



1922 2022

A Century of Conservation Leadership

IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

VOLUME 10 / ISSUE 1 © 2021

IKES ON TARGET



PHOTO: JAY CLARK

Set Your Sights On New Gun Owners During National Shooting Sports Month

The number of first-time gun owners has grown dramatically in the past year. According to the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), more than 8.4 million Americans purchased their first firearm in 2020. NSSF reports that 58 percent of firearm purchases were made by African Americans—the largest increase of any demographic group. Women comprised 40 percent of first-time gun purchasers.

Regardless of their reason for purchasing, they represent a huge new audience who will be interested in training and a safe place to enjoy shooting sports.

So when your chapter hosts your **National Shooting Sports Month** event in August (www.shootingsportsmoonth.org), set your sights on these new gun owners. An important objective of this nationwide effort is to encourage participation by people who are *not* already recreational shooting sports enthusiasts.

This event is also a great opportunity to identify and engage new members!

If your chapter has never hosted a shooting sports event especially for the public, the NSSF offers support with its **First Shots** program (www.nssf.org/ranges/first-shots). This educational and promotional program can easily be incorporated into your chapter's National Shooting Sports Month event.

To help you get started, refer to a "Quick Guide to First Shots" found in this newsletter (page 3). Through the League's national membership in the NSSF, your chapter can benefit from many support materials at no cost to you.

In addition, the League can assist your chapter with event marketing and promotion. For more details email shootingsports@iwla.org.

We want all chapters with shooting facilities to reap the benefits of hosting a National Shooting Sports Month event. Use these strategies and they will help your chapter stay "on target!"



FIRST SHOTS
AN INTRODUCTION TO SHOOTING



CALLING ALL SHOOTING RANGES!

As a shooting range, you serve a critical role in the continued growth of gun ownership and shooting sports participation. We urge you to join us this August for National Shooting Sports Month. Here are some ways to get involved:

- Host an event or a series of events that are geared towards attracting different audiences.
- List your event(s) on the National Shooting Sports Month website.
- Help spread the word about the event(s) you're planning by utilizing the resources within the promotional toolkit.
- Display the National Shooting Sports Month logo on your website, in your promotions and on social media.
- Encourage active customers/members to invite family and friends to go target shooting.

Visit SHOOTINGSPORTSMONTH.ORG to sign on today!

#LETSGOSHOOTING



A program of the National Shooting Sports Foundation

QUICK GUIDE TO FIRST SHOTS®

AN INTRODUCTION TO SHOOTING



More Americans than ever before are interested in gun ownership and learning how to shoot. First Shots®, developed by NSSF®, is an easy — *and proven* — way to get them started or restarted. First Shots is a program designed to introduce new shooters to shooting fundamentals, firearm safety, deliver a hands-on experience, and provide incentives to continue their shooting journey.

Adding First Shots events to your range's or organizations offerings is simple, and NSSF is here to help ensure success. Here's how easy it is:

1.

Identify what dates you'd like to hold your First Shots events, line up your instructors, and then schedule your events at nssf.org/firstshots.

2.

NSSF will connect with you to make sure you get all your First Shots materials (see the list of what you'll receive below). You'll also be able to download digital assets from our online First Shots portal, which includes presentation decks, templates and other resources to help with your marketing and advertising efforts.

3.

After you've received your First Shots materials and have everything you need, host your events and welcome new shooters from your community to their new favorite place—your range!

NSSF provides all support materials for First Shots at no cost to NSSF member ranges. You'll receive:

- Eye/ear protection
- Birchwood Casey Shoot-N-C targets
- Rimfire ammunition
- Up to \$500 annually in monetary support for clay target and shotgun ammunition expenses
- First Shots handbooks and other safety literatures for each student
- \$25 rewards coupon component for each student for them to use at their First Shots host range

First Shots is ideal for you if you're looking to accomplish these things:

- Attract new customers or members
- Expand your current efforts geared toward new shooters
- Welcome new gun owners
- Re-engage non-shooting gun owners
- Expand on overall outreach efforts and grow our sports
- Turn first-timers into repeat customers at your business
- Create new shooting sports advocates, not only for your business, but for the future our sports



Want more information or have questions?
Visit nssf.org/firstshots or contact Ann Gamauf, NSSF Retail & Range Business Development Coordinator, at 203-299-2079 or agamauf@nssf.org.

A PROGRAM OF
NSSF
The Firearm Industry
Trade Association

On Target: Featured Chapters

In each issue of “Ikes On Target” we highlight chapters that promote shooting sports.

Under 500 Members – Arlington-Fairfax Juniors Chapter (Virginia)



Located in northern Virginia, this youth chapter is hosted at the Arlington-Fairfax Chapter in Centreville.

Its membership is comprised of about 150 youth and student members from several local high school air gun teams and includes a collegiate trap team from nearby George Mason University. Members also come from the local Target Archery Junior Olympic Development Program, that is working to qualify archers for the U.S. Olympic team.

The Sills Air Range (interior shown below) is the main attraction. In 2015, this 26-lane air gun range was upgraded from a seven-lane facility (originally a tractor shed) to a larger professional-level indoor range.

In 2017 in partnership with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources, the chapter added a Megalink electronic scoring target system.

Chapter members, especially youth and junior athletes, use this modern indoor shooting complex. Also, local high school teams and area club teams practice their skills and compete in the sports of air rifle and air pistol.



Open practices are available to the public for a limited number of visits. Coaching and equipment are provided for those interested in trying the shooting sports.

The chapter’s air range has been the training facility where several outstanding shooting sports athletes first developed their skills.

At the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, chapter member Ginny Thrasher won the gold medal in air rifle competition.

More recently, two other local youth had success on the international stage. Suman Sanghera (NoVA Sharpshooters) made the air pistol finals and partnered to win a gold medal in the air pistol mixed team event at the Junior Grand Prix in El Salvador.

At another International Shooting Sports Federation competition in India, Lucas Kozeniesky (former Robinson High School and USA Olympic shooting team member) won a gold medal in the men’s air rifle event.

<https://wp.arlingtonfairfax-iwla.org/youth-chapter/>



Over 500 Members – Winchester Chapter (Virginia)

The Winchester Chapter in northwestern Virginia is the home to more than 800 Ikes—many of them shooting sports enthusiasts.



Rifle-Pistol Range

The chapter’s “Clyde L. Heishman Memorial Rifle-Pistol Range” offers nine benches and a handgun counter. Paper targets and steel gongs are available on this range at 7-, 15-, 25-, 50- and 100-yard positions.



Five-Stand Shotgun Range

The “Dr. Robert C. Green, Jr. Memorial Shotgun Range” includes a five-stand course with 10 mobile launchers using multiple clay pitch sizes. In addition, a shotgun patterning range is available to test and measure shot patterns. Their instructors are willing to work with participants of all skill levels.



3-D Archery Course

These courses offer archers a variety of life-sized 3-D game targets in natural scenarios on two different trails in a pine forest. Some backstopped lanes are available to those who bring their own targets for crossbows. The course offers elevated positions in simulated hunting stands and dedicated lanes with block targets and varying distances.



The chapter maintains an active Scholastic Action Shooting Program to provide student athletes (elementary through college) with a

“supportive environment where shooting sports serve as catalysts for teaching life lessons and skills that emphasize positive character traits and citizenship values.”



Their ranges are also available for The Well Armed Woman Shenandoah Valley Chapter to hold training sessions in “a safe, non-threatening way with the purpose of educating, equipping and empowering women shooters.”

As a component of the new member orientation, the chapter require all members to take a 90-minute range qualification course to use its shooting facilities.

www.winchester-iwla.org

IWLA National Shooting Sports Awards

Each year the Izaak Walton League offers nearly 50 national awards for conservation, outdoor ethics, water quality, shooting sports, communications, youth-focused achievements and much more!

The **Shooting Sports Award** is presented to individuals (member or non-member), groups or organizations judged to have done outstanding work to promote shooting sports.

Last year, the League recognized three members for their efforts to promote shooting sports.



As the Fort Wayne Chapter's (Indiana) most avid outdoors-woman, **Charita Niedermeyer** is a diligent organizer of several community outreach activities that introduce others to the

local Izaak Walton League.

She runs the chapter's Women in the Outdoors event held on the chapter grounds in conjunction with a local National Wild Turkey Federation chapter. Annually, this event attracts about 80 women for a day of introduction to outdoor activities.

In support of the R3 initiative (recruitment-retention-reactivation), Charita organizes a ladies' trap shooting day at the chapter. From this activity, she recruits a team of women shotgunners to participate in the pheasant hunts sponsored by the Indiana Department of Natural Resource.

Michael Scholz (Crete Chapter, Nebraska) volunteers much of his time as the shotgun coach for the local Blue River Clay Target team.

Over the past decade, Michael has mentored more than 200 young



shotgunners taking teams to 4-H State Shooting Sports Competitions and the Cornhusker State Games.

Many of these youth, with the help of Michael's instructional guidance, have expanded their skills beyond the trap range to shooting skeet and sporting clays.

Every year he organizes the chapter-hosted regional junior/senior high school competitions drawing over 300 participants from 18 teams from nine counties.

At the chapter, Michael also led the effort to remodel the trap ranges, including building new trap houses, upgrading lighting, repaving lanes and replacing barrier fencing.



A longstanding member of the York Chapter #67 (Pennsylvania), **Chester "Chet" Wise** is active in most activities but is focused on youth shooting sports.

He is a founding officer of the Mason Dixon Claybusters, a local non-profit youth trapshooting organization. For more than two decades, he has coached thousands of youth at the chapter's events, specials team competitions and weekly open trap nights.

Chet is the driving force behind trap shooting at the chapter-hosted York Area Sportsmen for Youth events and the annual York County Youth Field Day.

Chet also chairs rifle and shotgun shooting competitions during the chapter's Senior Games sponsored by the York County Area Agency on Aging.

~●~

We ask that you do your part to help honor a deserving chapter member for their dedication to the shooting sports.

Please refer to the enclosed award nomination form or online at

www.iwla.org/awards.

Quick Shots

Chapter Shooting Sports Coordinators



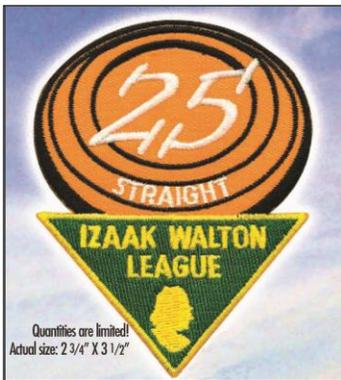
Attention Chapter President:
Does your chapter have an assigned **Shooting Sports Coordinator**?

Why is this so important?

Having a member volunteer in this position will help us provide your chapter with timely information about best practices for range management and other issues that affect hunters and recreational shooters at the local, state, and national levels. This member will also receive future shooting sports-related updates (and issues of *Ikes On Target* newsletters) from IWLA and NSSF and corporate discount product offers.

See the enclosed form and postage-paid envelope, if your chapter does not currently have such a position filled, and please identify a member to this position. Thank you!

IWLA 25-Straight Shooters Patch



Here's something for you trap and skeet shooters! Izaak Walton League "25-Straight" Shooter's Patches are available for sale to interested chapters and eligible

members in single, as well as bulk unit quantities of either 10, 25 or 50.

Use this enclosed order form to purchase from the IWLA National Office.

For additional bulk quantity pricing (100 or more), call (800) 453-5463, ext. 216, or email: shootingsports@iwla.org.

2021 National Hunting and Fishing Day



On September 25th, Americans across our country will be celebrating **National Hunting and Fishing Day** (NHF Day). And in 2021, the Izaak Walton League is continuing our longtime national NHF Day sponsorship.

IWLA chapters are encouraged to join the celebration recognizing the leadership of hunters and anglers in conserving America's wildlife, fisheries, and wild places.

If your chapter has never hosted a NHF Day event, start simply. For example, conduct one activity open to the public and related to hunting or fishing at your chapter. Another alternative is to seek a public location to conduct a tabling event to promote how hunters and anglers fund conservation and invite people to join your chapter at the same time!

Get started with the NHF Day toolkit at <https://nhfday.org/>.

In addition, some funding may be available to groups that hold an event with a "NHF Day Live It!" grant. Any questions can be directed to (417) 225-1162 or nhfday@wondersofwildlife.org.



"Ikes On Target" is a publication developed for IWLA chapter presidents and shooting sports coordinators.

© 2021 Izaak Walton League of America

For more information, contact:
IWLA Chapter Relations
707 Conservation Lane
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

(800) IKE-LINE, ext. 216 • shootingsports@iwla.org
www.iwla.org/outdoor-recreation/shooting-sports

NATIONAL HUNTING & FISHING DAY

HUNT • SHOOT • FISH

YOU HELP RAISE OVER

\$100,000

DOING WHAT YOU LOVE TO DO

Through licenses and excise taxes, hunters, shooters and anglers help generate over **\$100,000** every **30 minutes** for fish, wildlife and habitat programs.

50TH ANNIVERSARY

TAKE THE PLEDGE AND CELEBRATE THE OUTDOORS

SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

NHFDAY.ORG

Henry David Thoreau
WONDERS OF WILDLIFE
NATIONAL
MUSEUM & AQUARIUM



Cabela's



& HOOK
BARREL