

Fish and Game Club offers youth hunter mentorship program



By Chris Drost

Ten lucky youth are spending a week learning all about hunting and hunter safety as part of the 2023 Youth Hunter Mentorship Program thanks to the efforts of the Bancroft Fish & Game Club.

“Earlier this year, applications were made available to our members and the Bancroft community, and it worked out this year that we have five girls and five boys taking the 2023 Youth Hunter Mentorship Program,” says Paul Goggan, president of the Bancroft Fish and Game Club.

The following 10 youths, ages 12 to 14, were selected to attend the training, Liam Smith, Ava Warner, Sarah Komljanec, Zoe Deschamps, Alex, Jayden Fransky, Emma Pilgrim, Morgan Walker, Pierce Wong, and Elias White.

As part of the program each child will take the hunter's education course and get their PAL (Minors Permit). They will also learn about archery and have the opportunity to do lots of firearm training on the ranges.

“The program's objectives are to give each student a greater understanding of the role of hunting, hunter & firearm safety, hands on experience, plus the self-confidence and appreciation for the outdoors,” explains Goggan.

On Monday the youth will take the PAL course, with the exam taking place on Tuesday. On Wednesday, they will complete the Hunter's Course, and then on Thursday and Friday they will be out on the range doing shot gun, handgun, rifle, and long-distance shooting training.

The Fish & Game is providing lunch each day for the students, at no cost to the families.

“Thanks to our generous sponsors and the Bancroft Fish & Game Club this course is offered free of charge to all 10 students,” says Goggan.

The sponsors for this course include, BOSSGear, Hirsch Precision, Stoeger Canada (1990) Ltd., Rapala UMC Canada, Vortex, Firearms Outlet Canada, Switzer's Auctions and Appraisals, Canadian Tire, Mack Attack Outdoors, Firearms Safety Education Services Ontario, OFAH Zone “E”, Hornady, Peavey Mart, Richard Naranowiz, Rob's Custom Knives, Reg Wales “Precision Optics Academy, Mike Brake, technical field advisor for Vortex Canada, Ducks Unlimited, Accuracy Plus and Bullseye North.

The Fish and Game Club is also grateful for donations made by its members, Sean Davis, Norm Murray, Paul Dempsey, James Wong, John Goguen, Mike Morrison, Rick Melnick, and Steve Birnie.

The program would not be possible without qualified instructors to teach the youth about hunting and hunter safety. These include, Reg Wales from Precision Optics Academy, Mike Brake, technical field technician with Vortex Canada, Paul Goggan, Rob Walker and Bob Montroy, directors Bancroft Fish & Game, and Carl Ziebarth, instructor with the Bancroft Fish and Game.

The students' graduation is planned for July 21. Besides the presentation of certificates, it will include food and refreshments for participants and their families.