

# Well-Deserved Honor

PGC recognizes  
Dick Smith for  
years of teaching,  
mentoring youth

By **ROB ANDERSEN**

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"If somebody needs help with something dealing with kids and the outdoors, I want to be there," said Dick Smith, who has been volunteering with mentoring youth in hunting and fishing programs for "at least the last 60 years."

"I think the number one thing is, you've got to like kids, and you've got to like the outdoors," he added.

Smith said he has worked with groups of people over the years that have a love for hunting and fishing that they want to instill in kids.

One of the most important of Smith's endeavors is hunter safety education.

Smith's friend Dave Donachy, a Pennsylvania Game Commission wildlife conservation officer, said sportsmen's clubs began offering volunteer safety training for hunters in 1950, and the Game Commission began with the safety education programs in 1959.

"After World War Two, there were 150 to 200 hunting incidents with 20 to 30 deaths every year until 1959, when the Game Commission came on board," Donachy said. "Last year was the safest on record."

Today, the course is required for all

**See SMITH / A10**



Photo submitted to the Times Observer

During a recent annual Hunter Safety Education update meeting, Pennsylvania Game Commission Wildlife Conservation Officer Dave Donachy presented a Lifetime Recognition Award to Dick Smith for his commitment to Youth Hunter Education.

# Smith presented Lifetime Recognition Award...

first-time hunters, regardless of age.

Smith said he has been involved in the hunter education classes for "at least a half century," and still is with classes at Sheffield Rod and Gun, Kalbfus Rod and Gun and Wiltsie Community Church.

He added that taking the course is not the end of safety training.

"When they leave the classroom, their father, aunt and uncle continue to teach safety. It's ongoing for a lifetime," he said.

Every year, instructors for the hunter ed-

ucation classes meet with representatives from the Game Commission for updates on how and what to teach that particular year.

This year, Smith was called forward during the meeting and presented a Lifetime Recognition Award for his commitment to Youth Hunter Education, according to Donachy.

"It was the first time in the 24 years I've known him that he was speechless," Donachy said.

The award for dedication to young people and the outdoors was not Smith's first.

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**Dick Smith**

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives presented him with a citation on Nov. 10, 2003 for "Many years with the Warren County Council of Sportsmen mentoring the youth of Warren County in outdoor activities and sportsmanship. He truly exemplifies the finest virtues of American life, and has earned our deep respect and gratitude for his tireless efforts."

Smith has been volunteering with other youth outdoor activities as well. He said he began teaching archery skills to kids in 1951, when Pennsylvania had its first special archery season. He noted that archery has evolved from long bows to recurved bows to today's modern compound bows, which Smith said he doesn't care for.

At times he has served as president of the

Kalbfus Rod and Gun and as secretary at Pine Grove Rod and Gun.

Another organization he is involved with is the Hunt of a Lifetime, which presents hunts to youths with terminal illnesses or life-threatening conditions.

He donated a whitetail deer hunt at the Cherry Ridge Hunt Ranch in Tiona that he won in a drawing to the organization which, in turn, gave it to a youth with cancer.

He came by his background in the outdoors honestly, growing up on Stony Lonesome Road, and learning to shoot guns from his family's back porch.

"I came from a family of five boys. Four of us, and our father, hunted. We began shooting when we were three or four years old," he said.