

# No Child Left Indoors®

*Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever's Youth Programs E-Newsletter*



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## TRAINING TIPS SPECIAL EDITION

*Note from Cheryl: Happy Fall to all and I hope you are enjoying your favorite outdoor pastimes during this beautiful season. Many of you are planning youth mentor hunts, working with shooting teams and hosting fall banquets. Thank you for all you do for Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever! This is a special edition newsletter devoted to Training Tips. In this issue you will find lots of good articles on best practices to work with youth and host events from our Education & Outreach Team. Steal their ideas and don't hesitate to give them a call if you have questions. Enjoy the season!*



The *No Child Left Indoors E-Newsletter* is produced by Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's National Office and is distributed digitally to chapter youth/education chairs and presidents.

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## Teaching Wingshooting Skills

*By John Linquist and Sally Stevens*

### FORM - Foot positioning and stance

A shooter's stance is important to their success. A good rule of thumb is to position your front foot in the direction where you want to break the intended target. A shooter's hips should be open to the shot; the more closed off they are the more difficult it will be to follow through with the shot. Slight forward weight on the front foot (60%) helps absorb the recoil of the gun and reduces shooting over the target.

### VISION - Moving to the target and understanding lead

A good way to explain basic lead is to use the example of throwing a football to someone running – you don't throw the football where they are, but where they are going. We talk the flight path of a



*Helping a new shooter hit his first clay bird is exciting for everyone involved.*

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target or bird and instruct the shooter to follow the gun to the bird through its butt, belly, beak, then BANG. Both the lead and the follow though of the gun to finish the shot are important.

## **PRACTICE - Head on the stock**

The most common reason shooters miss targets (outside of equipment issues) is because their head comes off the stock before or during the shot. This can occur for many reasons – the shooter is afraid of the recoil, can't see down the barrel or pops the gun down too fast – but can be quickly remedied.

One of our favorite tricks is to take a dollar bill and put it between the shooter's face and stock, then instruct them to "not let the dollar bill fall, no matter WHAT!" It's a great technique to help show shooters they are lifting their head off the stock, especially when they don't believe they are.

## **ABOVE ALL, HAVE FUN!**

The most important component of shotgun sports next to safety, is to ENJOY yourself. As a trainer, you set the tone for the activity. Even if there is a difficult problem to solve or you have a shooter who is having trouble, if you show those around you that you are willing to work hard to solve the issue and keep a good attitude about it, they will continue to try.

Share stories of your own shooting issues. Doing so helps inexperienced shooters realize that even you, their trainer, started out like they did and had difficulties of your own. Always make sure new shooters know you are going to help them figure it out and they are not on their own.

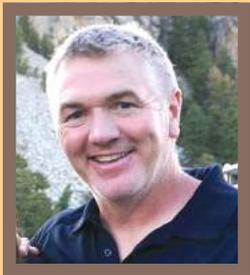
*John is PF/QF's Hunting Heritage and Shooting Sports Manager and Sally and her husband Mark are the shooting instructors for Focus on Forever Chapter Training Workshops.*

## **Vary Your Teaching Techniques For Best Results!**

Are you a PF/QF volunteer that has a passion for sharing our hunting heritage and outdoor traditions but at times question your ability to instruct all of the participants at events? All of us learn in three primary ways: visual learning (seeing the information), auditory learning (hearing the information) and kinesthetic learning (performing the skill or learning by doing).

Simply introducing skills in a variety of ways can increase your ability to reach more participants. For example, if you are introducing a technique for

cleaning a shotgun, you should talk through the process (for the auditory learners) while you demonstrate the proper techniques (for the visual learners) and then let all of the participants clean their own shotgun (for the kinesthetic learners). Below you will find an outline for the EDOC style of instruction. Hopefully it will help you be a more successful instructor. Good luck with your upcoming events and thank you for all you do as PF/QF volunteers to share your skills with new hunters and shooting sports participants.



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### **No Child Left Indoors® E.D.O.C. Style of Instruction**

Because students learn skills in three primary ways: hearing (auditory learning), seeing (visual learning) and doing (kinesthetic learning); it is recommended that instructors use the EDOC method of instruction:

- E** EDUCATE or tell the students what you want them to know
- D** DEMONSTRATE the proper techniques so students know the correct or preferred way of performing the skill
- O** OBSERVE each student as they verbally explain and physically demonstrate what has been taught
- C** CONGRATULATE every student as they perform the lesson properly



#### **Retention of information is:**

- 20% of what we hear;
- 30% of what we see;
- 50% of what we hear AND see;
- 70% of what we hear, see AND say;
- 90% of what we hear, see, say AND do!

## Tips For Planning A Youth Shoot

I get asked a lot about the plan I have for a shoot or a hunt that involves youth. My go-to answer is you can have a plan, but don't plan to stick with it. When working with the next generation, you have to be flexible at the drop of a hat. Just like any good teacher in the classroom, you have to teach to your audience and no one group will be the same.

Some shooting groups will be well experienced shooters and you can work on taking them to the next level. As well, you might get a group that will have very little or no experience. No matter what type of group you have, your number one goal is safety and the next is for them to have an enjoyable time. A new shooter does not need to go through one box of shells their first time to the line, but three. In addition, have that second shell ready for the new shooter. The quicker you can get them to shoot the second time, the more likely they will be to continue shooting and not worrying about any kick back.



*Safety and having fun are the keys to a successful youth shooting event.*

When planning a shoot for the first time, you want your shooters to remember quality over quantity. Shooting the gun correctly is the objective, not breaking the target. Good luck and stay safe.

## Give Kids The Hunting Dog Experience!

Kids and dogs are two things that go together like peanut butter and jelly. Chapters many times, though, struggle on how to create an event that specifically focuses on bringing these two together. I, myself, have struggled on how to provide kids the experience of training dogs at a fun, safe educational event. Recently though I attended an event put on by the Illinois River Valley Pheasants Forever Chapter and Briarwood Kennels that provided a fun easy answer to this question.

The focus of this event was to allow the public to participate in a mock hunting trial while also learning several dog training techniques. It is important to note that the participants did not bring their own dogs. Instead, participants were mentored by the dog handlers who provided trained, experienced field dogs. Using trained dogs is what I feel really made this event a success. Everyone believes their dog is the best, but the last thing you want is a 60-100-pound dog dragging a kid around the field or a person yelling constantly at their dog who is misbehaving.

At the field dog day, youth and adults arrived at the first station where trainers showed the participants how to train a pointing dog on the table. Participants got to touch the dogs and start to learn the commands that would be used out in the field. They then moved to the next station where they learned the technique to teach dogs to hold on point along with what the "whoa" command meant. After learning the commands that would be used in the field, each youth was partnered with a handler and dog. The handlers,



*Kids and dogs just go together. Introducing dogs into your youth event can add a new, exciting element.*

dogs and kids proceeded to a mock dog trial where the youth gave the dogs the commands, flushed the quail and shot the starter pistol. When everyone finished, lunch was served. While the event only took half a day, over 60 participants had a chance to see and learn how hunting dogs work.

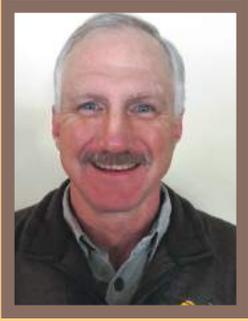
This event highlights a great opportunity for chapters to partner with many different organizations such as training kennels, hunt clubs, NAVHDA, AKC Clubs, UGA clubs or UKC clubs. It also brings the hunting outdoor experience to kids who may be too young to start hunting or are nervous around guns. We all love to watch our dogs working in the field or a kid getting excited about the outdoors. Dog field days help to merge these two great experiences.



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## How To Plan A Large Outdoor Event With Many Vendors

In Michigan we have an event called “The Great Outdoor Jamboree.” The Jamboree, a partnership between Pheasants Forever and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, is held on the second Sunday in September at Lake Hudson State Park. This year was our fourth annual event and we had 1,143 people attend. We also had 39 vendors at the park. Each vendor offered some kind of hands-on activity for the families to enjoy. Many vendors supplied the young people with take-away items.

When you are planning an event like this, consider all of these things:

**1. LOCATION:** Will your site be large enough? Is there easy access to parking? Are there convenient in and out driveways? Can you offer shooting sports? Is there power and water hookup if needed? Are bathrooms available or can portable bathrooms be placed on the property? Are there enough trash cans? Is there trash pick-up? Possible options could be state parks, fairgrounds, conservation or shooting clubs.

**2. VENDORS:** Many organizations are willing to come out and showcase what they offer. Oftentimes when you speak to one vendor they can recommend others. Ask your chapter members what other organizations they belong to and do they have a contact name. Also, local sporting stores may have leads and your Chamber of Commerce can be a resource. Think outside the box when looking for vendors. Two local libraries brought amazing ideas to our event as well as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and a college fishing team. Other vendors included a BB gun trailer, archer trailer, birds of prey demonstration and a reptile owner.

**3. FOOD VENDOR:** Will you have one? What type of food will be offered and will it be at family friendly pricing? It has been my experience that families will come and spend the day so they will be looking for

a place to have lunch. Be sure your location can accommodate the vendor’s needs when it comes to power, water and seating.

**4. ADVERTISING:** The more avenues you have to get the word out about your event, the better. For our event we use fliers, social media, banners and press releases. Radio is also a good idea.

**5. REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION AREA:** A check-in area and home base is helpful and displays a professional appearance. Waivers will need to be signed by all attendees. Have a plan on how to make this work. We put the waivers on clipboards and passed them out as people walked in. We asked them to sign the forms then move ahead to the table to turn it in. You may want to use wrist bands so you know they have signed the forms.

**6. THEME AND GOODIE BAG:** Will you have a theme for the event? Will you have something for each family/youth? Last year our theme was “Grandparent’s Day.” We advertised that the first 100 grandparents who brought a young person to the event would receive a goodie bag. Some of the items in the bag included a Frisbee, pencil and a can koozie. This year the event took place on 9/11 so we honored the first 100 veterans and first responders. Their goodie bag included an American flag on a stick, an American flag on a PF veteran’s pin, a key chain with mini flashlight and can koozie. We found that it is very important to give each young person some sort of bag to carry all of the fun items they take away from the vendors. Cabela’s has donated plastic bags for this need.

**7. CLEAN UP:** Who is in charge? Will each vendor be responsible for their spot? Is there someone the organizer will have to report to? For our Jamboree at the state park, the DNR was in charge of clean up.



*Spraying in the fall can make for a more successful spring planting project. (Photo by Casey Bergthold)*



*Monarchs are attracted to prairie plants like this blazing star.*



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## **If You Intend To Plant A Pollinator Habitat Project This Spring, Now Is The Time To Start Your Site Preparation To Eliminate Cool Season Grasses**

For those who intend to establish a pollinator habitat project this upcoming spring, site preparation is probably the last thing on your mind right now. Many people who conduct a spring pollinator habitat planting fail to recognize the benefits to conducting their site preparation in the fall. Site preparation is extremely important to the success of your project, especially if your site has existing vegetation like smooth brome, Kentucky blue grass or fescue. The earlier you begin the site preparation process, the better chance you have of eliminating existing vegetation that can impede the establishment of the wildflower and grass species you intend to plant.

One of the best site preparation methods to eliminate cool season grasses (smooth brome, Kentucky blue grass and fescue) from your project site is applying a glyphosate herbicide (Round-Up) after the first freeze of the year. Since cool season grass species begin to actively move their reserves to the root system after the first frost of the year, you have a small window of time to apply herbicide that will be actively taken up by the plant and moved to its root system for an effective kill. Applying herbicide on a 55-degree day directly after the first hard frost of the year will give you the best results. As a general

rule of thumb, apply a glyphosate herbicide at a rate of 2 quarts per acre. However, you should check the label on your product for application rates prior to applying herbicide as each brand recommends slightly different rates.

One of the other advantages to a fall herbicide application is the ability to evaluate your project site in the spring prior to planting. If you didn't get the desired results in the fall, it gives you the ability to apply another round of herbicide to cool season grass species that are difficult to kill or hit those areas you may have missed in the fall. Being able to give your site a second look prior to planting increases your chances of establishing a successful project. In addition, a fall herbicide application puts you in good position to conduct other site preparation activities (prescribed burning and tilling) prior to planting. If you try to do it all in the spring, weather may delay your site preparation techniques and not allow you to get everything properly prepared prior to planting. The fall herbicide application just puts you in a better position to conduct additional site preparation activities if they are required or needed. While it may seem a little early to start the process this fall, you will be glad you did next spring!

## NO-FAIL TRAINING TIPS

Safety and having fun should always be at the top of your list for planning youth events. Most of you are veterans at planning the logistics but sometimes interacting with the participants can be a little daunting when you may have a group of youth and you don't know any of them and just want them to have a great time. Here are a few trusty tips from some of our experts:

**1. Remember that a person's name is the most important sound in the world to them.** You may not be able to learn the names of all your participants at a one-day event, but you can furnish name tags and ask them to write their first name in large letters. If you are giving them shooting instruction, think about putting a piece of masking tape on their backs with their name on it so you can stand behind and call each shooter by name. If you are working with them in a classroom, you can use tented name cards.

**2. Never touch a young person without asking permission first.** Teaching some outdoor activities is easier if you can help guide by touching an arm or shoulder or placing a foot in the right position. Always ask. "May I touch your arm to move that gun into your shoulder?" This will keep you from making anyone unnecessarily surprised or uncomfortable.



**3. Cover the main points quickly and get them involved sooner than later.** Too many times, we start with a lecture on how to do something and before we know it, we are talking too long and in too much detail. Students learn better when they can get quickly involved and ask questions. Talk too long and even the auditory learners will get bored and tune out.

**4. Read your audience and take breaks when needed.** Remember that you are working with kids who can have shorter attention spans and are used to being entertained in a variety of ways. Watch for signs



that they are becoming bored, tuning out or getting distracted. Take a break or plan something that will get them moving.

**5. Let them coach each other.** Once you have covered the basics of an activity and the participants are practicing, set up ways they can work in pairs and coach each other. This reinforces rules and gives them some authority. Just be sure to circulate among the pairs and make sure they are coaching correctly. If a parent wants to try at the end of the class, let the student coach the parent.

**6. Praise often.** When you see someone doing it right, point out to the class. This reinforces, gives a boost and has others wanting to be the good example.

**7. Make sure basic needs are met.** It can be hard to learn if you are really hot or cold, have to go to the bathroom, the sun is in your eyes, your equipment doesn't fit or work properly... Make sure that you have looked after the basic needs of your students/participants. If they are not comfortable and it's not fun, they will not be eager to continue or come back.

**8. Set the example.** If you are having fun and enjoying teaching a skill, your learners are much more likely to also enjoy. Smile, be your friendliest and most enthusiastic self. Always follow the rules you are giving them or you will quickly lose credibility. Kids watch what you are doing as well as listen to what you say.

**9. Debrief every event.** When you've put away the equipment and are wrapping it up, be sure to spend a few minutes asking everyone involved what they thought went well and what they would improve. Discuss while it is fresh in their minds. Jot down notes. You will be glad you did when you start planning your next event.

**10. Be sure to thank those who helped.** Whether you send a note, an email or host a thank you gathering, be sure to recognize and thank everyone who helped pull off the event. A sincere thank you goes a long way with volunteers.