

HRGC CARDS:

If you have not yet renewed your card for 2004, you can acquire a card at Holmen Pawn, Smokey's Bar and Hardware Hank in Holmen, or at Wiebke Fur and Ace Hardware in La Crosse. They are also available at Gander Mountain.

The dues are still only \$20.00. Please be reminded that "day passes" are no longer available.

Remember to carry your card with you when you visit the grounds and use the ranges. Don't be offended if you are asked to show it.

Remember to patronize those businesses that graciously handle the sale of the HRGC cards.

You may also acquire a card by sending \$20.00 to the Holmen Rod & Gun Club, P.O. Box 442, Holmen, WI 54636.

MEETING CHANGE:

Normally, the April meeting is held on the HRGC grounds. This year there is a conflict, so the April meeting will be held at the Holmen American Legion on April 14th, 2004. This change is shown in the calendar sent with the last newsletter.

You are encouraged to attend the April 14th meeting of the Holmen Rod & Gun Club at the Holmen American Legion. This meeting is important because nominations for the Board of Directors are made.

When the Board of Directors is elected in May, the newly elected board convenes and elects the new president, vice-president, secretary & treasurer.

YOUTH DAY:

Saturday, June 26th will be our third

annual "Youth Day." Over 40 youths participated last year for first-hand experience in various shooting and sporting activities.

This is one of those events where each of us can truly make a difference by being there and working with kids. Any help you could give on that day would be greatly appreciated.

Please volunteer to help out on Youth Day by calling Ben Gappa (526-3912) or Dick Hellerude (526-4687), or attend the Youth Day planning meeting to be held on Wednesday, May 12th on the club grounds at 6:30 PM before the regular HRGC monthly meeting.

The Youth Day events are designed for boys and girls ages 8 to 18. Participants can experience trap shooting, .22 rifle shooting,

muzzleloader shooting, archery, rod & reel casting, and the running deer target. Adult supervision and instruction will be prevalent at all times. All firearms and equipment will be provided, but participants may bring their own firearms and bows.

Parents are encouraged to accompany their youngsters. However, youths under age 12 must be accompanied by an adult, and the running deer target will be available only for participants over age 15.

Registration for Youth Day begins at 8:00 AM. The totally free activities begin at 8:45 AM and will end at 2:30 PM. Participants must be present to receive the door prizes.

Free lunch is provided for adults and participants.

There will be door prizes, videos, and emphasis on safety. It will be a very worthwhile experience and it is all FREE!! See the insert regarding Youth Day in this issue of "The Firing Line."

BENCHREST:

The Transcontinental League American Conference and National Conference postal benchrest leagues are being combined this year. This poses a problem for the Holmen Rod and Gun Club and La Crosse Rifle Club benchrest shooters since, in 2003, the active participants were shooting monthly on both ranges, e.g. La Crosse in the National Conference, and Holmen in the American Conference. Now, with the combined leagues, the new rules dictate that each shooter can submit only 5

qualifying scores. Since most of the shooters from HRGC participate in the matches at both clubs each month there may be times when the La Crosse matches will not have enough qualifying scores to submit because the Holmen shooters will want their qualifying scores to be used for the Holmen matches.

Typically, the Holmen matches draw approximately 15 shooters each month, and La Crosse only 6 or 7 with 5 or 6 of these being shooters from Holmen.

While it is true that the coordinator of the newly combined leagues has stated that he will schedule so Holmen and La Crosse do not shoot against each other, it is also true that La Crosse Rifle Club needs more benchrest participants. With

this in mind, the logical course of action is to continue the HRGC matches as listed on the calendar of the La Crosse Rifle Club matches on the following dates: April 25th, May 23rd, June 27th, and July 11th. These matches start at 8:00 AM. The first match at La Crosse Rifle Club, on April 25th, was scheduled to be a warm-up match. Because of the time constraints in submitting scores to the coordinator, the scores from this match will be used for qualification and not “warm-up.”

Qualifying shooters on each range can choose through which club their scores are to be reported.

Please be reminded that there is a separate class of benchrest competition for unaltered factory rifles. The only requirements are a

caliber of .243-6mm or larger bullet and a case capacity equal to 30-30 or larger in a factory original rifle. Trigger adjustment and glass bedding will be allowed. The rests must be of the sandbag style. The factory class will be included in all matches held at Holmen this year. The course of fire will be six targets of six bulls each. Each target has one sighter bull and five bulls for score. Target one will be a warm-up and the last five will be for score. You can expect to fire about fifty rounds per match. Trophies will be awarded to winners of the registered matches and high gun of the year for club shoots.

WORKDAYS:

Saturday, April 24th has been designated a clean-up fix-up workday. On this day the grounds are spruced up, target backings

are replaced and general maintenance is performed. All ranges will be closed on this day.

Work begins at 8:00 AM. A lunch will be served.

Please come and help out on this very important day. The work is easy and gets done much faster with ample help.

Another important work day is scheduled for June 19th to ready the grounds for Youth Day. A lunch will be served on this day, and all ranges will be closed.

To prepare the grounds for Field Days a work day has been scheduled for August 28th. A lunch will be served on this day. Please, come and help. Field Days will be celebrated on September 4th, 5th, and 6th of this year.

COUNTY

ALLIANCE:

“When the Alliance speaks, people listen.”

These are the words of Robyn Thorson, Regional Director of the Great Lakes Big River Region US Fish and Wildlife Service. Ms.

Thorson was the featured speaker at the 28th annual County Alliance Banquet held at the Baus Haus in La Crosse on April 1st.

Dignitaries listening included DeWayne Johnsrud, Jennifer Schilling, Vickie Burk and Dan Kapanke. DeWayne Johnsrud received special recognition for his role as advocate for sportspersons in the political arena. Mr. Johnsrud will not be running for re-election and claims that he will “come down from the mountain” only for medical care and food.

The “County Alliance” consists of one or two representatives from each of the sportspersons clubs

in the area. The current officers are Harry Meinking, Pres., Gary Severson, V.P., Jim Beck, Treas., and Marc Schultz, Sec.

The organizations that make up the County Alliance are: Bangor Rod and Gun, Badger State Sportsmen, Bohemian Valley Conservation, Brice Prairie Conservation Association, Coulee Region Archers, Coulee Region Ducks Unlimited, Coulee Trap Shooters Association, Ducks Unlimited Greenwings, God’s Country Muskies Inc., God’s country Turkey Federation, Gunslick Trap Club, Holmen Rod & Gun Club, La Crosse Bass Masters, La Crosse Ducks Unlimited, La Crosse Friends of Upper Mississippi Refuge, La Crosse Rifle Club, La Crosse River Ducks Unlimited, La

Crosse Wild Turkey Federation, Lake Neshonic District, Lake Onalaska District, Pheasants Forever, River City Bow Club, River Valley Bow Hunters, Trout Unlimited, West Salem Game Getters, West Salem Rod & Gun Club, Whitetail Unlimited, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, and Wisconsin Trappers Association.

This Year, the Holmen Rod & Gun Club was recognized as the Conservation Club of the Year. In light of our projects and activities, it is no wonder that we received such recognition. We sponsor an annual “Youth Day,” we provide site and instructors for the annual Chad Herbst Memorial Trap Shoot, and we sponsor and cooperate with the D.N.R. in facilitating the “Women in the Outdoors” program,

we provided instructors and facilities to graduate 125 Hunter Safety graduates, we provide facilities for Western Wisconsin Police Association and Boy Scout Camp for trap and .22 shooting, we make donations to the Friends of NRA and the County Alliance, we provide access to our grounds and safety monitoring for rifle sight-in prior to the deer gun season, and we had over 1200 cardholders in 2003.

The Alliance has continual contact with the DNR, Fish & Wildlife Service and the Corps of Engineers.

When the Alliance speaks, people listen.

HUNTER SAFETY EDUCATION:

Kudos to Ben Gappa, our hunter safety coordinator.

Each year the Holmen Rod & Gun Club sponsors a Hunter Education Class sanctioned by

the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Ben coordinates and directs the volunteer instructors, all certified by Wis. DNR, and all members of the Holmen Rod & Gun Club. Ben sees that the students attend classes as required; he relates well with them and becomes an unselfish, firm mentor. Ben's influence and leadership ability can be seen when one assesses the statistics of the Hunter Education Class held recently at the Holmen Rod and Gun Club.

There were nearly 40 students, and Ben recruited 12 DNR certified Hunter Safety instructors to help with the classes. On the "range day" (Sat. April 3rd), that relates to one instructor for every three students!!

On the "range day" the students are supervised in

shooting the .22 rifle while being introduced to conventional range commands.

They are supervised in shooting a shotgun on the trap range, and are given a comprehensive demonstration of firearm actions, loading and unloading each action type, safety, caliber information, ammunition and ammunition interchangeability, and hearing/eye protection.

The volunteer instructors involved in the recent Hunter Safety class are: Ben Gappa, Dan Rentschler, Phil Scholze, Korey Scholze, Tony Bennett, Greg Gentry, Stan Richason, Vic Rieber, Bill Baumgardner, Gary Butterfield, John Alseth, and Tim Wyant.