

2011 National Hunting & Fishing Day at Elma Conservation

Erie County Federation Sponsors NHF Day 40th Anniversary

Sep. 24, 2011; 184 registered; 54 volunteers; 14 Learning Station format!

The host Elma Conservation Club provided gracious use of their spacious club facilities to provide 14 learning stations for kids of all ages at the 2011 Erie County Federation of sportsmen National Hunting and Fishing Day (NHF) event.

WYRK radio DJ Clay Moden said, "this event is truly

impressive," as over 200 people from 17 different communities across New York State attended the 40th



attendees have stopped to say hello and share their secret advice and tips with each other in hopes of success in the woods. Thanks to everyone who is working this event!"

Hawkeye Bowmen and the pro staff from Alpine Archery provided archery learning lessons with long bow, recurve bow and several different styles of the compound bow. Hawkeye offered equipment in kid sizes for all ages to experience the thrill of target shooting.

Similarly, Horton Crossbows shared the use of their equipment. At



Anniversary recognition event. Special thanks to 54 volunteers from 13 organizations in the Erie County Federation that provided educational and skill sharing entertainment for visitors from two to over 90 years of age.

Clay Moden shared his plans for the upcoming opening day of New York State archery deer season, set for October 15th this year, and said, "it was great that

too, were able to learn from the brother and sister instructor team from East Aurora Fish and Game, NRA certified youth instructors Samantha and David Salazar, both champion shooters in their own right. Each youth or adult participant was allowed three

shots to measure the fun of shooting a shotgun at a flying clay target. "The kids loved it," said New York State NRA Scholarship winner, Samantha Salazar, with a big ear-to-ear smile, "Many returned more than once and we let them shoot again." The Erie Federation provided plenty of 20 gauge ammunition.

Patti Wattengel and members from the Erie County Trappers explained how and why trapping is so important to everyone that cares about wildlife survival and human safety. Trappers can effectively isolate and contain nuisance raccoons, squirrels, beavers, coyotes and many other wildlife forms. Kids were allowed a small gift of fur from a pelt of their choice, a prize for any youth.

At New York Walleye Association, Don Nikischer, Pete Quagliana and friends taught kids to craft their own custom spinner/ worm combinations. Some colorful spinner bead and blade rigs resulted, and kids were allowed to take home what they made. Prizes everywhere!

The DEC station offered over 15 wildlife mounts native to WNY, allowing easy explanation of WNY wildlife. DEC biologist Connie Adams and DEC

the range, several youngsters said, "I enjoyed shooting a crossbow more than the other bows because it was easier to aim and hit the bullseye every time."

At the trap range, kids 12 years of age and older, and many adults



public relations manager Megan Gollwitzer offered useful information regarding the latest invasive species to New York, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB).

DEC Environmental Conservation Officers (ECO's) answered questions about outdoor rules and regulations, with lots of questions regarding the new crossbow rules for the 2011 NYS big game season.



Then kids were treated to a visit with flying raptors, as Marianne Hines and associates from Messenger Woods Wildlife Care and Education Center were among learning stations sites for visitors. This organization is the place to contact when injured wildlife, abandoned baby ducks or fawn deer are found and need help. They nurse the critters back to health and release to return to the wilds when healthy.

Hines explained, "our mission is simple: to promote community awareness, education and instruction, involvement, understanding, appreciation, and acceptance of our wildlife in order to conserve it."

All kids attending the event received a free raffle ticket and over the course of the event, a fishing rod/reel combo was given away every 15 minutes. Pretty impressive! Registration administrators, Rose



Barus and Paul Stoos provided each youth with a lightweight blaze orange hunting vest. "It was quite a sight to see," said Rich Davenport, event chairman, "with kids all through many acres of the facility running around in blaze orange attire, and proud of it."

Adult raffle prizes included a precision Crossman pellet air rifle with scope, a complete turkey hunting outfit with backpack from Bass Pro, including seat, decoys and calls, a Shakespeare Great Lakes trolling rod/reel combination with an assortment of tackle, two raccoon pelts from the Erie County trappers, which the kids couldn't stop going back to touch again and again.

Sahlen's hot dogs were the order of the day before and after 12 noon, with all the fixing's through the end of event. Kevin Skovinski, Sahlens

ace hot dog cooking connoisseur, personally fired up the grills to offer advice on how to cook hot dogs and asked onlookers if they would explain the best way to eat them. It was a two-way demonstration



with lots of laughs.

Hats off to the Erie County Federation chairman Rich Davenport and his trusty co-chair, Dave Smyczynski, and their ten man committee for such a well conducted NHF Day event, with accolades to Brian McCarthy, Tom Kuntz and volunteers of the Elma Conservation Club.

Sponsors & Voluteers:

Alpine Archery Pro Staff, Bass Pro Shops – Springfield Mo. store, Bison City Rod & Gun Club, Clay Moden (WYRK Country Radio), Crossman Air Rifles, Dick's Sporting Goods, Ducks Unlimited, East Aurora Fish & Game Club, Eastern Sales & Marketing, Elma Conservation Club, Empire Retriever Club, Erie County Trappers, Future Fisherman Foundation of America, NYSDEC (Connie Adams, Megan Gollwitzer, ECO Jim Hunt, ECO Scott Marshall), Trout Unlimited, NYS Walleye Assoc., Hawkeye Bowmen, Jamison Road Fire Department, Knight and Hale Game Calls, Made in America Store Messenger Woods, Musky Joe Netti, NY Outdoor News, NYS Dept of Health, Paul-Eye Lures, Pure Fishing, Quaker Boy Game Calls, Rob Ray (Buffalo Sabres alumni Enforcers TV Pgm), Sahlens Meat Packing, SCOPE (Shooters Committee On Political Education), Sioux Bee Honey Assoc., Triple-S Distributors, Wonderbread (Transit Store), and many individual volunteers.

By Dave Barus

