



Compliments of the Hunter Education Program

So many instructors are already listing classes on Event Manager for spring turkey season, which is a tell-tale sign that spring is in the air and the Hunter Education Program office is starting to get busy again! Calls are coming in from people looking for classes, and we are already scheduling equipment drop-offs for the spring. We are working on some really exciting new programming, so check out this newsletter for more information! If you have something you would like to add to our next newsletter, let us know by e-mailing HunterEducation@vermont.gov

Instructor Training & Recognition Banquet: June 3rd!

Thank you for the many responses that we received about our 2017 instructor banquet! We have set the date for our banquet for **June 3rd, 2017.**

When we have a location, we will let you know. We will send out a formal paper invitation in the mail. For now, please mark your calendars!

Newsletter Archives Now Available!

Never miss a newsletter again! Our instructor newsletter will now be archived on the VT Fish & Wildlife website and available for all instructors to view by clicking here:

<http://tinyurl.com/InstructorNewsletter>

Mandatory Background Checks for All Hunter Education Volunteers

by John Pellegrini

In 2016 the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Hunter Education staff decided that to assure safety for all hunter education students, background checks need to be conducted on all Hunter Education volunteers. Currently a thorough background check is conducted by the Vermont State Warden Service before an applicant completes the Hunter Education Instructor certification process. Non-certified Instructors are also assisting in Hunter education classes, and are an important part of our program. Those assistants must complete a background check prior to them teaching this year. And it is a rule we will enforce.

To streamline the process, the background check for any non-certified volunteer is conducted by Hunter Education Staff. It will only require the volunteer instructor's name, date of birth, the current address of the volunteer, and two references other than the Instructor they will be teaching under. No Social Security number is needed unless a record is found and verification is needed. The background check literally takes minutes, and checks for crimes against children, as well as sexual offenses.

I appreciate you understanding in this matter, and I am sure all will agree that every step is needed to protect our students.

I have record check applications, and will be happy to email them to you. Unless I am busy, I generally do the check the day they come in. As I said, I have the results in a matter of minutes. We will be requiring backgrounds this season, so if you have someone you need checked, please submit the application as soon as possible.

New Seminar and Mentor Opportunities



Photo courtesy of VTFWD

The Vermont Hunter Education Program staff is excited to announce some big updates coming to our seminars, but we need your help!

Currently, our seminars are delivering great information to the public, but we have found that there is a disconnect—people attend our seminars but then don't go hunting! After lots of talks, trainings, and meetings with other states and instructors, we are trying out a new way to implement a new format for our seminars. The new seminar format will include a few hours of classroom time, a few hours of field time, lots of time for

networking and meeting/talking with potential mentors, and time to talk next steps and barriers to getting out and hunting. The bottom line is that our seminars will give new hunters a way to connect to the hunting community. New hunters need a buddy; someone can call to ask silly questions, someone to go scouting with, to go hunting with.

We hope to engage instructors and hunting clubs in order to hook them up with specific audiences that need mentors and social support to continue (or start) hunting.

We will begin this format this spring with our turkey seminars on April 1st and 2nd. If you are interested in helping out with the field day component, or if you would like to be a hunting mentor (or know someone who would make a great mentor), please contact [Nicole Meier](#) or [John Pellegrini](#). We will be rolling out more information about this new seminar style soon. Stay tuned!

Trapper Education Online is Moving!

This month, the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) informed us that their online Trapper Education homework is moving!

You can now find the Trapper Education homework here: <https://conservationlearning.org/>

The state of Vermont requires all Trapper Education graduates to complete this online homework or the paper workbook and manual prior to their in-person class. All graduates must complete both the homework AND in-person class to obtain Trapper Education certification in the state of Vermont.

If you are interested in becoming a Trapper Education Instructor, you must first complete a new instructor training and then apprentice teach with a certified Trapper Education Instructor appointed to you by the Department. If you are already a certified instructor and you are interested in becoming a Trapper Education Instructor, you do not need to attend another instructor training course (but you can if you would like!). You can sign up for our next New Instructor Training Course here: <https://www.register-ed.com/events/view/97514>

New Instructor Training Class Date Announced!



In an effort to streamline the instructor training process, the VT Hunter Education Program is trying out a new training format for would-be instructors. “Curriculum Camp” was born to help new instructor applicants try teaching right after their

instructor training class. The regular in-person instructor training portion of the new instructor training class will take place on Saturday, April 22nd, and the instructor applicants who successfully complete the instructor training will have the opportunity to teach a hunter education class with staff and certified instructors the following day, Sunday, April 23rd.

New instructor trainings are a requirement for anyone who wants to become a Vermont Hunter Education Instructor in any discipline (bowhunter, trapper, hunter education). Any instructor or non-certified volunteer who would like to take the course must first complete assigned online instructor training homework and then attend a one-day in person training. Following the in-person training, all applicants must apprentice teach with a Chief Instructor before becoming a fully certified instructor.

The steps to becoming an instructor are as follows:

- **Complete all paperwork:** this includes the application, background check consent, child abuse registry check consent, and fingerprinting.
- **Interview:** Successfully pass an interview with a Warden.
- **Training:** Complete online instructor homework. Attend and pass an in-person new instructor training class.
- **Apprentice Teaching:** Complete “apprentice teaching” with an instructor assigned to you.

To sign up for the training, click here: <https://www.register-ed.com/events/view/97514>

For more information about becoming an instructor, check out our instructor [website here](#). If you would like to help at the next training, contact Nicole at Nicole.Meier@vermont.gov

Her Classroom is the Outdoors

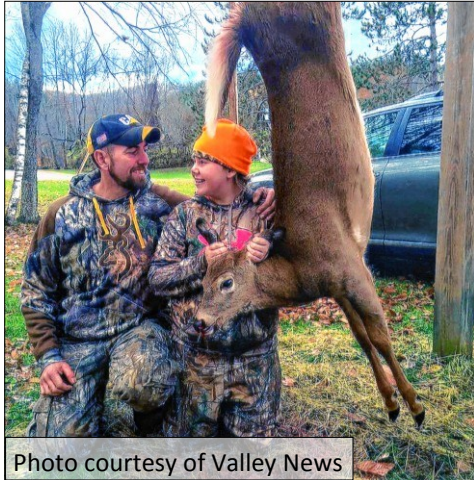


Photo courtesy of Valley News

This heartwarming story about 12-year-old Tarin Jones, an avid hunter and angler, was posted in the Valley News in November. I think we can all agree that we need more kids out in the woods.

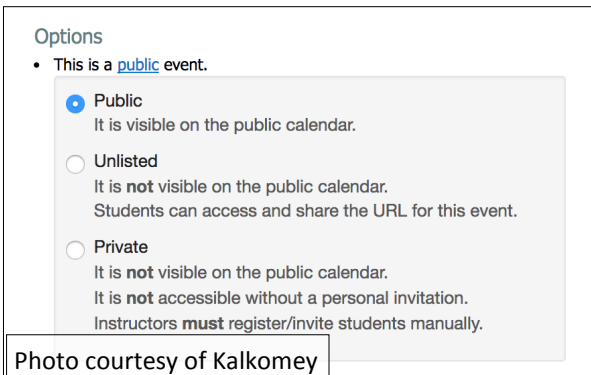
Do you know an extraordinary young hunter? Encourage them to become a junior instructor!

Junior instructors must display maturity, ethical behavior, and complete all instructor paperwork. They must be under the supervision of a certified instructor at all times during any hunter education class. For more information about our junior instructor program, contact our office at HunterEducation@vermont.gov or

call us at 802-828-1193.

To read the full article about Tarin, [click here](#).

Event Manager Updates



Right after the new year, Event Manager rolled out major updates, including a new event calendar, and automatic e-mails to students.

Easier-to-Understand Event Options: The Event Manager team has reworded the various event options so their implications are easier to understand. Unlisted is not a new option, it's just an easier way to create a public event that never appears on the public calendar.

New Event Calendar: Event Manager has always provided instructors with a way to view their events on a calendar. The calendar has been totally redesigned, and has added filters. Once you log into Event Manager, check out the calendar's Help and Legend buttons for more information.

Clearer Registration/Cancellation Times: We've added the registration start time to events that aren't open for registration yet. This way, students who want to know the precise time they can register will know when they should come back to Event Manager.

Clearer Success and Error Messages When Submitting Hours: The Event Manager team has added a few helpful messages so that instructors will better understand when their hours are submitted successfully and when they have errors that need fixing.

For the complete list of updates, view the [release notes here](#). For help with Event Manager, call Event Manager support or contact the Vermont Hunter Education Program at 802-828-1193.

A Letter on Membership from IHEA-USA

The following letter comes from Mark Hebert II, on the instructor advisory committee for IHEA-USA:



“It has come to our attention that many volunteer instructors are not members of IHEA-USA. We, the Instructor Advisory Committee, want to tell you what you are missing out on!!

One of the many benefits included with being a member of IHEA-USA, is a liability Insurance policy which covers you while teaching your state authorized hunter education class, covering up to \$1,000,000 per occurrence, and provides protection for a bodily injury or a property damage liability claim arising out of the performance of the registered volunteers' duties. This in itself is well worth your membership!

IHEA-USA is revising its website to make navigation easier. Many updates are already finished and in place, with more to come. One major addition due to debut soon in the Instructor Tool Kit where instructors can share and collaborate on teaching aids, techniques and generally compare notes on how to best teach courses and educate students.

As a member of IHEA-USA, you will also be able to take advantage of the discounts many vendors offer to the hunting community and their instructors. You can get excellent discounts on name brand optics, tree stands, knives, firearms, archery equipment, laser pointers and more. Besides discounts, we have training material to help you with your classes, including handouts, photos, teaching aids you can build, transparencies and lesson plans.

As an IHEA-USA member, you'll receive the award winning magazine IHEA-USA Hunting and Shooting Sports Education Journal. The *Journal* is packed with articles on improving your shot, helping wounded vets, the latest equipment, survival techniques, hunting clubs and more.

For only \$30 annually you get much more than what you paid for. Lifetime memberships are also available and include all the annual membership items, but in addition, include a \$100 Cabela's Gift Card, a nice Cabela's brand duffel bag and other great items. (A complete list of membership items is included in the membership box on the next page.)

Support IHEA-USA's mission to continue the heritage of hunting worldwide by developing safe, responsible, knowledgeable and involved hunters. Become part of the hunter education community that keeps giving back to the wonderful men and women out there volunteering their time to pass down our cherished hunting/trapping traditions.

[Click here for our membership information.](#)”

Contact Us!

This is YOUR newsletter! Have a photo or story you'd like to share? E-mail us with your suggestions, stories, pictures or other input!



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