



RICHLAND ROD & GUN CLUB

(INCORPORATED)
A 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Organization
P.O. BOX 337
RICHLAND, WASHINGTON 99352

I GIVE MY PLEDGE AS AN AMERICAN TO SAVE AND FAITHFULLY DEFEND FROM WASTE, THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF MY COUNTRY; ITS AIR, SOILS, AND MINERALS. ITS FORESTS, WATERS, AND WILDLIFE. I WILL HELP EDUCATE FUTURE GENERATIONS TO BE RESPONSIBLE CARETAKERS OF THE RESOURCES OF AMERICA.

January 2024, Volume 79 No. 1

Club Website- www.richlandrodandgun.org

Club Facebook- www.facebook.com/RichlandRodandGunClub

2023/2024 Officers

President	Secretary	Treasurer
Matt Cummings	Mike Estes	Richard Libby
(509) 948-4905	(509) 551-9066	(509)947-0498

MEETINGS AND DEADLINES

Next General Meeting – January 2, 7:00 PM at Richland Public Library

Next Board Meeting- January 16, 7:00 PM at Griggs Pasco Hunter Ed room

February Newsletter Contribution Deadline is January 22.

email: admin@richlandrodandgun.org

January 2nd General Meeting Presentation **7:00pm at the Richland Public Library**

Happy New Year! We are off to a fast start in 2024. The presenter for our January 2nd meeting will be Richard Sharp, the RRG member with the most extensive experience of how and where to catch any species that swims in local waters. Rich's topic for this meeting is Bank Fishing for Late Season Steelhead. Come find out what tricks and secrets we can get Rich to reveal.

Wild Game Dinner Tickets and Quality Trip Chances

Wild Game Dinner tickets and Quality Trip chances will be available for purchase at the January 2nd meeting. The Wild Game Dinner will be held Saturday, March 23 at the Benton Franklin Fairgrounds in Kennewick. The program presenter will be author and outdoor writer Rob Phillips. The title of Rob's presentation is "A Dog Life Well Lived". Dinner

tickets and Quality Trip chances are \$25 each. Membership dues for 2024 must be paid to participate in the Quality Trip drawing.

Tri-Cities Sportsmen Show

Thanks to everyone who has already signed up to help at the Lunker Lake fishing pond and/or Kids' Air Rifle Range at the Tri-Cities Sportsmen Show which will be held January 26-28 at the TRAC in Pasco but there is still a need for additional volunteers on some shifts. RRGC will be hosting both events again this year for youth 12 years and under. Show hours are Friday, Noon to 7:00pm; Saturday, 10:00am to 6:00pm; and Sunday, 10:00am to 4:00pm. Fishing Pond set up will be on Thursday morning with teardown on Sunday afternoon. Sunday is Kid's Day with free fishing sponsored by Griggs. Volunteers are needed to work shifts each day of the show and to set up and disassemble the fishing pond. Volunteers receive free admission and it is a lot of fun assisting the kids. Sign up information will be available at our January meeting or contact Dale Schielke, 509-420-0021. Volunteers are needed to fill the following shifts at the fishing pond.

- Thursday, January 25, pond set up, 9:00 to 1:00.
- Friday Jan 26 - noon to 3:00 and 2:30 to 7:00
- Saturday Jan 27 - 9:30 to 12:30, noon to 3:00, and 2:30 to 6:00
- Sunday Jan 28 - 9:30 to 1:00, 2:30 to 4:00, and 4:00 teardown.

Calling all Cooks, Chefs, and Sous Chefs!

The 2024 Wild Game Dinner is fast approaching, and volunteers and meat donors are the key to its success. We are always looking for new volunteers and welcoming back seasoned veterans that keep the tradition going! Meat donations give us the base to develop our menu. We can't wait to see what hits the freezer this year. There will be a dinner meeting Friday, January 12 at 6:00pm which will include planning for the Wild Game Dinner. This is a chance to gather input from members who want to be part of the cooking team this year. If you want to be part of the team and will join us for the dinner meeting, text RSVP to 509-392-2128 with your name and how many by Wednesday, January 10. This will help Marilyn plan and assure enough food for all to enjoy.

Meat and Prize Donations Needed for the Wild Game Dinner

We still need meat! Marilyn Steele (509-392-2128) and John Prather (509-521-1593) are accepting donated fish, fowl, upland birds and big game meat for the 2024 Wild Game Dinner. A reminder that each package must be tagged with the donor's name, WILD ID number, species and cut of meat, plus the date and location taken and that ground meat cannot be accepted. Please bring your donations to the monthly meeting or contact Marilyn or John to coordinate a time and location for delivery. John also needs your help collecting prizes to be auctioned or given away at the dinner. Please contact John for a copy of the donation letter that we provide to businesses who might consider making a donation to us.

Quality Trip Rules

Members who perform volunteer work on a number of RRGC projects and activities are eligible to purchase additional chances in the drawing. A free chance in the raffle will be offered to any member who 1) purchases a chance in the drawing, and 2) accumulates 20 or more hours of volunteer work on club sponsored projects during the calendar year (January 1 through December 31) preceding the drawing. A second free chance will be offered if the individual purchases 2 or more chances and accumulates 40 or more hours as described in the preceding sentence. No member may be awarded more than two free chances in the drawing. Volunteer service on the following projects will count towards the accumulated hours.

- Tri-Cities Sportsmen Show – Lunker Lake and Youth Pellet Range (set-up, tear down, shift work)
- Wild Game Dinner (food preparation, cooks, equipment transport, event set-up and tear down)
- KOE Special Needs and Kids Fishing Days (rod assembly, mentoring, event activities)
- Angler Education (class instructors and assistants)
- Hunter Education (instructors and assistants during classes and range day)
- Youth Pheasant Hunt (mentors and dog handlers)
- Introduction to Firearms Class (instructors and assistants)
- Salmon in the Classroom (egg and supply deliveries, carcass deliveries, dissections, fish release)
- Habitat (water guzzler installation, monitoring, maintenance , removal or relocation)
- Wood Duck Nests (construction, installation, monitoring and maintenance, student instruction)
- RRGC wildlife related group projects in support of WDFW, USFWS, and other agencies.

Quality Trip chances are available from Treasurer Rick Libby. The drawing will be held as the last event of the annual RR&GC Wild Game Dinner on March 23, 2024. The winner does not need to be present to win. Follow this link to the Quality Trip page then click on Quality Trip Rules underlined in the first paragraph: <https://www.richlandrodandgun.org/trips>

Elections and Annual Meeting

The club's annual year is from April 1 through March 31. Officers and Trustees are elected annually at the March general membership meeting and assume office in April. Our Board of Directors consists of four elected officers (President, VP, Treasurer, and Secretary), up to 15 elected Trustees, and the Immediate Past President. Our organization depends on volunteers to accomplish everything that we do. The Board provides the financial oversight, planning, and decision making necessary to keep everything moving along. If you are or might be interested in joining the Board, please contact Richard Sharp (509-551-6785) or Mike Estes (509-551-9066) to express interest or have any questions answered. Serving on the Board is a great way to become more involved and to develop personal relationships with other members.

KOE 2024 Fishing Events

The KOE Special Needs fishing event will be held on Friday, April 26, at Columbia Park Pond. The KOE Kids Fishing Day will be held on Saturday, April 27, at the same location. More than 1,000 fishing rods will need to be assembled for the events and dozens upon dozens of volunteers will be needed to serve as fishing mentors, fish cleaners, and to assist as support workers. More info to follow, but please save the dates before your 2024 calendar fills up.

Decline in Hunter Numbers Reported

Hunting license sales jumped when the COVID-19 pandemic struck and many workers were prohibited from going to work and people were restricted from gathering with others during the lockdown. Nationally, hunting license sales in 2020 jumped 5 percent over 2019. Wildlife agencies were excited that new and former hunters were returning to the field. Now that COVID is regarded as just another illness and people have returned to their usual routines, hunter numbers have dropped to pre-pandemic levels and are trending lower. Delta Waterfowl reports that fewer people hunted ducks and geese in North America during the 2022-2023 season than in any season in the past 60 years. Waterfowl hunter numbers were down 8 percent in the U.S. and down 10 percent in Canada. In Canada that represents a 75 percent decrease in waterfowl hunters from the country's high in 1978 and the lowest since license sales tracking was started in 1966. What's going on?

There are many impediments to recruiting new hunters and retaining experienced hunters. Time, money, and access to good hunting areas are some of them. Baby Boomers have represented a large percentage of hunters and are timing out as they reach their 70's. Approximately 5 percent of Americans are hunters while an estimated 10 percent are anti-hunters. That means that the majority of Americans, about 85 percent, are non-hunters but they are not against hunting. Maintaining the support of these non-hunters is critical to the future of hunting. A recent study conducted for the Outdoor Stewards of Conservation Foundation revealed that more than 10 million adult Americans have changed their attitude toward hunters and hunting in a negative way since 2019. (Notice that 2019 was the year that license sales jumped. Is there a correlation between an increase in hunters and an increase in opposition to hunting at the same time or is it just coincidence? Were the newbies as courteous and law-abiding as they should have been?)

The issue greater than just attempting to recruit new hunters is to increase Americans' cultural acceptance for hunting and the shooting sports. A National Rifle Association (NRA) study concluded that increased cultural support for hunting must precede increased public participation in hunting. The masses often have different attitudes towards hunters, hunting, guns, animal rights and animal welfare than we have and do not accept, believe, or support the vital roles that hunters play in wildlife conservation. If you are looking for a meaningful New Year's resolution, consider pledging to be a tactical communicator of the critical role that hunters play in sustaining our renewable wildlife resources and in building cultural support for hunting.

Fish and Wildlife Commission seeks public input on Conservation Policy

You should already be aware of the controversy created several months ago when the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission introduced a draft Conservation Policy that infuriated many hunters and outdoor recreation related organizations. The draft policy was withdrawn and reworked. The Commission has opened a public comment period on its updated draft Conservation Policy through **Jan. 12, 2024**. The draft Conservation Policy directs the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to preserve and protect Washington's fish and wildlife and their habitats by proactively addressing current and emerging conservation challenges. You are invited to comment on the draft policy by submitting written comments at updateddraftconservationpolicy@publicinput.com. The updated draft policy is [available on WDFW's website](#).

Update your contact information!

If you have changed your address, your phone number, or your email address please use this link and scroll to the bottom of the page where it says "Update My Contact Information".

[Richland volunteer opportunities for members \(richlandrodandgun.org\)](http://richlandrodandgun.org)

Get involved in one of our Committees:

Salmon in the Classroom: Gene Van Liew – e.van-liew@hotmail.com

Wild Game Dinner: Marilyn Steele – momhoops46@gmail.com

Wood Ducks: Dale Schielke – dahlialou@gmail.com

KOE – Kids Fishing Day: Marilyn Steele – momhoops46@gmail.com

Hunter Ed: Ron Ruth – RonRuth.HunterEd@frontier.com

Guzzlers: Larry Martin - larry49martin@gmail.com

Youth Conservation Camp - larry49martin@gmail.com

Membership: Connie Cummings – richlandrodandgunmembership@gmail.com

Scholarship: Mike Estes - estesm34@gmail.com

Website: Ron Moore – admin@richlandrodandgun.org

Lunker Lake: Matt Cummings – riverviewcounsel@gmail.com

Dale Schielke – dahlialou@gmail.com

RRGC Club Upcoming Activities

Tri-Cities Sportsmen Show – January 26-28, 2024, HAPO Center (TRAC) in Pasco

Wild Game Dinner – March 23, 2024 at the Benton County Fairgrounds

KOE Special Need and Kids Fishing Events – April 26 and 27, 2024 at Columbia Park Pond