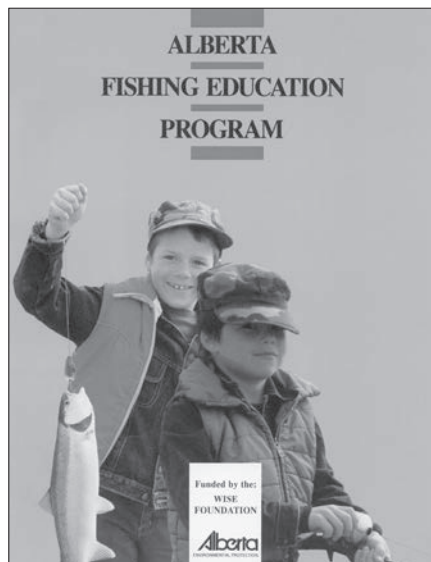
Following on the success of the Field Techniques smartphone app, AHEIA has been working on additional versions, including a Waterfowl app for hunters of migratory birds to use in the field.

Just like Field Techniques, the new apps will be available for iPhone and Android OS. On the heels of our hugely successful online training programs, we are also upgrading our Conservation and Hunter Education program. We try to stay abreast of changes in technology, and put the best possible offerings forward for our students. It's clear to us that we need to ensure our programs are available on the latest equipment our students use. In the past, students who couldn't attend an in-classroom session would take their course on a computer. Today, there are fewer and fewer students using a full-sized computer. Today's savvy student wants to do their learning on a smartphone, a tablet or similar mobile device. Believe it or not, our courses have to be rewritten (delivery, not content) to enable a student to see everything on their high tech devices that they previously saw on their full screen computers. AHEIA has invested heavily in time, labour and technology to ensure all our programs stay current with technological developments and trends.

The Calgary Firearms Centre also has a full calendar of registered and non-registered shoots, public and private events in 2017, including the Alberta Provincial Trapshooting Championships, July 19-23. There have been extensive improvements to the facilities and equipment over the past year; be sure to drop by for a few rounds of trap, skeet or sporting clays, and some camaraderie!

AHEIA is in the process of developing additional firearms ranges and other property in the central and northern areas of the province. We are very excited to soon be able to offer Albertans more places to learn safe firearms practices in a hands-on environment. There is much to do and many pieces need to fall into place, but we are very optimistic! More information is to come, so keep an eye out for upcoming announcements.

We are adding substantial capacity to our Alford Lake Conservation Education Centre for Excellence. As this article goes to print, we are drilling the last few feet of a well on the range side of our property. Power is being routed and a large septic system is being placed. All of this will service a new structure that will sleep approximately 24



Continued ➤



people, with showers, toilets, full service kitchen, and more. We are looking forward to it being fully operational and adding nicely to our camp operations.

I am also very happy to tell you that the delivery of the plethora of training programs we offer contin-

ues to be a working partnership with our provincial government. This is our 54th year of working with government to deliver these programs. I personally believe it may very well be one of the very best examples of collaboration between government and volunteers in Alberta's history! Premier Notley, Minister Phillips and her staff have been extremely helpful in continuing to support and advocate for our continued existence.

In addition to all the activity described above and our collaboration with the government, AHEIA is proudly anticipating the 2,000,000th student to graduate our programs later this year! Plans to celebrate this momentous occasion are in the works and will be shared with the public as we approach this milestone. This is a stellar achievement and we expect to officially mark the occasion in a fitting way!

As you can see, we are busy as ever and we have a great deal of growth planned. These are some of the ideas that are the engines of our progress. Each of our programs improves peoples' lives by connecting them to wildlife, fish and wild places. These programs are continuing to help our organization grow, remain healthy

and at the forefront of what we do. All of this we call "Conservation Education".

Conservation Education exists because of a core group of volunteers who believe they can make a difference with their time, knowledge and energy. Our volunteers share their enthusiasm because they know it makes a difference! To our staff and volunteers: thank you for your "touch of wonder" and for your breath of fresh air into our cause. Thank you for all that you do!

Let's get ready to celebrate the incredible achievement of graduating our 2,000,000th student. A touch of wonder and accomplishment, indeed.

Cheers!

Robert A. Gruszecki
President



Staff Appointment



It is my pleasure to announce that, effective Monday, May 1, David Dolph has accepted a permanent position with AHEIA as Executive Director. He will report directly to me.

David has had a career spanning 30 years in the Alberta oil and gas business, exploring for hydrocarbons both domestically and internationally. As a professional geologist, he has led teams in new venture opportunities from offshore Nova Scotia to Kazakhstan.

Prior to joining AHEIA, Mr. Dolph volunteered as Chair on numerous committees within the AAPG (American Association of Petroleum Geologists) including Student Chapter, Student Technical Competition programs, Ethics, Membership and Credentials. He served as the AAPG Canada Region President and sat on the Executive Committee and Advisory Council. He was presented with the AAPG Award of Excellence, Recognition of Service and Distinguished Service awards for his volunteer efforts.

Born in Edmonton, David holds a Bachelor of Science degree (Specialization Geology) from the University of Alberta. He is an Alberta Registered Professional Geologist with APEGA and a Certified Professional Geologist with AAPG.

Like his father, also a geologist, David has spent his life outdoors in Alberta fly fishing, camping, hiking, skiing and canoeing. He has volunteered as an Alberta Environment Steward, and takes great pleasure in spending time outdoors with his wife, Heather, their four children, and two identical twin granddaughters.

David's passion for the outdoors and business acumen will be definite assets at AHEIA. He can be reached at 403-319-2287 and via email at daviddolph@aheia.com.

Please join with me as we welcome David onto our team.

Robert A. Gruszecki, President - AHEIA



Conservation Education Magazine

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Front Cover Photo:

Grizzly, Jasper National Park, Spring 2017.
Courtesy Don Kesler Nature Photography.



Firearms Education Report

“As usual, audits have continued and have revealed a few interesting trends.”

By Glenn McKay



Glenn McKay
Firearms Education
Coordinator
AHEIA

In June 2016, the Canadian Firearms Program took a step forward in the method of delivery for both the non-restricted and restricted programs. The jury is still out as to whether or not it is preferred. Seems to matter not, as it is the prescribed process.

As usual, audits have continued and have revealed a few interesting trends. One major issue for the instructors was teaching a maximum of 12 students by themselves. From the student feedback, they really like smaller class size. Although the reasons vary, it appears the student is less shy to ask questions, and there is more firearm handling time as well. For

the instructors who “team teach” with a second or third instructor, the students appear to have a better comfort level.

Based on the findings of the audits and general conversations with students and instructors, there has been a slight shift in the thinking of both student and instructor. The method in which the course is presented (PowerPoint) is, in general, the way that the student expects the course to be taught. If it is left to the instructor to read the manual, students tell me they would rather read it by themselves.

There have been a number of instructors that have left the program because they feel the technology is beyond them. That I understand, as I am more afraid of spreadsheets and tables than I am of teaching a group. Audits have pointed out some problems with the instructor and for the most part, the small issues have been worked out. There are also a number of instruc-

tors who took the time to attend the meetings, sign agreements, but until now, have not been able to complete a course. I am not sure of the reasons for not teaching, but that choice is up to the instructor.

So far in 2017, 25 new instructors have been certified and it is hoped that they can fill in some of the areas within the province that need active instructors. There will be more taught this year and it will be determined how many more are needed to answer the calls of the new students wanting the training.

Overall, it has been a decent year! As always, if you have any questions or concerns, let me know.



Contact Glenn at the Calgary office,
403-319-2282 (direct line) or
via email at bgm@aheia.com.

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**This is a very worthy cause,
and AHEIA is thrilled to have again been part of such a great event.**

Brian Burke's Targets for Kids Event

By Robert Gruszecki



Robert Gruszecki
President - AHEIA.

On June 8 at the Calgary Firearms Centre, Brian Burke's Targets for Kids event, held in partnership with KidSport Calgary and the Flames EvenStrength Program, had 28 teams of shooters and celebrities — almost twice as many teams as last year! — out to raise money for kids and have fun. Both those goals were achieved — and then some. Over \$40,000 was raised as celebrities and participants enjoyed trapshooting (some shooting for the first time), some friendly competition, and great weather. Southstreet Burger, Fiasco Gelato, and Big Sky BBQ Pit brought delicious food to keep everyone going.

This is a very worthy cause, and AHEIA is thrilled to have again been part of such a great event. Many thanks to the over 250 attendees, especially our incredible volunteers! This could not be done without you. The importance of organized sport in the lives of children is often undervalued, and that's why AHEIA, the Flames, and the good folks at KidSport are working hard to bring opportunities to kids. Since 1998, The EvenStrength Program has distributed over \$2,000,000 to support local minor hockey players. Thanks to KidSport Calgary's initiatives, over 17,000 kids have been assisted since 2012. In 2017, AHEIA anticipates graduating our 2,000,000 student!

Together, AHEIA, the Calgary Flames, and KidSport make a great team in the effort to get kids playing the sports they love.



**“ Many thanks to the over 250 attendees,
especially our incredible volunteers!
This could not be done without you. ”**



“ Over \$40,000 was raised as celebrities and participants enjoyed trapshooting (some shooting for the first time), some friendly competition, and great weather. ”





What?

2017 AHEIA Women's League



Who?

Everyone! All abilities welcome, including those who have never held a gun before.

Our coaches will help you step-by-step and get you breaking clays the first night, no firearm licence required.

An AHEIA membership is required and can be purchased onsite.

Firearms, eye & ear protection included.

Where?

The Calgary Firearms Centre
242 Avenue & 32 Street SW
DeWinton, AB

www.AHEIA.com/calgaryfirearmscentre

Cost?

\$60 per session.

Member pricing on ammunition and targets.

When?

There will be three sessions to choose from — or join them all!

May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 & June 7
July 5, 12, 19, 26, August 2 & 9
September 6, 13, 20 & 27

Starting time is 6pm;
we ask that newcomers
arrive at 5:30pm
for an orientation.



Why Not?

Contact Allan Orr at 403-252-8474 or email allan@aheia.com
to register or for more information.



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The Outdoor Bound Mentorship Program
The Outdoor Women's Program
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Since 1985, Wildlife Habitat Canada, a national, non-profit, charitable conservation organization, has invested over \$50 million to support hundreds of conservation projects on private and public lands across Canada, through its granting program. Wildlife Habitat Canada works through partnerships with communities, landowners, governments, non-government organizations, and industry to conserve, enhance, and restore wildlife habitat. To learn more about the projects that Wildlife Habitat Canada has funded or to see our annual report, please visit www.whc.org.

Without habitat ... there is no wildlife. It's that simple!

Making Wildlife and Fish Part of the Value System of all Albertans.



Women's and Youth Leagues at the Calgary Firearms Centre

By Allan Orr



Allan Orr
Assistant Conservation
Education Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - South

Women's League

May 3, 2017 marked the beginning of our third annual AHEIA Women's League. As in previous years, the participants varied in age and ability from young women to seniors, from beginners to seasoned veterans. Our focus is and always will be on improving women's abilities and interests in the shotgun shooting sports by giving them an opportunity to shoot in a safe, educational en-

vironment. Of course, the social aspect is well taken care of in a non-pressured environment away from prying eyes!

AHEIA provides professional instruction from certified shotgun coaches who are AHEIA staff or trained volunteers. Shotguns are provided for those ladies who don't have their own, or for those who are looking to try something different. We recommend using 12 gauge shotguns rather than 20 gauge in order to give the shooters the best opportunity to hit their target. The difference in recoil is minimal, but the increase in the number of pellets being thrown at the target is significant. For those who just can't manage with a 12 gauge however, we do have some 20 gauges available.

The cost for the league is \$60 for the entire six week session and is pro-rated for those ladies who start part way through the season. An AHEIA membership is required (\$30 for a one-year individual membership) and each participant is required to purchase their own target rounds (groups of 25) and bring or buy their own target ammunition. Target rounds are \$6.50 per round of 25 and ammunition starts at \$8.30 per box of 25. Instruction is included in the league fee, as is the opportunity to meet and shoot with other ladies who hold a similar interest.

Sessions run on Wednesday evenings as follows:

- Session 1 – May 3 to June 7
- Session 2 – July 5 to August 9
- Session 3 – September 6 to September 27 (\$40 league fee)

Shooting starts at 6:00 each Wednesday evening and newcomers are asked to be there no later than 5:30 to get the orientation and paperwork out of the way.

Youth League

Starting in 2017, we are also running a Youth Shotgun League concurrent with the Women's League. All costs, instruction and times are the same and any youth who are interested in shooting are encouraged to attend. There is no set age limit, but the shooter must be able to hold and fire a shotgun by themselves. If you have questions about whether or not your youth can attend, or about anything to do with either league, call the Calgary Firearms Centre at (403)256-0665 or email allan@AHEIA.com.

*Hope to see you
out there!*



24th Annual Outdoor Women's Program

August 9-13, 2017



Evening & Special Events!

Alford Lake Olympics
Bow Tuning and Maintenance
Camp Fire Evening!
Cleanin' My Gun
Fly Tying
Game Calling 101
Knife and Axe Sharpening
Learn How to Photograph
Your Harvest
Nature Power Walk
Outdoor Jeopardy -
Learning About Wildlife and
Wild Places in the Most
Entertaining Way Possible
Rope Making

Potential Sessions Available:

- Archery
- Chainsaw Basics
- Fly Fishing
- Geocaching
- Handguns
- Introduction to ATVing
- Let's Go Bowhunting
- The Real Mantracker
- The Science of Fishing
- Trailing
- Walk on the Wild Side
- Wildlife Identification
- Wilderness Cuisine
- Wilderness First Aid
- Advanced Hunting - Big Game Animals
- Advanced Hunting - Upland Game Birds and Waterfowl
- Building Your Own Survival Bracelet and Learning How to Use it
- Canoeing - Basic and Advanced
- Crossbows - Getting Started
- Field Techniques - Preparing Your Animal for the Taxidermist
- Firearms Basics - Guns, Guns, Guns
- Get Out Alive! - Basic Outdoor Survival
- K-9s at Work
(Each day will feature a different type of working dog:
K-9 Police Dogs, Search and Rescue, Retriever and
Pointer Hunting Dogs)
- Predator Awareness - Preventing Conflicts with Carnivores
- Where Am I? Where Should I Be?
- Wilderness Survival - Basic
- Making Leather Moccasins



For more information contact dave@aeia.com
780-466-6682 • 1-866-282-4342





Edmonton Report

“ Giving back has great personal rewards. The more help we get, the better. ”

By Len Gransch



Len Gransch
Program Coordinator
AHEIA
Red Deer - North

It seems that time just flies by. Didn't we just celebrate New Years and here it is summer? Not that I am complaining ... well, perhaps a little.

The 2017 Outdoor Youth Seminar is slated for August 25-27. Download registration forms at our website or pick up copies at either our Calgary or Edmonton offices. This is a great event for the whole family. Let me know if you would like to volunteer at this event. We can always use a hand.

If you missed the 2017 Youth Hunter Education camp, you can get ready for the 2018 camps. Simply call our Edmonton office at 780-466-6682 or email us at edmontoninfo@aheia.com and we will place your name on our Advance Notification list for 2018. Don't miss out.

Please join us on September 9 for our Antler Scoring Workshop to be held in the Edmonton

office. Join official scorer Mr. Dave Paplawski for an informative session on how to score antlers and more. Dave is an official scorer for both Boone and Crockett and Pope and Young. The 2017 Antler Scoring Workshop will provide the participants with hands-on training on how to score their trophy using the Boone and Crockett system. All materials are included along with Dave's expertise. Coffee and snacks will also be provided. Download your registration form at our website www.aheia.com or give us a call.

Special thanks to all the volunteers and staff who assisted with 2017 Spring Fling banquet. Thanks also goes out to all the companies, organizations and individuals who donated to our cause. Your generosity once again helped make the event a big success. You all make my job easier, so thank you very much! Mark June 7, 2018 on your calendar and join us at our 5th annual Spring Fling.

We continue to look for volunteer assistance for all of our courses, camps, events, assistance around the office, etc. If you or any of our friends wish to become part of something bigger, please let me know. Giving back has great personal rewards; the more help we get, the better. If you

live in the Calgary area, please contact Glenn McKay at 403-319-2282 or by email at bgm@aheia.com. I know they are also looking for volunteer help.

For those instructors who borrow our firearms kits, please do not use any unauthorized ammunition with the firearms during your courses. Occasionally we find ammunition that does not belong in the kit and never came from AHEIA. Alarming, on occasion we find live ammunition mixed in with our dummy ammunition. You should obviously understand that this is unsafe and contradicts the rules set down by the CFO.

Until next time.

*Take Care and
Enjoy the Great Outdoors!*



Want to get involved with AHEIA? Want to teach potentially lifesaving skills? Want to talk about boats and boating?

AHEIA is currently canvassing for instructors for our
Pleasure Craft Operator Training (PCOT) Course

We have recently been approved by Transport Canada to provide training which would allow people to obtain their Pleasure Craft Operator Card. At this time we are taking names of anyone interested in teaching this course when we roll it out in the near future.

For teachers, this course will satisfy the requirement for WLD1090 in the NAT cluster in CTS.

Instructor training will be provided at no charge to those interested.

Pleasure Craft Operator Training

BOATING SAFETY INSTRUCTION PRESENTED BY



Please contact Allan Orr at allan@aheia.com or 403-319-2281 for more information, or to express your interest.



2017 Spring Fling Banquet and Fundraiser

“It seems like this event has become more of a family reunion rather than the average fundraiser.”

By Len Gransch



Len Gransch
Program Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - North

2017 marked AHEIA's 4th Annual Spring Fling fundraising banquet.

The event was very well attended and it was nice to once again see old and new acquaintances getting together to celebrate Conservation Education. It seems like this event has become more of a family reunion

rather than the average fundraiser. If you were unable to attend, I would really encourage you to try to attend next year. The 5th Annual Spring Fling will be held on Thursday, June 7, 2018 at the Taliani Palace in Edmonton.

Those attending had a vast array of items available to tempt them, including a live auction, specialty packages, bucket raffles, silent auction items, the Cabela's game processing package, and a beer for a year raffle. The live auction featured a custom metal sign, two African safaris, our popular elimination auction with the winner choosing a firearm, high-tech portable battery pack, three day precision rifle course with Rob Furlong, special wild game dinner for six from Normand's restaurant, NHL book and five commemorative replica rings, and a black bear hunt.

Special thanks to Mr. Dave Wideman who surprised us with a donation of four tickets to a Def Leopard concert that were auctioned off. There were lots of smiling faces and happy people enjoying themselves during this fundraiser.

This year's door prize of a Pure Wash Laundry System was won by Mr. Phil Reiser. Mr. Gary Didier was the winner of the early bird draw. He won a Savage Mark II camouflage .22 calibre bolt action rifle, complete with a Nikon PROSTAFF 3-9x40 scope and a hard case. Congratulations to both winners and thanks for the support. Next year's winner could be you if you attend the event!

An event like this would not be possible without the support of numerous businesses and organizations. In the current economic climate it is extremely difficult to obtain the donations required to make this event viable. A heartfelt thanks to all who were able to donate. Your continued support is very much appreciated indeed. It was very nice to see more young people attending. The Strong clan even brought their infant grandchildren. Keep up the good work.

This year's Volunteer Award was presented to Mr. Allan Neill. Allan has been a friend of Conservation Education for quite some time now. I first met Allan about seven years ago when he attended one of our firearms courses. After successfully completing the course he contacted me

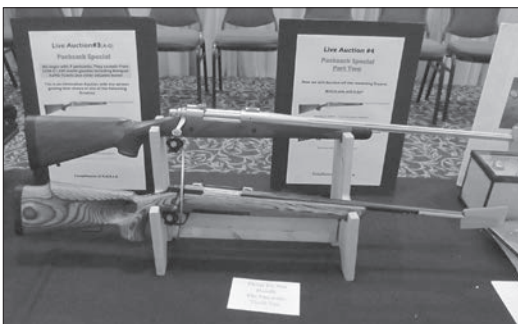
regarding volunteer opportunities with AHEIA. Within a short period of time Allan's volunteer endeavours were full speed ahead. Allan was not content at being the only volunteer in the family. In short order all his children and many in-laws were also assisting. Allan is the prototype of what a volunteer should be. His selfless help over the years has been very much appreciated. Congratulations Mr. Allan Neill.

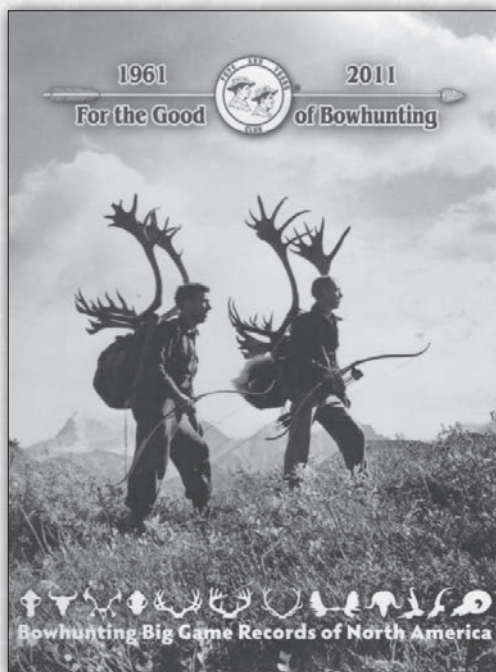
Thanks to Mr. Marvin Kleinbert who once again did a great job of anchoring the live auction as our auctioneer. Thanks also goes out to our MC Mr. Eric Moland who helped to make everything run smoothly and even had a good joke or two. Recognition also goes out to all the staff and volunteers who helped make this event a big success.

A special thank you once again to the Taliani family who run the Taliani Palace, which has hosted our event since its inception. Their friendly family attitude and dedication to details really make this event a huge success. The food is always a treat and my favourite item is still their fried fish ... wow! Thanks again. If you are considering holding an event in Edmonton, whether it is a wedding, reunion or banquet, give them a call at 780-468-6006. You will not be disappointed.

See you next year.







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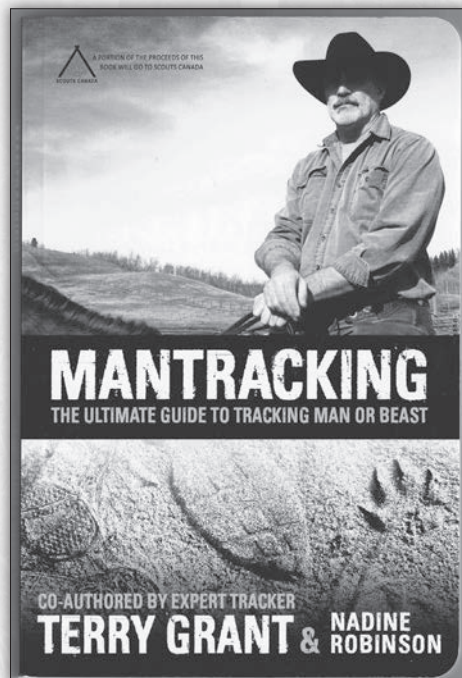
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**Important
information
for staying safe
in the
backcountry.**

Be Bear Smart!

The best method to avoid bear encounters:

- Remain alert.
- Shouting regularly or singing loudly is far more effective than using bear bells.
- Keep your ears open. Do not wear earphones while on trails.
- Watch for fresh bear signs. Tracks, scat and digs indicate that a bear has been in the area. Leave the area if the signs are fresh or if you encounter carrion.
- Travel in groups and during daylight whenever possible.
- Keep your dog on a leash or leave it at home.
- Be cautious about bear safety and fishing.
- Carry and know how to use bear spray.

If you encounter a bear:

- **STOP! STAY CALM.** Your calm behaviour can reassure the bear. Screams or sudden movements may trigger an attack.
- **NEVER RUN.** Running may cause the bear to pursue you.
- Pick up small children and stay in a group.
- Bears may approach or stand on their hind legs to get a better look at you or to pick up your scent. This is their way of identifying you and is not an aggressive response.
- **BE HUMAN.** Speak to the bear calmly and firmly. This indicates that you are not a prey animal. Appear passive.
- If you have bear (pepper) spray, get your hands on it and be ready to use it. Take note of the direction and strength of the wind.
- Keep your backpack, hiking poles and other equipment — they can provide protection.

If the bear approaches you:

- Remain calm. Prepare to use your bear spray.
- Assess the bear's behaviour and try to determine why it is approaching.

If the bear appears defensive —

- A defensive bear may be feeding or protecting young or you may simply have surprised it — this is why it is imperative that you shout or sing regularly while on the trail.
- A defensive bear will appear stressed or agitated and may make noise.
- Try to appear non-threatening.
- Talk in a calm voice.
- Whenever the bear is not advancing, slowly move away without turning your back to the bear.
- If the bear continues to advance, stand your ground and keep talking. If the bear approaches to within 4 metres (12 feet or about a car length), use your bear spray.
- Note that some brands of bear spray can be used at a distance of up to 9 metres (30 feet) depending on wind and weather. Always check the instructions on the bottle.

If the bear does not appear defensive —

- Young bears occasionally test their dominance or are curious. In the rarest of cases, a bear could be predatory.
- Speak in a firm voice.
- Move out of the bear's path.
- If it follows you, stop and stand your ground.
- Shout and act aggressively.
- Try to intimidate the bear. Pick up a stick and/or raise hiking poles above your head to appear larger.
- If it approaches to within 4 metres (12 feet or about a car length), use your bear spray.

If a bear attacks you, it is important to know if the attack is defensive or predatory.

Defensive attacks are the most common.

- Use your bear spray.
- If the bear makes contact with you, play dead! Playing dead involves lying on your stomach with your legs spread apart and your hands interlaced behind your neck to protect it. Having your legs spread makes it harder for the bear to roll you over. Remain still until you are sure the bear has left the area.
- Defensive attacks usually do not exceed two minutes in duration. In most cases, injuries are relatively minor. If an attack lasts longer, it is possible that the defensive attack has become predatory.

Predatory attacks occur when a bear stalks you along a trail and then attacks, or when an attack occurs at night.

- Try to escape! A car or building may provide safe refuge. Climbing a tree is an option, but offers no guarantee of safety. Black bears are excellent climbers and grizzlies have also been known to climb trees. If you choose to climb a tree, get as high up in the tree as you can, as quickly as possible. Once you have a safe perch, prepare to use your bear spray.
- If you cannot escape, **DO NOT** play dead.
- Use your bear spray and fight back! Make lots of noise, throw rocks, hit the animal with a branch or your poles. Do everything you can to dissuade the bear from continuing the attack.

Bear safety and fishing:

- Clean fish at designated cleaning stations. If no station is available, clean fish inside a plastic bag or bucket. Then seal the guts in a plastic bag and deposit the waste in a bear proof garbage container.
- Fish with friends. Make lots of noise and keep an eye on each other.
- Stay attentive near lakeshores, rivers and creeks. These areas are used by wildlife as travel routes and feeding sites. Be alert and make as much noise as you can when fishing and moving about in these locations.
- Seal your catch in plastic bags; wash your hands.

Article courtesy Alberta Environment and Parks
Photo courtesy Terry Tollefsbol

Alberta's Bears

Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*)



Photo Credit: Todd Ponich

Size

The black bear is the smallest of the North American bears. Adult male (or boar) body weight average is 100-200 kilograms (220-440 pounds). Adult female (or sow) body weight average is 45-140 kilograms (100-310 pounds). Adult forefoot print width is about 9.5 centimetres (3.75 inches). Adult rear foot print length is about 18 centimetres (7 inches).

Appearance

In profile, snout and face form straight line — no “dished” face. Ears pointed and somewhat prominent. No shoulder hump. Claws of front feet are short and usually black. They make little or no imprint in track. When standing on the level, a black bear’s body profile slopes forward from the high point at the hips. Colour varies from black to blond.

Distribution

Historically, the black bear was widely distributed in suitable habitats throughout most of North America. It evolved as a forest-dwelling species and under natural conditions is shy

and secretive, rarely venturing far from the security of forest cover. Current range encompasses some 488,000 square kilometres or about 74 percent of the province.

Habitat

The black bear inhabits most of Alberta’s forested land and are common in open forests throughout the mixed-wood, foothill, and montane life zones. Partial clearing of forests for roads, trails and other developments has improved black bear habitat and consequently their numbers have increased in recent years.

Food

A black bear’s diet varies with the seasons.

Spring diet may include:

- carcasses of winter killed animals
- overwintered bear berries
- poplar buds
- horsetails
- sedges
- dandelions
- peavines and clovers
- moose and caribou calves

Summer diet may include:

- sarsaparilla
- peavine
- ants and other insects
- fish

Autumn diet may include berries, particularly red buffalo berries in mountain regions, and blueberries and other berries in the boreal forest. In years of berry failures, black bears may seek out human refuse.

When Active

Black bears are active from spring through to autumn. In northern climates such as Alberta, black bears escape severe winter weather and food shortages by hibernating. During this period of dormancy, body temperature is lowered by 7 to 8°C, metabolism is reduced 50 to 60 percent, and heart rate drops from 40 to 50 beats per minute to 8 to 19.

Black bears in Alberta spend 5 to 6 months in winter dens and lose 10 to 30 percent or more of their body weight. They do not eat, drink, defecate or urinate during the entire denning period and the intestinal tract becomes blocked with a fecal plug until the bear emerges in spring.

Breeding Behaviour

Black bears usually reach breeding maturity by the age of three-and-a-half years. Mating takes place in June and July. However, development of the embryo is delayed until the fall. One to four cubs are born in February while the sow is in the winter den.

Growth Process

Tiny at birth, weighing about 250 to 350 grams (9 to 12 ounces), black bear cubs grow rapidly, and weigh about two kilograms (five pounds) by the time they emerge from the den in April. Boars (males) do not share in the raising of young. Cubs remain with the sow, sharing her den during the second winter. The following spring, the cubs leave to forage on their own. Except during the breeding season, and sows with cubs, black bears are basically solitary.

Status

The black bear is classified Secure in the General Status of Alberta Wild Species report.

Courtesy of Alberta Environment and Parks



Grizzly Bear

(*Ursus arctos horribilis*)



Size

Adult male (or boar) body weight average is 180 kilograms (400 pounds), but in better habitats, body weight can be 325 kilograms (716.5 pounds) or more.

Adult female (or sow) body weight average is about two-thirds that of the male.

Adult forefoot print width is about 14 centimetres (5.5 inches). Adult rear foot print length is about 25 centimetres (9.75 inches).

Appearance

In profile, snout rises sharply into broad “dished” face. Ears rounded, noticeable but not prominent. Pronounced shoulder hump.

Claws of front feet are long, sometimes with white streak. In prints, the claws are obvious — five to eight centimetres (two to three inches) ahead of toes.

When standing on the level, a grizzly's body profile slopes backward from the high point at the front shoulders.

Colour varies from tawny brown to black. Fur is often “grizzled” in appearance (silver-tipped), but this is not true of all grizzlies, nor does this occur at all times of the year.

Distribution

Grizzly bears prefer open or semi-open country, and are found in the foothill, mountain and boreal regions of the province.

Historically, grizzlies once occupied the prairie and parkland, but conflicts with people, as well as wildlife community and habitat changes, have resulted in the species being eliminated from most of these areas. Their current range includes areas in or near the Rocky Mountains and in some boreal forest areas of north-central and north-western Alberta.

Habitat

Because of a combination of social and other ecological requirements, grizzly bears require large areas of land or “space” on an annual and lifetime basis. Grizzly bears also require a mix of seasonal habitats in their annual home ranges in order to have sufficient access to a full range of primary food sources.

In the spring, dry, steep subalpine grasslands are the favoured habitat for grizzlies in the mountain regions, whereas moist stream banks and channels are preferred by grizzlies in the boreal forest.

In summer, grizzly bear habitat may include:

- Wet streamsidelines in mature spruce forest
- Gully bottoms
- Groundwater seepage areas
- Wet meadows and fens
- Disturbed sites (e.g., roadsides)
- Toes of avalanche slopes
- Moist east- and north-facing slopes near the treeline
- Regenerating burns and clearcuts

In winter, the grizzly usually digs its den on a slope where the ground is stabilized by root systems of trees and shrubs and where accumulation of snow adds insulation.

Food

Grizzly bears are omnivorous, meaning that they eat both plants and animals.

The diet of a grizzly bear can include:

- Berries
- Fish
- Grasses
- Ground squirrels
- Insects
- Mice
- Roots
- Ungulates

Grizzlies will readily eat carrion, and occasionally kill deer, moose, elk or even black bears.

Diet changes with the seasons. In early spring, diet is primarily vegetarian, consisting of such food items as overwintered bear berries and Indian potato roots. By summer, diet can expand to include elk and moose calves, and ants.

When Active

In Alberta, grizzly bears are active from spring until late autumn.

As a rule, grizzlies enter dens during a major snowfall (late October for females, late November for males). Like northern black bears, grizzlies “hibernate” for the winter, although the period spent in the winter den averages slightly less and they do occasionally wake up and roam near the den during the winter.

Breeding Behaviour

Grizzly bears reach breeding maturity by the age of five to seven years. Female grizzlies, on average, breed only once in three to four years. Mating takes place in June or July, and the embryo does not develop until fall when bears enter dens for their winter dormancy. One to three cubs are born during the winter (the most common litter size is two).

Growth Process

At birth, cubs weigh only 340 to 680 grams (12 to 24 ounces), but grow rapidly to about 15 kilograms (33 pounds) by the time they leave the den in April.

The sow aggressively protects her cubs from all real or possible threats, including grizzly boars (adult males), which may attack and kill undefended cubs.

Cubs remain with sows for 28 to 29 months, through the second winter, but leave her before she mates again.

Status

The grizzly bear has been designated as Threatened under Alberta's Wildlife Act. On recommendation from the Endangered Species Conservation Committee, the grizzly bear is listed as Threatened because of the small size of the breeding population, restricted dispersal from adjacent jurisdictions and the expectation that current and future land use and human activity will lead to declines.

Issues

Human-caused mortality is the most important limiting factor in grizzly bear conservation.

Unrestricted road access and use in grizzly habitats can lead to habitat fragmentation and conflicts with humans, and contributes to increased bear mortality.

Courtesy of Alberta Environment and Parks



SURVIVAL IS IN OUR CROSSHAIRS



CON CAPIT

DID YOU KNOW:

- that it takes an annual operating budget of approximately \$4.3 million to deliver all facets of Conservation Education to approximately 100,000 Albertans annually?
- that every cent of every dollar that is donated goes into Conservation Education program delivery?
- that the annual printing budget of AHEIA for all program areas, including manuals, tests, certificates, etc. represents in excess of \$400,000?
- the annual premiums to secure liability insurance of \$5,000,000 and all other necessary insurance for equipment, facilities and vehicles for AHEIA and every instructor and participant exceeds \$150,000.
- the annual cost of correspondence to members of AHEIA is approximately \$150,000.
- the annual cost for the purchase and repair of training aids and equipment is approximately \$400,000.
- the cost of the one week long Outdoor Women's Program, including three meals and one snack per day, is approximately \$130,000 or \$550 per participant.
- the cost of running one of our Youth Seminars for 150 youths exceeds \$70,000.
- the cost of running one of our Youth Camps for 50 youths for five days, including three meals and one snack per day, is approximately \$1000 per participant or \$50,000.
- the cost of running a one day Outdoor Wildlife Learning (O.W.L. Days) program for 150 youths is approximately \$120 per child or \$18,000.
- the cost of one instructional techniques workshop for 20 instructors for 20 hours is approximately \$1,500 per participant or \$30,000.
- AHEIA does not charge fees on a cost recovery basis for their programs, and survives by donations!

PLEASE CONSIDER

CONSERVATION EDUCATION FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

FACT:

Our programs survive by donation.

FACT:

Economic woes affect us all, especially the charities.

FACT:

Incomes are down nearly 50%
and operating costs are increasing.

FACT:

Our goal is to continue excellent program delivery,
not to cut services or courses.

FACT:

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

In 2016 our programs will reach over 100,000 men, women, and children
of all ages and our projections for 2017 are to reach an even larger audience.

Our fundraising efforts are being supplemented with a new
fundraising campaign to appeal to those we serve.

DONATIONS OF \$25-100

will receive an AHEIA gun sleeve.



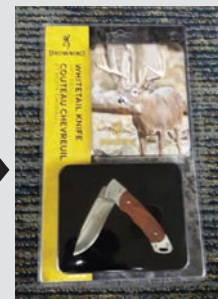
DONATIONS OF \$101-999

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DONATIONS OVER \$1000

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an AHEIA logo'd
Browning pocket knife.



A voucher for each of the above award levels will be mailed
along with the tax receipt to the donor who can then make
arrangements to pick up the prize, minimizing costs to our
Association which ultimately allows AHEIA to utilize the ma-
jority of funds for program delivery.

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☐ Check here if you prefer not to receive a funding incen-
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or contact our office in Calgary and we can process
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NASP Provincial and National Championships

By Sarah Long



Sarah Long
Administrative Assistant
AHEIA - Edmonton

Well, with the two biggest NASP tournaments in our province successfully completed this year, it's time to talk about the results.

The Nationals were held in Edmonton during the Boat and Sportsmen's Show at the Expo Centre this past March. There were an incredible 80 schools registered to partake in the tournament. In total, there were four different provinces that made an appearance, stretching literally from one end of the country to the other. 1592 registered archers from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia came to line up, aim, and see where their arrows would land. This year is the last year we will be hosting the Nationals in Alberta. The torch is being passed on to Saskatchewan and Doug Gibson, the provincial NASP Co-ordinator there.

The Provincials were held at the Supply Warehouse in Drayton Valley at the end of April. Schools came from all over the province, with the most northern being from Grimshaw, the most southern from Cardston, Hinton from the far western side of the province and to the far east, Altario. There were 58 schools registered for this tournament and an amazing 1041 registered archers showed up to compete. It was here that the female record for the province was broken, and I would like to say "Congratulations!" to Jessa Heatherington on her remarkable achievement.

It was amazing to see the whole NASP system come into play on such a grand scale. Even though there were 40-80 archers on the line at any given time, every single archer did exactly what they had been trained to do. I could tell everyone was excited (and maybe a bit nervous too) to be there; archers at the ready with proud coaches at their sides and families sending their support from the stands. What I noticed most was the level of calm collectedness from the shooting line. You could hear a pin drop as the archers and the crowd waited for that one whistle blast command to shoot, and hear the repeated *thud, thud, thud* of the arrows hitting home on their targets. That's an astounding amount of silence for any sporting event!

Behind the scenes, everything seemed to flow as the events took shape. Schools were registered, t-shirts were given out, equipment was checked, the range was run, scores were collected and displayed. Everyone had a job to do and everyone worked as a team to get it done. We all looked out for each other, constantly checking to make sure we were okay or if we needed a break. Then after all was said and done, everyone packed and cleaned up together. What a great team to be a part of! I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who put in so much hard work to make both the Nationals and Provincials the successful events that they were.

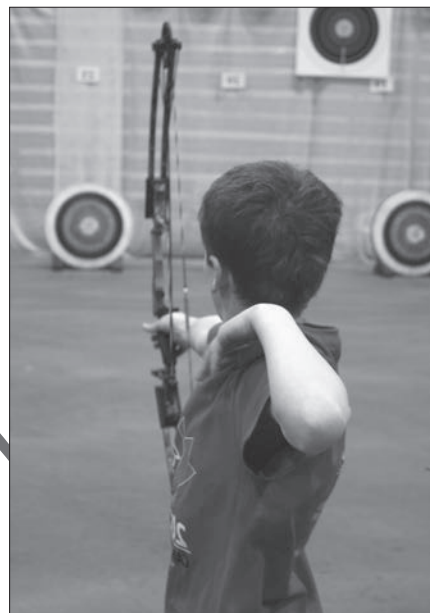
We couldn't have done it without your support and passion.

Thank you so very much!



**National Archery in
the Schools Program**

Changing Lives One Arrow at a Time.



Provincial Results

Girls Individual

High School Division

New Alberta Record!

1st Place	Jessa Heatherington, William E. Hay School	296
2nd Place	Emmalee Connolly, H.A. Kostash School	290
3rd Place	Bryn Boykiw, H.A. Kostash School	288

Middle School Division

1st Place	Karly Ashton, H.A. Kostash School	287
2nd Place	Autumn Lamouche, H.A. Kostash School	281
3rd Place	Summer Hallock, Mountain View School	279

Elementary School Division

1st Place	Laurn Boykiw, H.A. Kostash School	248
2nd Place	Jessica Vert, Altario School	245
3rd Place	Karen Rominick, St. Anthony School	240

Boys Individual

High School Division

1st Place	River Hoffos, Ardrossan Junior/Senior High School	292
2nd Place	Nathan Doig, Cardston High School	289
3rd Place	Nickolas Zaft, Edwin Parr Composite School	287

Middle School Division

1st Place	James Leishman, Mountain View School	284
2nd Place	Issac Potts, St. Mary's Catholic School	280
3rd Place	Michael Beazer, Cardston Junior High School	276

Elementary School Division

1st Place	Nathan Van Lagen, Altario School	266
2nd Place	Christian Francis, Edwin Parr Composite School	256
3rd Place	Trent Heidinger, H.A. Kostash School	251

Team Scores

High School Division

1st Place	Cardston High School - High Team #1	3352
2nd Place	H.A. Kostash School - High Team #1	3352
3rd Place	William E. Hay School - High Team #1	3280

Middle School Division

1st Place	Mountain View School - Middle Team #1	3204
2nd Place	H.A. Kostash School - Middle Team #1	3182
3rd Place	Cardston Junior High School - Middle Team #1	2973

Elementary School Division

1st Place	H.A. Kostash School - Elementary Team #1	2690
2nd Place	St. Anthony School - Elementary Team #1	2669
3rd Place	Aurora Elementary School - Elementary Team #1	2052

National Results

Girls Individual

High School Division

1st Place	Emmalee Connolly, H.A. Kostash School (AB)	292
2nd Place	Haylee Ashton, H.A. Kostash School (AB)	291
3rd Place	Brooke Glasier, William E. Hay School (AB)	287

Middle School Division

1st Place	Karly Ashton, H.A. Kostash School (AB)	292
2nd Place	Heather Ziprick, H.A. Kostash School (AB)	271
3rd Place	Elizabeth Janzen, Melfort Composite Junior (SK)	270

Elementary School Division

1st Place	Kristina Therres, Maude Burke School (SK)	256
2nd Place	Drew Cropley, St. Anthony School (AB)	244
3rd Place	Eadlin Lalonde, H.A. Kostash School (AB)	239

Boys Individual

High School Division

1st Place	Nickolas Zaft, Edwin Parr Comp. High School (AB)	295
2nd Place	Cameron Beazer, Cardston High School (AB)	289
3rd Place	Adam Verspeelt, H.A. Kostash School (AB)	288

Middle School Division

1st Place	Sacha Libke, Melfort Composite Junior (SK)	288
2nd Place	Zander Hollinge, Melville Comp. School (SK)	277

Deciding factor for second place was the total number of tens scored by archer: 16.

3rd Place	Alden Baron, Canora Composite School (SK)	277
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Deciding factor for third place was the total number of tens scored by archer: 15.

Elementary School Division

1st Place	Matthew Makowsky, Canora Jr./Elem. School (SK)	265
2nd Place	Donavin Linden, Maude Burke School (SK)	259
3rd Place	Jacob Brataschuk-Gauthier, Maude Burke School (SK)	258

Team Scores

Elementary School Division

1st Place	Maude Burke School (SK) - Elementary Team #1	2730
2nd Place	St. Anthony School (AB) - Elementary Team #1	2542
3rd Place	H.A. Kostash School (AB) - Elementary Team #1	2385

Middle School Division

1st Place	Melfort Composite Junior (SK) - Middle Team #1	3212
2nd Place	H.A. Kostash School (AB) - Middle Team #1	3131
3rd Place	Mountain View School (AB) - Middle Team #1	3102

High School Division

1st Place	H.A. Kostash School (AB) - High Team #1	3357
2nd Place	Cardston High School (AB) - High Team #1	3294
3rd Place	Yorkton Regional High School (SK) - High Team #1	3212

Continued ➤

A Special Thank You to our Volunteers and Staff

Volunteer Range Officers and Officiates:

- Ken Cook
- Doug Gibson
- Heather Rominick
- Mikkie Leiterman
- Mark Lockwood
- Sheldon Frissell
- David Schoenberg
- Philip Reiser
- Maxine Hildebrandt
- Lisa Boykiw
- Trevor Heidinger
- Stan Schamuhn

Cabela's Staff:

- Jason Ofner
- Dustin Wozniak
- Trevor Bayles
- Anne McDonald
- Bryce Labranche
- Remington Bracher

The S.C.I.

Drayton Valley Chapter:

Coby Mahan
and his group of volunteers

Servus Credit Union Devon Branch:

Sarah Hermann
and her group of volunteers

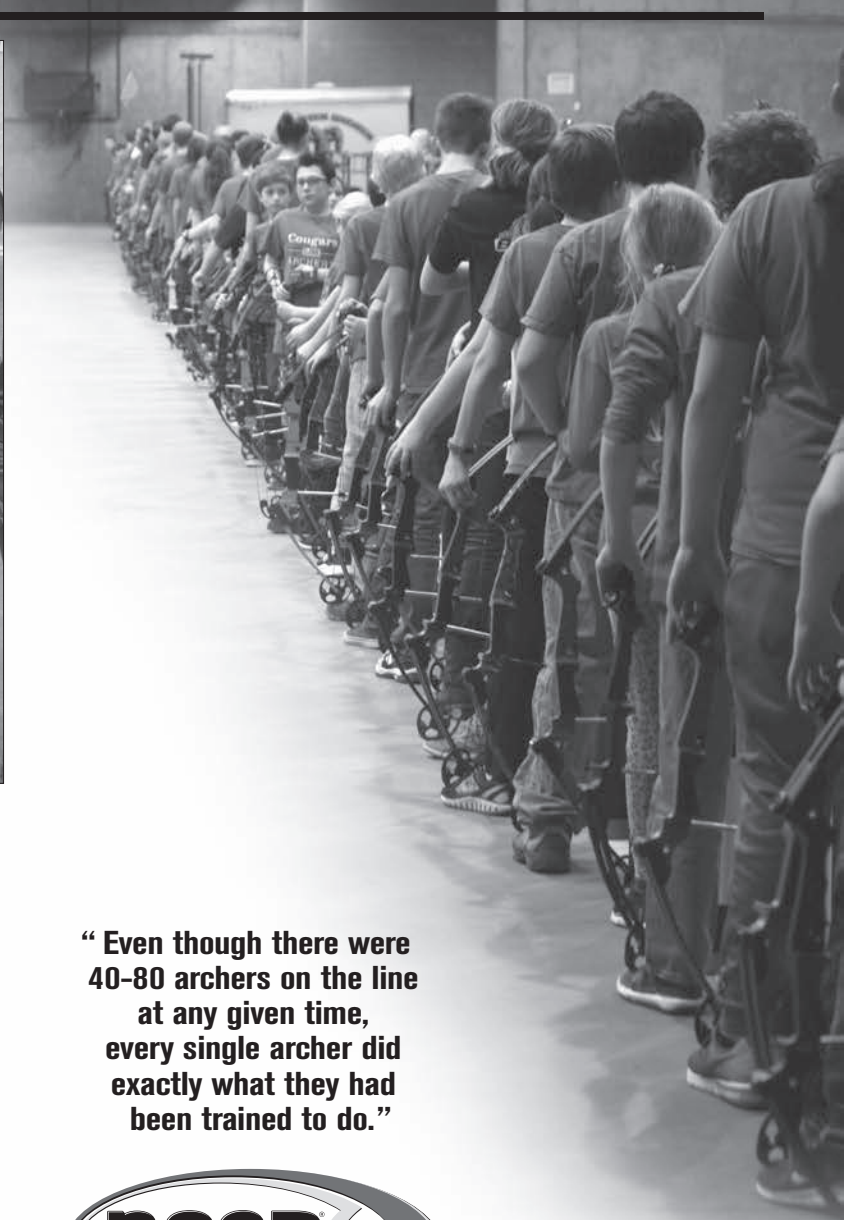
AHEIA Staff:

- Dave Paplawski
- Charlie McLean
- Matt Shaw
- Allan Orr
- John Morrissey
- Glen Pickering
- Glenn McKay
- Sarah Long



Scenes from the NASP Provincial and National Championships





**“Even though there were
40-80 archers on the line
at any given time,
every single archer did
exactly what they had
been trained to do.”**



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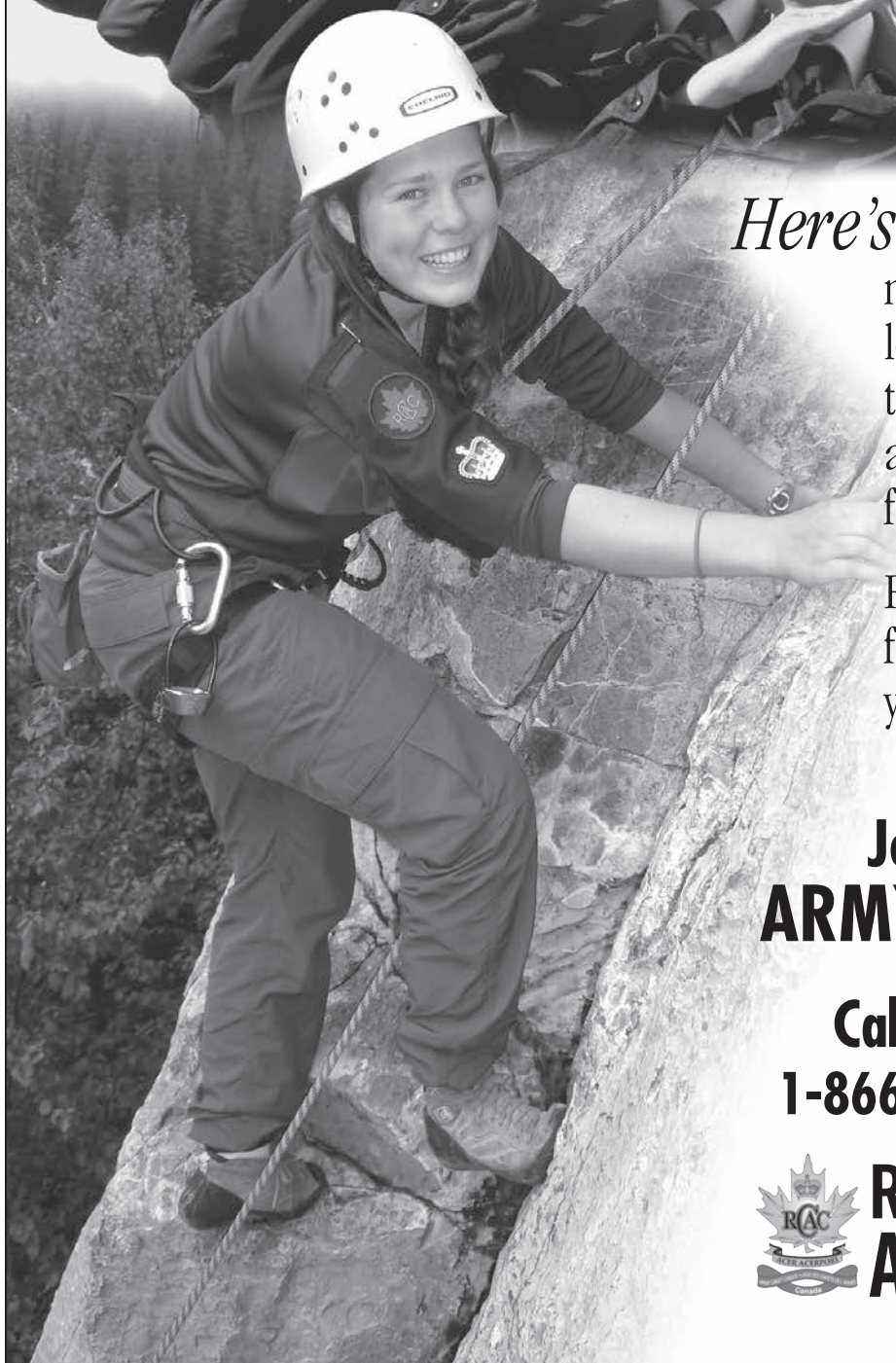
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“He is a three-time Canadian All-Star, and helped the Canadian team secure a bronze medal at the World All-Star Championship in South Africa in 2016.”

Big Honour for HAK Alumni Archer

By Ross Hunter



HA. Kostash (HAK) School graduate Zack Tychowsky has received a major award from the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP).

On May 13 at the 2017 National Tournament in Louisville, Kentucky, Zack was presented with the NASP Outstanding Alumni Award, one of the NASP's recently inaugurated *On Target for Life* Awards. The Outstanding Alumni Award is presented to a former NASP graduate that experienced the positives of the NASP, and now continues to give back to their former school or team.

Zack, 19, started with the NASP in 2011 while attending HAK. His skills and dedication to archery grew quickly as he advanced to the NASP World Championships in 2014 and 2015. In 2016, he was the top male at both the NASP Provincial and National Championships, and held the Canadian record. He is a three-time Canadian All-Star, and helped the Canadian team secure a bronze medal at the World All-Star Championship in South Africa in 2016.

Zack also became involved in helping to organize and lead the archery program at HAK, starting as a work experience student. He has helped mentor younger archers and also serves as a coach and range safety officer. As well, he has helped maintain HAK's archery equipment by restringing bows and repairing missing or damaged fletches, and has passed that knowledge on to younger students.

Zack was also instrumental in setting up the first international competition held over Skype between HAK and a team from South Africa. He continues to help organize and run "Skype shoots" at HAK's own NASP-sanctioned tournament, with teams from across Canada, the United States and Africa participating.

Now going into his second year of the Environmental Conservation Reclamation program at Lakeland College in Vermilion, Zack continues to travel back to Smoky Lake regularly to coach the HAK team. In his spare time, Zack is training on a recurve bow in hopes of making the Olympic archery team.



“Zach's patience, sense of humour and quiet demeanour make him a wonderful instructor and mentor to our young archers, and is an amazing example of how a NASP alumnus provides continued support, service, and serves as a positive role model for current NASP students to emulate,”
said one of his nominators for the NASP Outstanding Alumni Award.

"The important part was the chance to carry on a tradition that is so typical of kids whose parents spend their time in the field."

Another Chapter

By Glenn McKay

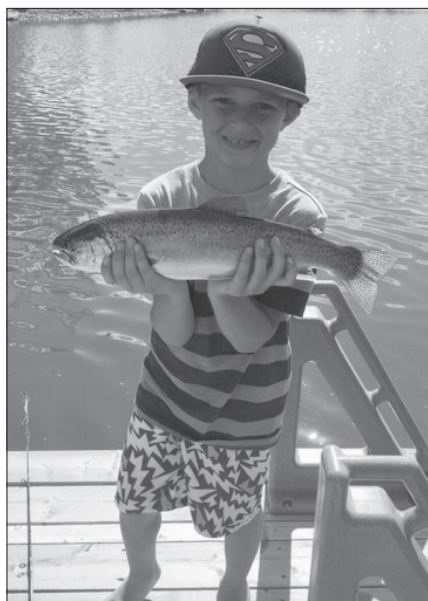


Glenn McKay
Firearms Education
Coordinator
AHEIA

For all of the times spent in the field, on the shore of a lake or stream, nothing seems to focus you more than teaching some youngster how to shoot, cast a lure or play a fish. Two weeks ago I was asked to take out two real youngsters, Owen, age 7, and Michael, age 4, and yes, dad Jason got to hang out as well.

Heading out to a location, we had a chance to see some of this year's perennial targets, commonly referred to as gophers. Was this a trip to shoot a bunch of critters? No. It was simply a chance to respond to Owen's request to go out shooting. A typical sunny day, light winds and enough grass to hide a herd of targets! Younger brother Mikey was not going to be left at home and was more than game to follow his brother into the field. A few shots were taken and although the results were expected, it did not dampen the spirit of the shooters. The important part was the chance to carry on a tradition that is so typical of kids whose parents spend their time in the field.

During a lull in the action, Owen spotted what was thought to be a gopher standing straight up approximately fifty meters away. The shape and size looked right, but the colour and movement were a little off base. Rather than take a shot, we watched the target start to move towards us, and soon enough the "gopher" was identified as a weasel. As we watched the feisty little hunter



close the distance between us, a movement directly in front of the weasel (turned out to be a gopher) caused one of life's lessons to take place in front of the boys. In a blink of an eye, the weasel had the gopher by the back of the neck and was taking it to her lair to feed her young.

A great conversation took place on what we had witnessed when we noted that the weasel was back on the prowl. This time it took place about 20 feet in front of us with the results being exactly the same. In all their time spent outdoors, the two adults had never ever witnessed an event such as this and the kids were just adding a chapter to their early lives.

Due to the time of day, the boys left with dad to go to another location which was on a private lake in the city. Owen then took up another "tool" and tossed a lure into the lake. His first cast was rewarded by a great scrap with a very healthy rainbow trout. Did it matter that it was the first and only fish of the day? Not a chance!

As parents, coaches or mentors to those taking up the outdoors as a way of life: take the time to enjoy their triumphs. It may even take you back to a time when you were taking a shot, casting a lure or maybe even jumping into a lake for a cool dip! Enjoy the summer and take a youngster with you. I would like to thank Owen and Mikey for taking me out to shed a few years off my life.

"As parents, coaches or mentors to those taking up the outdoors as a way of life, take the time to enjoy their triumphs."



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“ On behalf of all of us at AHEIA and Conservation Education, it is my great pleasure to express our sincere appreciation to all the men and women who serve in our Canadian Armed Forces.”

Canadian Armed Forces, 401 Tactical Fighter Squadron, Receives Loan of a Mounted Ram from AHEIA

By Robert Gruszecki



Robert Gruszecki
President - AHEIA

Captain Thomas McQueen was killed in a tragic jet crash on November 28, 2016. A request was received by AHEIA to help in the creation of a lasting memorial to commemorate Captain McQueen's service and contributions. Numerous members of AHEIA are connected with the Canadian Military, and we are proud to be associated with them as Canadian Firearms Safety Course instructors, Hunter Education instructors, volunteers and members.

A mounted bighorn sheep was loaned from the permanent collection of AHEIA to hang in the Officers Club at 4 Wing Cold Lake. A special plaque will be created in Captain McQueen's memory. The bighorn sheep has special significance to the squadron. The squadron badge is the mountain sheep, indigenous to many parts of Canada, and is known for its great stamina and fighting power. This link forms a fitting tribute indeed. The 401 Tactical Fighter Squadron (401 Tac F Sqn) was stood up on June 30, 2015 at 4 Wing Cold Lake by separating equal portions of personnel and equipment from 409 Tactical Fighter Squadron, also based at 4 Wing, Cold Lake.

The newly re-formed 401 Squadron complements the duties of 409 Tactical Fighter Squadron and, assisted by 401 Tac F Sqn, deploys tactical fighter forces to meet Canadian and Allied defence needs. Under the umbrella of the NORAD mission, fighter crews are on standby 24/7, ready to respond to any aerospace threat. 401 Squadron is now one of two operational CF-18 Squadrons at 4 Wing Cold Lake.

AHEIA thanks the following people for their help with the creation of this important memorial project: LCol Joseph Mullins, Commanding Officer of 401 Tactical Fighter Squadron, Canadian Armed Forces; Mr. Tony Jackson, Military Liaison with Cenovus Energy Inc; Alex Sharif, AHEIA member and wild sheep enthusiast.

We express our condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Captain Thomas McQueen.



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Proportion of American Hunters Who Say They Hunt Mostly for the Meat Continues to Grow

By Mark Duda
Responsive Management

Survey research shows that American hunters most often name the meat as their most important reason for hunting, and that the percentage of hunters who hunt mainly for the meat continues to grow. Responsive Management, which has tracked hunting participation for almost three decades, recently released the latest results of a survey question put to U.S. hunters since 2008. Asked to choose their single, most important reason for hunting from a list that included for a trophy, to be close to nature, to be with family and friends, for the sport or recreation, or for the meat, about two in five hunters nationwide selected the latter reason — by far the most popular answer. (While research shows that hunters hunt for numerous reasons, this question was designed to identify their top reason.)

Rather than any new development, this finding is instead the latest data point in a continuing trend. Whereas the sport or recreation was the most popular reason for hunting roughly a decade ago (when about one in three hunters gave this answer), hunters beginning in 2013 have most often named the meat as their primary motivation for going afield. And while the percentages of hunters naming one of the other three reasons have declined or remained flat over the past decade, the proportion of hunters who say they hunt mostly for the meat has almost doubled.

The reasons for this emphasis on game meat as a primary motivator for hunting participation range from the economic to the sociocultural — the shift cannot be attributed to a single reason alone. An important benefit of hunting is its potential as a source of food that hunters can acquire themselves in a cost-effective manner. During times of economic downturn, such as the recession that gripped the country for much of the last decade, hunting is an attractive option for putting food on the table. Certainly, this perspective is represented to some degree within the substantial percentages of individuals who, over the last several years, hunted primarily for the meat.

Another reason for the uptick in hunters who went out mostly for the meat is the locavore movement, a growing national trend reflecting interest in eating locally and taking a more active role in the acquisition of food, especially organic, free-range, chemical- and hormone-free meat. Through the locavore movement,

individuals from nontraditional hunting backgrounds have flocked to lessons and seminars offering instruction on how to hunt and process game meat. Locavore hunters are often educated millennials who hail from urban and suburban areas; lacking traditional hunting mentors, they nonetheless have been moved to take up hunting as adults for reasons of self-sufficiency, health, sustainability, or a desire to reconnect with nature.

The growing popularity of the locavore movement is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook and an icon of the millennial generation, has taken up hunting as a means of procuring his own meat. (Zuckerberg was recently quoted as saying that food “tastes doubly better when you’ve hunted the animal yourself.”)¹

The locavore movement has grown to the point that fish and wildlife agencies are beginning to take seriously the recruitment and retention potential of this new category of hunter. Responsive Management recently worked with the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies’ (SEAFWA) Committee on Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife-Related Participation and the Midwestern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies’ (MAFWA) Recruitment and Retention Committee to evaluate the outcomes of a series of pilot programs designed to promote hunting and fishing among young adults in urban/suburban settings. The programs targeted individuals who were interested in locally grown or organic foods.

The locavore movement was also examined in *Hunting, Fishing, Sport Shooting, and Archery Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation: A Practitioner’s Guide*, a new handbook produced by Responsive Management and the National Shooting Sports Foundation. The handbook, which covers recruitment, retention, and reactivation (R3) strategies and issues consistent with the ones identified in the National Hunting and Shooting Sports Action Plan, also features a series of on-the-ground vignettes written by R3 professionals and academics. Several of these vignettes focus on the potential for people to be recruited into hunting through locavore motivations.

Finally, the growth of the locavore movement has become important enough to warrant exploration in a recent documentary. *An Acquired Taste*, a new film from producer/director Vanessa LeMaire, follows three teenage locavores as they decide to learn how to hunt as a way of connecting with the source of their sustenance.

“Without the data, I never would have suspected there was a trend this big,” says LeMaire. “Responsive Management’s *The Sportsman’s Voice* and *The Future of Hunting and the Shooting Sports* had been key in my research, but it wasn’t until they crunched some numbers that I realized there was an opportunity to reach out to this new demographic. The statistics were essential to the film.”

LeMaire also notes the positive reception the film has enjoyed among non-hunting foodie crowds. “So far, the film is proving to be a great eye opener to non-hunters who seek alternatives to factory farmed meat. The experiential style of the film invites non-hunting audiences to live their first kill through the journey of the three teens. Because the adolescents are so authentic, one can’t help identifying with them.”

She continues, “We’ve had youth and adults stand up after a screening sharing their transformation, and people choking up saying that they had never understood their father or brother’s hunting habits until now, and that, at last, they felt reconciled.”

An Acquired Taste is the winner of a “Best Youth Film” award and screened at the American Conservation Film Festival, the San Francisco Green Film Festival, the Colorado Environmental Film Festival, the Wild & Scenic Film Festival, and many more. Today, a number of state fish and wildlife agencies are considering integrating the documentary into their conferences, hunter education programs, and fund-raising events.

From rural residents who have stalked game their entire lives to urban millennials who have only recently become locavores, an increasing number of hunters today are heading into the field first and foremost for the meat. This latest research on hunter motivations reconfirms the value of hunting as a source of sustainably harvested organic meat, in addition to its economic, recreational, social, and naturalistic benefits.

¹ Malloy, Mark. “Mark Zuckerberg: Animals taste better when you hunt them yourself.” *The Telegraph*, October 12, 2016. Accessed March 2017. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/technology/2016/10/12/mark-zuckerberg-animals-taste-better-when-you-hunt-them-yourself/>.

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“ Learning taxidermy is just another skill, like cutting and processing your own meat, that adds to the experience of hunting ...”

DIY Taxidermy

By Glen Pickering

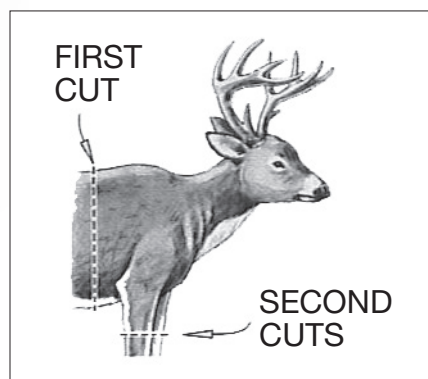


Glen Pickering
Assistant Conservation
Education Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - South

The term “Trophy” does not do justice to the magnificent birds, fish, and big game animals that we have the privilege of harvesting in Alberta. Taxidermy is simply a way of making use of all parts of an animal and preserving the experience and adventures that take place in the field. Whether preserving the hide to make survival mitts, mounting horns or antlers in a European style, or doing full shoulder mounts, the art of taxidermy helps to preserve those memories of time spent in the field for generations to enjoy.

The process begins immediately after your game is down and properly tagged, if required. If you are considering mounting a bird, remember legally, the fully feathered wing must be attached until transported home, so plan to take along a cooler with ice to place the bird in until you get home to skin and process it. Removing the entrails of a big game animal needs to be done as soon as possible, but before you begin skinning, you must decide what you are going to do with the hide, and this will determine the cuts that need to be made. Skinning up the belly and all the way up the neck will work if you are just tanning a hide or making a rug, but if you are plan-

ning on doing a shoulder mount, you will need to stop and cut around the body about four inches behind the shoulders and all the way up the back of the neck to remove the “cape” for mounting.



Bighorn mitts.

You need to take your time when skinning to prevent unnecessary holes in the skin which would have to be sewn up later. Skin as close to the hide as possible to save the amount of fleshing time required later when all the fat and tissue must be removed. There is a lot of detail work that needs to be done in order to remove the skin from the face, and a surgical blade works the best for this delicate work. The ears, eyes and lips must be turned and thinned in order to prepare them for the salting process. Be especially careful when packing your game out of the field that you do not cause rubs or damage to the hair, fur or feathers, as this may make it difficult to mount. It is a good idea to watch videos and to practice on small varmints, or capes from other hunters who do not want them, to develop your skills.

Hides and capes can be rough skinned, frozen and processed later in the off season when you have time. Once the skin has been properly fleshed, it needs to be salted and dried to prevent any bacteria from causing the hair to “slip” or fall out. Take the time to rub the salt into the hide especially around the facial area, and drain the moisture and salt again after a day to get any remaining moisture out. A deer cape requires at least three pounds of table salt and larger animals will be double that, so if you are planning an extended trip and the weather is warm, you need to pack the salt in with you. Bird game skins are preserved with borax and some may need to be degreased before mounting.



Attaching the antlers.



Fitting the cape to the form.



Completed mount.

The tanning process can be done by buying a tanning kit from a taxidermy supply shop and following instructions, or by sending your salted hide to a commercial tannery with the required paper work (WIN and licence number). Once properly tanned and shaved thin, your wet hide needs to be frozen until you are ready to mount it onto a form. For making leather goods, you can also learn the traditional brain tan method.

It is important to take close-up pictures in the field to use later as a reference when mounting your game. You also need to take measurements in the field or after the cape is tanned in order to get the right size styrofoam mold to mount it on. These measurements include the eye to nose distance and the circumference around the neck after the hide has been skinned off. You can now order your form, glass eyes and ear liners from the taxidermy supply shop along with any other materials required to complete your mount.

Once you have obtained your form, you must ensure your cape will fit the form by roughly pinning it in place to see if you have to reshape any part of the form in order to be able to sew your cape together. A properly tanned hide can be stretched three or four inches to help it fit. There will be some modifications needed in terms of sanding and filling any imperfections to prepare the form for your tanned cape, and sometimes it will have to be cut and rasped for a final fit. Material will have to be removed in the mouth and nostril area with a Dremel tool, depending if you are doing an open- or closed-mouth type of mount. The next steps will include attaching your horns or antlers (if male) with proper screws, properly setting the eyes, inserting the ear liners, and building up any muscles with clay that were lost in the fleshing process. The form is then covered with hide paste, and pins can be used to hold the hide in place while you tuck in the lips, nostrils and eyelids to bring your mount to life. The final stage of a shoulder mount is to sew up the back of the neck with nylon thread and trimming the cape so you have about three inches of material to attach with a staple gun on the back of the form.

Your mount will now have to dry for at least three weeks before it is ready for the finishing touch of painting around the eyes and lips. You will need to brush and place the hair/fur in its natural state because after it dries that is how your mount will look forever. As the cape shrinks in the drying process, you may have to rehydrate and reposition the eyelids if any movement has taken place. Lastly you will want to consider the type of artificial habitat or base material you may want to use to display your bird or big game animal. Ideally you will be able to use some natural dried material (grass, brush or wood) that was in the area where you harvested your game.

Learning taxidermy is just another skill, like cutting and processing your own meat, that adds to the experience of hunting and helps recreate the memories that you have shared in the field with friends and family. The internet or books can be a great source of information to help get you started. Remember, professional taxidermists are true artists who must be licensed, but you can, through many hours and years of practice, create quality mounts that you can enjoy for a lifetime.



Great Meals

from the

Harvest

with Len Gransch



Len Gransch
Program Coordinator
AHEIA Red Deer - North

Venison Fajitas

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 1/2 pounds venison (cut into thin slices) | |
| 2 cups shredded Mexican cheese blend or cheddar | |
| 1 medium onion (halved and sliced) | |
| 1 tablespoon Lawry's seasoning salt | |
| 1/2 cup orange juice | 1/4 cup white vinegar |
| 1/4 cup cilantro | 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper |
| 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper | 1 medium green bell pepper (julienned) |
| 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder | 1 medium sweet red pepper (julienned) |
| 8 flour tortillas (8") | 2 tablespoons canola oil (divided) |
| Lime wedges (to taste) | Sour cream and salsa (to taste) |

In a large Ziploc plastic bag, combine orange juice, white vinegar, seasoning salt, pepper, garlic powder and cayenne pepper. Add the venison, seal the bag and rotate the meat until it is well coated. Refrigerate for 2 hours, mixing often.

Drain and discard the marinade. In a large skillet, sauté the peppers and onions in one tablespoon of canola oil until crisp-tender. Set aside.

Heat remaining oil and stir fry meat for 3-5 minutes or until no longer pink. Return vegetables to pan and heat through.

Spoon over tortillas and top with cheese, sour cream, salsa and cilantro. Squeeze fresh lime over the top, and then fold in the sides and serve. Excellent with a rice pilaf, some refried beans and a Mexican beer. Enjoy!

(Feel free to substitute elk or moose meat.)

Venison and Beans

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1 - 16 ounce can kidney beans (rinsed and drained) | |
| 1 - 16 ounce can northern (white) beans (rinsed and drained) | |
| 1 - 16 ounce can pork and beans (undrained) | |
| 1 1/2 pounds ground venison | 1 medium onion (chopped) |
| 6 slices bacon (cooked and crumbled) | 1 cup ketchup |
| 1/3 cup packed brown sugar | 2 tablespoons white vinegar |
| 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard | Hot sauce to taste |
| 1 tablespoon garlic (minced fine) | 1/2 teaspoon black pepper |

In a large skillet, cook the venison, garlic and onion over medium heat. Drain and set aside.

Stir in the remaining ingredients. Transfer to a 2 quart baking dish. Cover and bake at 350°F for 35-40 minutes until heated through.

Serve with coleslaw, cheese buns and a good beer. Enjoy!



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“Unlike regular lead or copper jacketed ammunition, polymer coated ammunition eliminates metal to metal contact in the barrel.”

Polymer Coating: The Future of Lead Cast Bullets

By John Morrissey



John Morrissey
Assistant Conservation
Education Program
Coordinator
AHEIA - Calgary

Handgun shooters have been casting or reloading lead bullets for target shooting for years. Generally, the lead bullet will have some type of wax lubricant applied to it. As we know, the velocities for a lead bullet are less than for a full metal jacketed, or copper plated, bullet. However, the cost is also less for lead bullets.

In 2016, Federal Ammunition released polymer coated bullets to the North American market, and with it the American Eagle Syntech range ammunition was introduced. According to the literature provided by Federal Ammunition, the Syntech total synthetic jacket (a complete polymer coating) takes the place of the copper jacket that is used in conventional full metal jacket target ammunition.

But how does it shoot? Testing conducted with Federal Ammunition Syntech revealed some interesting results. Unlike regular lead or copper jacketed ammunition, polymer coated ammunition eliminates metal to metal contact in the barrel. The result of this is there is less friction,

heat and barrel wear. Federal estimated this equates to 12% less friction than conventional copper jacket bullets. Another benefit was a reduction of heat in the order of 14%. As we all know, less heat and friction means less wear on our firearms, giving us a longer barrel life.

We all know lead, as well as copper, will leave residue or fouling in the barrel. So what about polymer coated bullets? As the polymer coating encapsulates the entire lead core of the bullet and maintains its integrity during ignition, down the bore and in flight, there is little to no residue left in the barrel. Combine polymer coated bullets with clean burning powder and for shooters this means a cleaner gun.

Purchasing factory ammunition if you are a volume shooter may not be affordable or practical. In this case, manufacturers of reloading supplies

have made polymer coated bullets available in the United States as well as in Canada. As far as cost, I recently purchased 115 Grain 9mm polymer coated bullets for seven cents per bullet.

One manufacturer in Quebec, Xmetal, lists some of the benefits of polymer coated ammunition as:

- greatly reduces the amount of smoke associated with cast bullets;
- lead fouling is reduced or eliminated;
- polymer coating is 100% non-abrasive and contains no PTFE or MOLY;
- safe to use in Glock's polygonal rifled barrels;
- no lube on the bullet with no gum up of reloading dies.

Additionally for target shooters shooting steel targets, the polymer coated bullets offered less spatter or fragments than the conventional full metal jacket bullets.

While polymer coated bullets may be new to North America, they have been in use in Europe and Australia for the past 20 years.

Will polymer coated bullets replace lead cast bullets? Only time will tell. However, given the benefits of polymer coated over lead, I think we will see more shooters using them.

“While polymer coated bullets may be new to North America, they have been in use in Europe and Australia for the past 20 years.”



Congratulations!

AHEIA Raffle Winners

*Thank you to all
who purchased tickets.*

3 Gun Raffle

Drawn April 10, 2017 at Calgary.
Licence #441907.



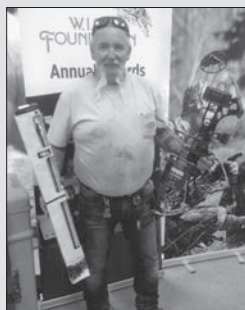
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2nd Prize:
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3 Gun Raffle II

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