



Peer Review Process Is Designed To Help All

“WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?” were the first five words uttered to him when Mik Mikitik, hunter education state coordinator, recently showed up unannounced for a hunter education meeting. The question underlined the apprehension and anxiety instructors sometimes feel when a hunter education staff member shows up on the doorstep.

Hopefully, those five words will never be heard by Judy Littlefield, Dan McLean and Larry Lufkin—who together comprise our newly reconstituted peer review team to assist fellow hunter education instructors. They are now available to observe and assist hunter education instructors on a pre-scheduled basis. (See also *Biographies*, page four).

Instructors who have been around for several years will recall that we once had a peer review team of almost a dozen instructors. The peer review team conducted in-class/on-range site visits for instructors who requested reviews or who were randomly picked for review by Dan Boes or Chuck Ray, Washington hunter education field coordinators. The peer-review process helped us learn about instructor issues *inside* the hunter education class, and it served as a very good opportunity

to assess overall instructional quality. It also helped us prevent a few train wrecks by identifying policy issues and rectifying them before minor problems became major aches.

Our 2007 peer review team is much smaller and is more focused, and the goal for this coming year is to review a total of 15 instructor teams statewide. If you and your hunter education team want to have Judy, Dan or Larry visit your class for a peer review, please notify Chuck or Dan, who will, in turn, pass the information to Mik. Then Judy, Dan or Larry will follow-up regarding mutually convenient dates and times to conduct a review. A review matrix is attached.

In most cases, the peer review team will be available to observe a hunter education team for one class session. However, if teams request more in-depth review, Judy, Dan and Larry will try to accommodate the need.

Imagine if Boeing tried to build its new Dreamliner without evaluating performance milestones during the design phase. Quality at Boeing and here in hunter education come as a result of attention to details—and we invite you to ask Judy, Dan and Larry to come and view the details in your classes!

First Call For 2008 Class Schedules

YOUR 2008 *Class Schedule Request* form is enclosed with this newsletter. 7809

As in years past, we are asking all Chief Instructors to submit their class schedules by the second Friday in December (December 14th) in order to print and

distribute the information statewide. Only instructors serving as a Chief Instructor need submit schedules.

The single biggest challenge for the hunter education program is linking public interest with available classes. The best tool

to date in providing that linkage has been the annual class schedule booklet listing classes by county.

Class schedule information will appear on the Internet and in *Washington Outdoors*. Please get us your skeds in writing.

Inside this issue:

Register For 2008 IST	2
Lead Notes	3
E-Newsletter Is Coming: Can You Switch?	4
2008 PST Schedules	5
Student Evaluations Help Us 'See' Ourselves	6

Dates To Remember

- November 31, THMFSA Nominations Due
- December 1, IST Early-Bird Registration Due
- December 31, Chief Instructor Reports Due

Important Contacts

- Olympia: 1-800-215-1979
- Chuck Ray: 1-800-468-5006
- E-mail: huntered@dfw.wa.gov
- Blog: <http://hunter-education.blogspot.com>

Register Now For 2008 IST

PLAN NOW to attend the April 12 – 13, 2008 In-Service Training (IST) program at the Yakima Convention Center. Registration material is enclosed with this issue of your newsletter. Special early-bird prize winners will be drawn December 1, 2007 from the names of instructors who pre-register by that date. Early-bird prizes up for grabs include a firearm, *Gift Certificates*, DVDs, and more. Registration is first-come, first-served, so if 'ya snooze, 'ya lose!

New for this year is a Friday fun trap/skeet shoot and Bar-B-Q for instructors who plan to arrive on Friday. We've also added an IST syllabus—listing course offerings and a brief instructor biography for the course instructors—designed to help you become better informed as you pick and choose your Saturday afternoon training selections. Also, new for this year, instructors will select their Saturday classes at the time of pre-registration. As in years past, all instructors will participate in the same Saturday and Sunday morning activities. Instructors attending the last few ISTs have asked us to do a better job, and we're taking your suggestions to heart and starting earlier than ever!

The Red Lion Hotel—the same venue used for IST sessions before 2004—offers convenient access to the convention center, comfortable hotel rooms and additional meeting space for our training sessions. We are also working with the Clarion Hotel—about three miles away and the site of the ISTs for the past two years—to handle guests who wish to lodge there. Although instructors will have their choice of hotels, please be aware that the Red Lion is literally only steps away from the convention center. The Clarion Hotel will require some cross-town commuting time, but hotel staff have agreed to provide shuttle service upon scheduled requests.

This year we're looking forward to exceeding our goal of 400 hunter education instructors attending the IST. Chat it up with your team and come join us in Yakima for the training, camaraderie and fun at our IST!

Training topics for 2008 include *Shotgun Shooting for Women* (female instructors get first choice, natch), *Psychology In The Classroom*, *Sportsmanship & Recruitment*, *PowerPoint*, *H.E. Tools, Forms & Records*, *C.O.R.T.*, *Firearms Nomenclature*, etc. Add our ever-popular First Aid classes for those who need training and you can easily see why the weekend has become such a fun, informative event for all hunter education instructors.

Remember that door prizes and raffle items are simply icing on the cake for instructors attending an IST. The central location, the convention facility, the actual training and the camaraderie with fellow instructors will help make Yakima 2008 our best IST ever. 7493 Come join us and see for yourself in 2008!

H.E.R.O. Corner

We now have firearms that are available directly to instructors on written request to us at:

P.O. Box 1904
Richland, WA 99352

Most of the firearms are non-firing bolt action and to be used for demonstration use only.

We have received applications with no dues, which are still only \$10.00/year. If you did not send your dues, please re-submit them.

Dues are good for one fiscal year which runs from July 1st – June 30th

IST OPTIONS

Options available for the annual IST requirement include:

- ♦ Home Study Option. Instructors who did not attend the April 2007 Yakima training will receive a home study packet to complete and return, or they can choose other options below.
- ♦ Instructor's Forum. Attend a meeting in your area with Dan Boes or Chuck Ray. A minimum of 10 instructors is required to conduct a Forum. *Instructors must request this option.*
- ♦ Chief Instructor Waiver. Any Chief Instructor who serves as a chief instructor in three or more classes can request an IST waiver for the calendar year. *Must request this option.*
- ♦ Active Instructor Waiver. A certified instructor who teaches in three or more classes with at least 10 hours' participation total can request a waiver. *Must request this option.*
- ♦ Cross-Training Waiver. A certified instructor who teaches with another group for at least 2-1/2 hours can request an IST waiver for the calendar year. *Must request this option.*

Instructors must complete their annual IST requirement by 12/31 to remain active in the hunter education program. Instructors who do not complete the IST will become inactive.

Field Notes: News, Views And More....

Remember

Policy: Instructors charging a fee of more than \$5 per student are required to get approval in writing in advance! This policy applies to every instructor and every team.

New phone numbers are now in place for John Wisner, Dan Boes and Mik Mikitik as a result of the new "phone tree" system we use to route telephone calls. Instructors who wish to speak directly with one of the above three hunter education staffers will be asked to enter the "5 digit numbers" below once in the phone tree queue:

Dan Boes — (90)2-8409

Mik Mikitik — (90)2-8408

John Wisner — (90)2-8410

Remember that instructors may still call Olympia on the toll-free line at 1-800-215-1979.

Remember that the "blog" at <http://hunter-education.blogspot.com> offers hunter education staff a very quick (and free!) tool to disseminate information to instructors. We update it weekly on Mondays—even if it's just to note the staff work schedules for the week. Future newsletters will be posted there first, so blog to get the latest news! 7638

Instructor discounts are now available at from Beretta, CVA and Leupold. Details are available on the hunter education blog at <http://hunter-education.blogspot.com>. For Beretta, the contact is Travis Breiner, (301) 283-0189. For CVA the contact number is (770) 449-4687. For Leupold the contact is Gabe Lange at (503) 526-1609. All offers are only for certified hunter education instructors.

Several instructors have asked for an updated CD with the Revised Code of Washington on it. There's actually a better option—one that is totally free for all of us—and that's an online address with the latest updates. The web address posted below takes your browser to a web

site maintained by the Washington State legislature. Check it once a year to learn the latest:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=77>

And speaking of the law.... WAC 232-12-257(1) now makes it "...unlawful to hunt water fowl, wild turkeys, or deer with the use of or aid of battery-powered or other electronic devices as decoys."

Electronic decoy devices are now prohibited for deer hunting.

While injury incidents are very rare in hunter education classes, they do occur. Please be sure to fill out a Security / Injury Incident Report Form within 24 hours if there is any type of incident that requires medical attention—regardless of how small the incident may appear at first. WDFW requires incident report forms for all medical emergencies. If you need copies, please contact Chuck Ray or Dan Boes directly or via the toll-free line.

Instructor Tony Kastella, Vancouver, writes:

A partially paralyzed student came to class earlier this year needing some special assistance. I used an adjustable shooting stand for his shotgun introduction. His first two shots were very encouraging, and on the third shot he broke the clay bird! He learned how to "swing" one-handed using the rest and eventually broke three of the nine targets he shot at. It was a great effort!

On the pistol range it was hard for this student to load the semi-automatics. I got out a revolver, which was much easier to load and fire safely and accurately.

On the field course the student decided he could participate and he walked the entire course along with his group. He went slowly and did not require help though it was offered!"

Good job, Tony. If instructors have any questions about accommodating special needs for students, please contact Chuck Ray or Dan Boes, hunter education field coordinators.

Accurate data is always important in figuring out trends and future directions. The data now in hand shows that about two-thirds of the students enrolling in hunter education are juveniles less than 18 years of age, while another one-third represents individuals 18 years and older. This has been fairly consistent for the past few years. Over the past decade the number of individuals over 18 years of age enrolling in hunter education has crept up from about 29% to today's 35% of the overall student population.

What does this data set actually mean? In a state that is growing as rapidly as Washington, it's not good news. Although the population has been steadily climbing, the percentage of the population enrolling in hunter education has been static or actually declining. Worse, youth under 18 years of age are enrolling in hunter education at about the same level as the early 1990s—when the population was much smaller than today.

There is good news at the end of the tunnel, however, in that a large percentage of individuals who enroll in hunter education actually appear to purchase a hunting license after class. Last year, for example, we trained about 13,500 students and there were slightly more than 13,000 first-time license buyers born after 1/1/72 in the state.

JAN's Corner

This is another "good news/bad news" newsletter for me. Most instructors are taking the time to double-check student and course records, and those records run quickly and without jamming. Keep up the good work...Thanks! Some instructors fail to check student records at all! I've been seeing more records without important student data (birth date, address, etc.) and/or with significant or sloppy errors. It's clear some instructors are not taking any time to review student records. Those records take a great deal of time to process—all because of mistakes. I know it's time consuming...but remember the students!

Meet The Peer Review Team: Dan, Judy and Larry

Dan McLean – King County I moved to Alaska originally in 1947 where I was employed as an airline pilot after a stint as a Marine Corps aviator during World War II. In 1959 I left aviation and returned to college and law school where I felt I could make a living sitting down. Shortly after graduation I returned to Alaska and received an appointment as District Judge on Kodiak Island. My family eventually moved back to Minnesota in 1966 where I became involved with the Hunter Education and also received an appointment to the family court. I retired from the court and moved to my childhood home in California where I also became certified as a hunter education instructor. In 1987 the opportunity to live in Washington State presented itself and I moved to Renton and again became involved with hunter education where I have been teaching and serving as chief instructor ever since 1996. I have been very involved with firearms and safety training and hold NRA Certified Instructors ratings in Rifle, Pistol, Shotgun, Personal Protection, Home Firearms Responsibility and am an NRA Training Counselor as well as a graduate of the Washington Criminal Justice Training Commission Firearms Instructor School. With WDF&W I have served as a PST trainer and have taught at several IST's. My experience as a judge has taught me to keep an open mind and not to form judgments without knowing all the facts. I believe the best qualities I can bring to the job of peer reviewer are perspective and impartiality

Judy Littlefield—Skagit County I am a wife, mother and grandmother to two beautiful and very intelligent granddaughters. I have been married to my best friend and hunting partner—Al—for 40 years. I have also been his “volunteer secretary” as he is an elected Skagit County Public Utility Commissioner. Al is also a certified hunter education instructor. I retired as a WSU/Skagit County staff assistant employee after 32 years on the job and am an avid WSU supporter. I am a Retired Senior Volunteer Program board of director and a present RSVP volunteer. I also served on the board of directors for Anacortes schools and am a past 4-H leader. I remain an active hunter education instructor and a PST trainer, an outdoor enthusiast and an avid hunter for over 50 years.

Larry Lufkin – Thurston County I have been a certified hunter education instructor since 1987, and have assisted in conducting PST programs since 1991. I have maintained my NRA certification as a range safety officer since 1988. I have been active in the shooting sports and teach basic handgun shooting and safety at the Capitol City Rifle and Pistol Club (CCRCP). I am also a member of the board of directors for CCRPC, the board chairman for the Olympia Credit Union, and was previously a member of the Firearms Range Committee for the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation. I have a degree in business with a major in accounting from Washington State University and retired in 2000 as Area Audit Supervisor for the U.S. Office of Child Support Enforcement. I currently provide governmental cost allocation training and consultation to counties throughout Washington State.

E-Mail Newsletter Is Coming: Impacts And Issues (7696)

IN JUNE the WDFW print shop closed its doors for the last time, the result of a legislative decision that all future printing needs would be handled by the Department of Printing. Historically, the WDFW print shop printed almost everything used by the hunter education division—including the bimonthly newsletter. Hunter education printing costs that were once artificially low because all work was done in-house will quickly become very expensive unless we take steps now to control printing expenses.

Two recurring hunter education expenses—newsletter printing and postage—can be easily reduced if we begin using an e-newsletter. The preparation of an e-newsletter is exactly the same as preparation of a printed newsletter, but the reduction in printing and delivery costs—electronically—is where money savings occur. Any such savings, however, is a false economy unless the e-newsletter is timely received and read by instructors. We don't want to sacrifice effective communications with instructors just to save \$1,000 per issue.

An e-newsletter can be “delivered” in several different ways. It can be posted on a web site, with an e-mail notification from WDFW to you that the latest issue is now online and ready for review. Or it can be e-mailed directly to you. Either way, we require a current e-mail address to deliver the content. A third, less-effective option is to simply post the e-newsletter and place the responsibility upon the audience to know when the newsletter is ready. While some individuals will certainly check on a regular basis, it's more in keeping with human nature to forget. Instructors who forget to check of the newsletter will obviously miss out on the communication contained therein.

Our current plan is to transition to an e-newsletter by 1 January 2008. If you do not have computer access, we need to hear from you *NOW*. We don't know how many instructors do not use computers. Also, we will need valid e-mail addresses for every instructor who *does* have Internet access. Yes, we need to hear from you, too, *NOW*. Please send an e-mail to mikitnjm@dfw.wa.gov with your address.

We want to be absolutely certain an e-newsletter will work before we make the switch. Please tell us what you think about the idea.

From The Desk Of Lt. Mann, Enforcement Program

KNOWING AND DOING THE RIGHT THING is not always done. For all of our certified hunter education instructors, knowing and doing the right thing *MUST* always be one and the same. Accountability, credibility and professionalism demand that we practice what we preach.

A recent enforcement contact with a former hunter education instructor helps illustrate the issue. The former instructor—who had not been active in the hunter education program since 2001—was riding an off-road vehicle and carrying a loaded rifle. When stopped by a law enforcement official the ex-instructor stated he was carrying the rifle to protect him from bears—and he "...went out of his way to let the officer know he instructed hunter safety courses for WDFW." (Quoting from the officer's report.)

The hunter education instructor certification card is only for purposes of official identification, and it should be surrendered upon termination / separation as a hunter education instructor. This individual not only retained the card, but he attempted to use it as a means to avoid a citation. He was nevertheless cited for his violation. 7571

At issue here were both law and ethics. Legally, the former instructor was committing a deliberate violation. Legally, he should not have retained possession of the instructor certification card. Legally, he was attempting to use a state resource (instructor certification card) for a private benefit (avoidance of a ticket). Every legal issue was a strike against this ex-instructor.

Ethically, however, the issue rises to an even higher plane. Instructors are expected to serve as role models for others. Not only are we obligated to follow the law, but we are also duty-bound to uphold the highest ethical standards in representing ourselves to the world as hunter education instructors. Here, too, the ex-instructor fell far below the standard required. He sought to use his former status as an instructor as a way to weasel out of a ticket.

Anyone can make a mistake. It happens. But the difference between making a mistake and accepting its consequences is the difference between "character" and "charade." The good news is that the former instructor failed in his charade. Help us continue to build character.

2008 Pre-Service Training Classes: Remember *New "Fee"*

LISTED BELOW are new instructor training classes currently scheduled for 2008.

Pre-Service Training (PST) is one of the requirements for new instructor applicants.

Please note that all new instructors are required to attend a training session prior to certification.

January 11--12	Spokane
February 22 - 23	Tri-Cities
March 28 - 29	Yakima
April 25 - 26	Colville
May 30 - 31	Walla Walla
June 20 - 21	Chelan
July 18 - 19	Spokane

There is no exception--every new instructor is required to successfully complete the PST prior to certification.

Signing up for a PST training is painless process. Simply check the PST training dates, decide which location and dates best meet your schedule and send in a fully-refundable \$25 check along with your name, telephone number, your preferred

PST training dates and you're done!

Registration for all PST's must be made at least seven days in advance of the scheduled training dates. Your \$25 check is required to confirm PST attendance. All attendees receive and study materials in advance to prepare for the PST. There is pre-class work required and, therefore, we actively discourage last-minute registration.

PST enrollments are limited. Once a PST location has reached its maximum enrollment, registration will be closed for that location. In simple English, that means first-come, first-served.

A minimum number of new applicants per location is required to conduct a PST program. If we have too few applicants for a given location, we may cancel that training session. All participants will be notified in advance in event of cancellation.

As always, contact Chuck Ray (eastern Washington) or Dan Boes (western Washington) if you have any questions.

'No - Shows' Less Of A Problem

A DISTURBING TREND over the past few years was the increasing percentage of "no shows" (individuals who registered but fail to attend) at our PSTs. Nobody worried too much about one or two, but at some PSTs the "no show" rate hit 75%! Obviously, we would have cancelled such PSTs had we known in advance.

Last year we began charging a \$25 reservation fee—which was cheerfully refunded to all instructor applicants who honored their word and attended the PST they signed up to attend. For those that failed to attend, they made a \$25 hunter ed donation!

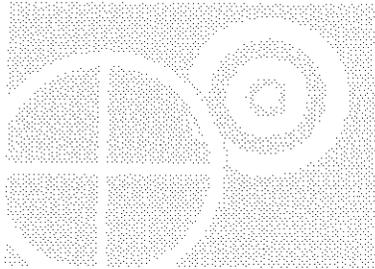
The system worked well and we will use it again in 2008. Note that it's not the money we wanted! We wanted prospective instructors to attend the PST. The "reservation fee" helps reduce "no shows" in student classes and also worked for our PSTs.

Student Evaluations Help Us 'See' Ourselves

MOST OF US only see ourselves in a mirror a few times a day. Sure, we know when we need a shave or our hair isn't just so, but like drinking a glass of water the passing glance at something familiar doesn't really register with us unless there's something w-a-y different evident.

Student *Course Evaluation* forms—with data summarized from several hundred students is attached to the back side of our Peer Review Matrix—provide us with just such an opportunity to learn about things both familiar and different.

Sure, you know how your students do in class and you can tally their exam scores to get an idea of how well they performed. But what do your students really *think* about your hunter education class? Were



they satisfied with the overall experience? Will they now purchase a hunting license? Would they recommend your class to their friends? Do they have any suggestions for improvements? 7758

The attached data summary gives us a brief insight into student opinions about our classes. The data comes from students who voluntarily return the form to the Olympia office. Over time, we should have comments and opinions from thou-

sands of students, and more data will help us develop a more accurate profile of what your students think.

The *Course Evaluation* form is a companion to our Peer Review process. Linking what students think to what our peer review team identifies in the classroom should help us generate new ideas for keeping hunter education fresh and interesting.

Like so many other "new" ideas in hunter education, this one comes from an instructor (Don Hawkens, Pierce County). Don suggested that we send the evaluation form along with the newly-issued student certification card as a way to save money, and have the student pay the return postage. The new forms are now coming in from counties all across the state. Thanks, Don!

THE WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Hunter Education Program
600 Capitol Way North
Olympia, Washington
98501-1091

Online learning now available at www.hunter-ed.com/wa/

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"Safety First"

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