

Teaching hunting

State workshop series will introduce the great outdoors

BY JOHN N. FELSHER

Small game seasons across Alabama open Sept. 12. Squirrel and rabbit seasons both run through March 7, 2021, with a limit of eight each per day.

As a youngster, the squirrel season opener meant the beginning of a new hunting season. Sure, we dabbled with dove hunting and sometimes hunted teal, but for me the “real” hunting season began when squirrels became legal. Back then, few white-tailed deer wandered the fields and forests. Just seeing a deer track almost made the news, so most people hunted small game.

Like me, most hunters probably learned their skills as children following their fathers, grandfathers or other relatives. Before dawn on the squirrel season opener, my dad and I always sat quietly on a log in some hardwood forest waiting for the sun to brighten the sky enough to see bushytails. We continued this tradition with squirrels and other game as often as possible for the rest of his life.

Fortunately, I had a father who taught me the basics of hunting. Dad commonly said, “You can either fish or take small children fishing, but you can’t do both at the same time. Decide what you are going to do and stick with it.”

The same philosophy applies to hunting. When I was a small child, Dad always carried his gun in the woods, but rarely fired it. He preferred watching me, one of my brothers or one of our friends doing the shooting. He missed many



The archery skills Connie Chow developed at an Adult Mentored Hunting Program (AMH) workshop helped her harvest her first deer during an AMH hunt. Registration is now open for this fall’s AMH workshops.

opportunities to bag game because he didn’t want to take that opportunity away from a child.

Too many sportsmen today don’t understand this philosophy. They want to hunt more than they want to teach their children how to hunt. Some sportsmen think youngsters should already possess the skills of Daniel Boone and yell at them when they don’t. Instead, teach children how to do something correctly. Don’t do everything for a child. Let young sportsmen learn by doing and making mistakes as long as they can do it safely.

Not everyone enjoyed the same outdoors experiences as I did. Today, too many young people don’t even know who their father is or where he is. They may have little contact with that

See **TEACHING**, 13

Paul’s Automotive, Inc.

“We Have a Great Reputation. Ask Around.”



Bring in your church bulletin and receive 10% off

(251) 631-3925

Paul Riels
Owner



50 Schillinger Rd. N. Mobile, AL 36608
(Behind Cockrell’s Body Shop & Fausak Tires)