



By Carolyn Lee

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For the 12th year, the Southwest Nebraska Pheasants Forever Chapter hosted the annual Youth Mentor Hunt Oct. 19, on land owned by Don Weiss Jr.

About 50 volunteers made the day special for nine youngsters. A youth and a mentor pair up all day, learning to ask permission from landowners to hunt and going into the field with a dog handler to hunt.

Presenters this year included Heather Francis of Pheasants Forever and Jeff and Logan Pribbeno concerning wildlife habitat; Dr. Troy Worth concerning canine first aid; Dave Hogsett concerning trap shooting and trap safety, and Duke Jaeger concerning gun safety.

Some of the volunteers were high school students who will receive community service hours for their work, Francis noted.

Game and Parks hunts

Youth participation in Nebraska's Special Youth Pheasant Hunts has increased 77 percent since the program began in 2011, and 42 percent since last year.

In 2013, 392 youth participated, compared to 276 in 2012 and 222 in 2011. The goal of the program is to increase youth participation in upland game hunting by providing them an opportunity to experience a successful hunt.

This program allows youth ages 15 and younger to hunt at nine wildlife management areas across Nebraska during the statewide youth pheasant, quail and partridge season, which took place Oct. 19-20.

Pheasant hunting season in Nebraska opened Oct. 26.