



By Dan Schmidt Forest County WCO

Making a Difference

In the future, the PGC plans to add classes on muzzleloader hunting and wingshooting.

If becoming an instructor

SELFLESS and dedicated is the best way I can describe the Game Commission's volunteer Hunter-Trapper Education instructors. Every year these individuals conduct hundreds of classes, certifying many new hunters.

These instructors are often the first PGC representatives the students encounter, but their lessons influence new hunters for years. They are volunteers in the truest sense of the word, receiving no compensation.

The PGC's Basic HTE Program has evolved over the last decade, maintaining a standard that is used throughout the country. This standard was established by the International Hunter Education Association.

After the basic HTE course, no student leaves the class an expert hunter, but definitely a safer hunter. Topics include firearms and archery nomenclature and handling, tree stand safety, responsible turkey hunting, basic trapping, laws and regulations, shot placement and ethics.

The PGC has also established advanced courses that not only reinforce lessons from the basic course, but expand knowledge in archery hunting, turkey hunting and trapping.

If becoming an instructor is something you want to pursue, the process is simple. First, call the Game Commission region office for your county. Your information will be passed on to your local wildlife conservation officer. You'll complete an application packet and after it's approved, you'll attend new instructor training. This involves some home study and instruction from the regions information-and-education supervisor.

Within 18 months of your initial training, you'll attend an HTE class as a student, and then under the guidance of veteran instructors, assist at a class. I recommend you start with the basic HTE course, which will offer you more opportunities.

The PGC holds annual update training sessions for all instructors. To remain certified, you must attend at least one of these meetings every two years and teach a class every two years.

The look on that new hunter's face when he or she receives the certification card is priceless, and makes being an instructor a satisfying experience.

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