



# THE FIRING LINE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE RIVER FALLS SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

SEPTEMBER 2022

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Sept. 22 banquet pre-  
viewed

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Info & Hours

2022

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Allen Gallistel  
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Mike Robey  
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**From left: Linda Xiong, WDNR Outdoor Skills Trainer- West Central Region, Volunteer Safety Instructors: Jeff Degeest, Becky Sindelar, Craig Aschenbrenner, Pat Knorn, Keith Bonse, Ashley Van Egtern, WDNR Hunter Ed. Assistant Administrator; and Travis Schnick, RFSC President.**

## Hunter ed team lauded as 'Best in State'

*Fivesome taught 245 kids, adults in 2019*

A team of volunteers with RFSC connections has been honored by the Wisconsin DNR 2019 Hunter Education Group of the Year among more than 200 statewide hunter ed teams. The group also seized the opportunity on Aug. 8th to present an award of appreciation to board president Travis Schnick for use of club facilities for teaching and practice.

The teaching team led by club member Pat Knorn, formerly of Roberts now of Danbury, was recognized by Linda Xiong, WDNR Outdoor Skills Trainer- West Central Region, Eau Claire, and Ashley Van Egtern, WDNR Hunter Ed. Assistant Administrator, from Madison, who used the August board meeting as a chance to meet with the teaching team and award the recognition, which was delayed by COVID restrictions.

In 2021, Wisconsin had 28,243 students complete Hunter Education certifications. Roughly 58 percent of those students were 17 and under. There are currently about 2,800 active unique instructors certified to teach Hunter Education in the State of Wisconsin, Van Egtern said.

"We love being able to personally present awards/accomplishments as our schedules al-

low," Van Egtern noted afterward.

Knorn and instructors each received new instructor hats, complimentary Vortex binoculars and first-aid kits from the two WDNR representatives in appreciation for their efforts.

"I tell the kids, if we need to yell at you, I will. You're handling a firearm that will kill somebody," said Knorn, noting that the students are also urged to point out shortcomings in their instructors. "If you see something (dangerous), say something."

Knorn's passion for firearm safety was ignited after she and her late husband, Jim, took the class so he could hunt out of state. Soon afterward, one of their instructors "volun-told us" to help out with a subsequent class. They were quickly hooked.

Club member Keith Bonse of North Hudson has been an active part of Knorn's team for about five years. He first became involved with mentoring about a decade ago when his daughter, Faith, joined the BB gun league at the Hudson Rod, Gun & Archery Club. The WDNR restructured the curriculum and shifted course focus from a classroom lecture to more direct learning approach, Bonse said. The change was prompted when state law-

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## Please welcome the newest RFSC members

**Robert Peterson, Robert Berning, Scott Nemitz, John & Caroline Gallagher, Mickel Roberts, Josh Knutson, Derek Wilson, Jacob Berning, Mark Walker, Anthony Schlotte, Troy Szotkowski, Brady Neal, and Jonathan Wright . (June)**

**Anthony Titus, David Swanson, Robert Storey, Jakob Kelsey, and Kent Ferraro. (July)**

**Stuart Beuhler, Abe Ford, Samuel DeLain, Thomas McNamara, Harrison Oney, William Ahrens, John Ahrens (jr. member), and Tanner Jarmuz (jr. member) (August)**

## Mel Warren Turkey Shoot' declared rousing success

Range Master Ed Gibb described the Mel Warren Turkey Shoot held Saturday, Aug. 13, as a raging success.

Shooters competed for 32 turkeys, and BBQ-ready shrimp and pork loin.

"It was a success. I heard lots of compliments on our junior shooters. Folks said they were respectful, and a joy to be around," Gibb said.

He quoted Warren as saying -- "I had a good day!"

## Hopp ends 12-year run as newsletter editor

Member and club secretary Belinda Hopp has wound up more than a decade of generating "The Firing Line", the club's quarterly newsletter.

Member Steve Dzubay has assumed the job.

If members have newsletter suggestions, feedback, comments or criticisms, e-mail [stevendzubay@gmail.com](mailto:stevendzubay@gmail.com), or text or call (715) 821-7537.

Visit the club's website at [www.riverfallsportsmensclub.com](http://www.riverfallsportsmensclub.com) for regular updates.

## Group earns WDNR's top honor *Continued from page 1*

with peers at St. Croix Central High School. She also plays other sports, her dad said.

Students now spend the majority of class time learning to understand and safely handle firearms, he said.

"Pat really does have a heart of gold," said Bonse. "We're all in it for the students."

Time needed to teach the class has been reduced from 20-25 hours to about 12-15 hours -- typically two Saturdays and a Sunday. Outside speakers like game wardens still take part and share real-life stories, but that sometimes occurs while kids have lunch during an all-day session.

"Most of the instructors we have are very people-oriented," said Bonse. "We're all different in our own way, but it's an extremely good group. We don't try to hammer the information into the kids."

Knorn, who describes herself as "brutally honest", said the traditional "long-ass" classroom lecture-style course had many students bored to dozing, or doodling in their instruction books. In her classes, students are quickly assigned to small groups and engaged with WDNR-issued safe weapons in their hands most of the time. They're challenged to familiarize with at least five different gun actions and constantly reminded of real world dangers of muzzle direction and fire zones.

"We are strictly safety priority," Pat said. "We don't teach 'em how to gut a deer. They can learn that from Grandpa." Instead, the focus is how to safely climb and exit a tree stand, cross fences, load and unload a weapon.

Learning is so hands-on "they don't have time to

doodle or take a nap," said Knorn. "It's fun to see the lightbulb come on."

During 2018-19, Knorn and her team conducted 19 classes and graduated 245 kids -- including some with learning disabilities.

Board member Belinda Hopp, who coaches youth shooting sports, complimented Knorn on her no-nonsense approach. "You can't throw the entire instruction book at a kid and expect it all to stick."

Knorn's approach to teaching is popular with students and parents. Van Egtern said the WDNR tries not to micromanage its teaching teams.

"Each group is definitely unique! There are parameters; policies and procedures, as well as lesson plans that instructors must adhere to when delivering the Hunter Education curriculum. That being said, each instructor and group are free to add their own flavor and unique style within those parameters," she stated. "Those individual characteristics that are brought forward is what makes working with Wisconsin's Hunter Education Volunteer Instructors so much fun!"

The program's is to promote safety, conservation and Wisconsin's hunting heritage through a comprehensive educational program, said Van Egtern.

"Hunting in Wisconsin is safe, as demonstrated by the continued downward trend in hunting incidents. Wisconsin has a strong tradition of safe hunting, and it is everyone's responsibility to continue this tradition," Van Egtern wrote in e-mail correspondence.

## Big club fundraiser just 3 weeks away. Unable to attend? Raffle purchase will help the Club and just *might* enhance your gun collection

Prizes to be awarded and auctioned at the Thursday, Sept. 22nd event include more than 20 guns, power tools, a Sig scope/rangefinder, hunt club passes, bricks of ammunition and more, said co-chairs Mike Robey and John Piepenpol.

The event, being held at the River Falls Golf Course, 2120 E. Division St., opens at 5 pm with various games, a silent auction, cash bar and social. The buffet steak or chicken dinner will be served at 7 pm with a short live-auction with more guns, gift certificates and merchandise after the meal.

Current and former members will receive a mailed invitation containing details about the event and a form for reserving tickets and various sponsor opportunities. [Or print a copy from here:](#)

Those unable or not interested in attending the event are encouraged to participate in the pre-event raffle. Three tickets -- included in the mailing -- are \$10 for one or \$20 for three. Raffle stubs and money can be dropped off at the clubhouse or mailed to RFSC, P.O. Box 336, River Falls. You need not be present to win for this gun raffle.

Guns offered include: a Beretta A300 Auto 12 GA; a Smith & Wesson M&P 15, AR 5.56; a Sig-Sauer 365X pistol, 9mm; a Browning ABolt3, synthetic, 6.5 or .270 cal.; a Weatherby Element 12 GA, auto & synthetic; a Howa Game Pro, bolt with scope in synthetic, 6.5 PRC; a Smith & Wesson Shield EZ pistol, 9mm; and a Savage Axis ii XP, bolt with scope in synthetic, .270. cal.

# Board offers update on next-door property purchase

As many of you may know through past communications and annual meeting discussion, the 9.2 acre property purchased next door has been paid for.

Through planning and the initiative by directors over nearly 20 years, the club established and funded a land acquisition- savings fund. Those savings plus the proceeds of four years- worth of fund-raising efforts and member contributions to pay off the acquisition quickly.

Members may be asking, "What is next?"

Board members and other volunteers are continuing clean-up of the land. Extensive work has been com-

pleted to the area nearest the clubhouse, with efforts to continue westward on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Among work that remains:

- Grade and seed around the shed and the east end of the property yet this fall.
- Install chain link fence along Rifle Range road west to new driveway.

Future efforts will include:

- Fence the remainder of the property
- Clean-up of stumps and brush piles, and grade the rest of the cleared area.
- Plant additional trees in selected areas around the perimeter.
- Improve and further secure

the existing shed making it more useable for storage.

The board hopes to continue building a financial "nest egg" which could be used for future land acquisitions, legal fees or future building renovations or projects.

The stronger our financial position, the easier it will be for the existing and future boards to thoughtfully consider options.

Taxes on the property, valued at \$133,000, were \$1,565 last year -- down from more than \$3,300 after the parcel was purchased. Taxes were lowered after buildings were removed.

Taxes on the club's original 15-acre parcel were \$2,275 in 2022.

*Allan Gallistel, Club Manager &  
2022 Board of Directors*

## Board briefs

- St. Croix Central High School trap team will again be using the range for its shooting sports this fall.
- Haas Excavating has been hired to grade the area around the shed on the new property in coming weeks.
- An exterminator continues to visit regularly to curtail destruction by pocket gophers and moles on the property.
- Best Built Fence has been contracted to extend four-foot security fencing west from the gate along Rifle Range Rd. across the south line to the driveway.

## Upcoming Club events

### Young shooters invited

The RFSC will host an open house on Oct. 1st for any youth residing within the RF school district, grades 6-12, who is interested in clay target shooting.

### Public Sight-in

Range facilities will be open to the public from 9 am to 1 pm, four dates ahead of Wisconsin's deer gun opener. Volunteers will be available to assist on Saturday, Oct. 29, Nov. 5 and Nov. 12; and Friday, Nov. 18. Cost will be \$10 per gun.

### Fall Club Clean-up

Members can log volunteer hours by pitching in during the autumn work day around the club. We'll also conduct the seasonal roadside cleanup. Start time is 8 am, Saturday, Sept. 24. Bring gloves!

### Fall trap leagues underway

Fall trap-shooting begins at 5 pm, Tuesday, Sept. 20, and at 11 am, Sunday, Sept. 25, continuing each Tuesday and Sunday through Oct. 23rd.

RIVER FALLS SPORTSMEN'S CLUB  
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## **RFSC HOURS**

RANGE FACILITIES ARE OPEN TO MEMBER'S 365 DAYS PER YEAR. WE ONLY REQUIRE THAT YOU OBSERVE POSTED SHOOTING HOURS AS FOLLOWS:

WEEKDAYS FROM: 9 AM TO 8 PM

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM: 9 AM TO 8 PM

THE CLUBHOUSE IS ONLY OPEN DURING TRAP LEAGUE HOURS (JANUARY TO OCTOBER), WHICH ARE AS FOLLOWS:

TUESDAY 5 PM – 9 PM SUMMER, AND FALL TRAP LEAGUE

WEDNESDAY 5 PM – 9 PM SUMMER TRAP LEAGUE

SUNDAY 11 AM – 3 PM WINTER, SUMMER, AND FALL TRAP LEAGUE



The RFSC provides a safe place for members to shoot and have fun and also hosts a variety of beginning and youth shooting programs. In 2019, over 2200 hours were logged instructing youth 4-H shooters. Kids learned about safety and practiced disciplines of using a shotgun, small bore .22 pistol, muzzle-loader, .22 rifle, air rifle and archery (including wildlife ecology and hunting skills.)

Volunteers also taught Hunter Ed. classes, supervised trap programs for River Falls and St. Croix Central students, and oversaw RWVA Project Appleseed rifle marksmanship and Beginning Shooter courses. It's important to realize the role the RFSC plays the education of today's adults and tomorrow's leaders.

***It's what we do. It's who we are.***