

# HRG News

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**Harwinton Rod & Gun Club Inc.**

[www.harwintonrodandgun.com](http://www.harwintonrodandgun.com)

## President's Corner

Fellow Members:

Welcome to Fall!

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who participated in the recent parking lot project. The outcome is impressive and represents a significant improvement to our club's Campville Hill Property. Special thanks are due to the two HRG Mikes—Sirois, for his leadership, equipment, and manpower, and Fusco, who volunteered his time and expertise, coming out of retirement to operate the Big Loader and assist with spreading and rolling the millings. Fusco remains cheerful, noting that it was "just like riding a bike!"

Thanks also to everyone involved in the Pheasant Pen Project. The pen is now successfully housing extra birds. I would also like to thank those using the walk-in cooler for their continued efforts in keeping it clean, it is much appreciated!

The last trout stocking occurred a couple of weeks ago, and there are some beautiful fish remaining in our pond waiting to be caught. Please exercise caution when walking around the pond, as the mud can be slippery and could lead to an unexpected dip!

During our last general meeting, the topic of consistent Sunday Opening of the trap range was discussed. We are always in need of volunteers to assist with various committees. Increased participation in Trap would make scheduling easier. If you are interested in helping Dan with the Trap Committee and helping this situation, your involvement would be welcome. For those you haven't tried shooting Trap yet, consider giving it a try!

As hunting season begins, I urge everyone to prioritize safety in the field. Always be aware of what lies beyond your target before pulling the trigger or releasing an arrow. If hunting from an elevated stand, remember to always wear a safety harness.

Jim Stowe

President, HRG

**Please Note: Due to the Schedule for the December 9,  
Annual Membership Meeting, it will start at 7:15 p.m.**

**November 11, 2025**

**Volume 25 Issue 6**

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# Annual Meeting Notification

This is the notice calling you to the Annual Membership Meeting at Harwinton Rod & Gun Club. The Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday December 9, 2025. **The Meeting will start at 7:15 p.m.** The Election of Officers and Directors will be on the agenda for this meeting. A Buffet will be available for members and served from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

## Annual In-House Membership Raffle

The Annual In-House Membership Raffle will also be held at the Annual Membership Meeting. All paid up "Dues Paying Members" whose HRG ID # ends in .0 will be eligible to win one of six 2026 HRG Memberships that will be awarded to the lucky draw winners. Winners **MUST BE PRESENT** to be awarded these memberships. Winners will be awarded the same type of membership that they maintained in 2025. (Upgrades are allowable at winner's expense)

## Election of 2026 Officers/Directors

The election of Officers and Directors for 2025 will take place at the Annual Membership Meeting that will be held on Tuesday December 9, 2025. The positions to be filled and nominations for those positions so far are:

<b>President:</b> Jim Stowe Jr. (Incumbent)	<b>Vice-president:</b> Wayne O'Neill (Incumbent)	<b>Secretary:</b> Joe Sopczneski Sr. (Incumbent)
<b>Treasurer:</b> Dave Fournier (Incumbent)	<b>Assistant Treasurer:</b> Joe Sopczneski Jr. (Incumbent)	
<b>Directors:</b> (3 Three Year Terms) Shannon Joyce (Incumbent)	Mike Lorme (Incumbent)	Dani Mariotti (Incumbent)

Nominations for all positions are open and accepted until the time of the elections.

**If you are interested in running for one of these positions, contact: Call/Text Bob Jensen (860) 307-9670  
Mike Sirois (860) 601-1227      Joe Sopczneski Jr (860) 378-5406      Val Hoffman (518) 669-5228**

## 2026 Membership Dues/Assessment Bills

At the November 4, 2025 Meeting of the Executive Board of Harwinton Rod and Gun it was voted to keep the Dues/Assessment owed by members for their 2026 Membership the same as the 2025 amounts. Active Memberships will be billed \$285.00 +10% sales tax + Work Fine (if owed), and any delinquent amount. Family Memberships will be billed \$418.50 +10% sales tax + Work Fine (if owed), and any delinquent amount.

The 2026 Dues/Assessment Bill will be mailed out the first week of December. Please correct any outdated contact information! If for some reason you do not receive your renewal, contact Joe Sopczneski (860) 378-5849. If you are experiencing a personal problem and would like assistance with your HRG renewal, contact Joe or any Board Member.

\*\*\* (All of these types of communications are held in strict confidence and are handled on an individual basis)

Individual members may qualify for "Golden Membership" in two ways. The first qualifiers are : A member who is; at least 65 years old, retired, and a member for 15 consecutive years. The second set of qualifiers for Golden Membership is: 30 consecutive years of membership with no age or work status qualifiers. If you believe that you meet either of these for 2026, please contact the membership chairman.

If you wish to change your membership type for 2026 please indicate on your renewal form. If you chose to change to an Active Membership instead of a Family Membership, just write that on your renewal form and submit the amount you owe. If you wish to change from Active to Family Membership write that on the renewal papers and the appropriate forms will need to be sent to you. Family Membership Members turning 21 not Full Time Students or Military may join under their own Membership without regard to Waiting List nor Initiation Fee.

Please note as per By-Laws: **Dues are payable January 1st with a thirty (30) day grace period. (All dues related communications must be initiated during this time period)**

**All members will once again be required to complete a waiver as a requirement of renewal. Membership cards will only be mailed to members who are current with their dues and have filed a correctly completed waiver for 2026. The seven yellow boxes two front five back MUST be INITIALED! CHECK MARKS or X MARKS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE!!**

## Shooting Ranges Mike Fusco Chairman

**RIFLE RANGE:** We're in very good shape here. With the firearm season for deer will be opening soon, the Rifle Range is seeing an increase in the number of shooters practicing and sighting in. Members are reminded to turn on the **FLASHING RED LIGHTS** when going down range. The Flashing Lights are a **Reminder Don't Shoot, someone is on the Range!**

**PISTOL RANGE:** Members are reminded on how the range is run when there are more than one shooter - COMMUNICATION and knowing the Rules and Best Practices work best!

**TRAP:** More Trap Shooters are needed Sundays to keep the dedicated Sunday trap time. Suggestions are needed.

### Spotlight: She Loves to Shoot

#### Breya's Story

Breya has been shooting at HRG for over six years and continues to enjoy it immensely. She began with a .22 and has since progressed to larger caliber handguns. Inspired by my love for handgun hunting, she has embraced the sport as well. Remember, one of the most important things when taking the kids shooting, SAFETY!! The second thing is MAKE IT FUN!! Making shooting both safe and fun is key when introducing kids to the sport. By doing so, you help cultivate their enthusiasm and create cherished memories that they might one day share with their own children.

My advice, bring your kids to the range, these children are the future of our shooting sports. When you're here with them, teach them safe gun handling, explain the importance of gun safety, eye and ear protection. When they start shooting you'll be amazed how much it helps build up their confidence. Praise them with each and every shot that they take. Your praise will help build up their confidence and they will be looking forward to the next time you ask, "Want to go to the Range?"

#### Christmas is Back!

It's that time of year again!!

I would like to invite all members of HRG to come out to our Annual Christmas Party December 20.

This year's party will start at noon. We will have a lunch spread, crafts, and our usual **SPECIAL VISITOR!!**

Please sign-up on Santa's List on the Oak Table in the Meeting Room.

Santa's Helper Danielle

#### **SOMETHING SPECIAL THIS YEAR FOR OUR SPECIAL HRG SANTA**

It has been brought to my attention that OUR SANTA has been bringing joy to HRG KIDS for quite a few years and that some of the kids who sat on his lap many years ago have had kids of their own who have also sat on his lap!! We are inviting anyone who has ever sat on our Santa's lap to come to this year's party! We only ask that you notify Daniel so that she can have enough food and plan perhaps a "less vigorous" activity for these older HRG KIDS!!

If you can't make it to the party but have pictures of yourself or your kids on Santa's Lap we would love to have a copy of them to display at this year's celebration.



One of Santa's "older kids" is an HRG BOARD MEMBER NOW!!

His mother made Santa's suit ! ➡



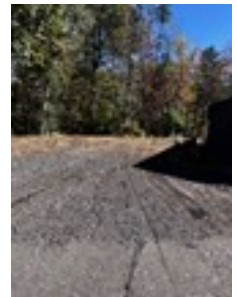
**Call/Text Danielle (860) 484-1210**

## Club Improvements

This past summer and fall have seen a bunch of projects get completed at our Campville Hill Road property. The ongoing work and planned improvements haven't all been completed yet and will continue in the near future. The roof began to leak and the entire clubhouse/Indoor Archery Range roof have been stripped and new shingles have been installed. That along with the staining that was recently done have our main building looking quite well!



Forty triaxles of millings were spread in many areas of the property to improve parking. The main upper lot, the path from the clubhouse to the Rifle Range, the path down to the Pistol Range along with its parking area, and the area near the walk in cooler was cleaned up.



Another project was installing a Pheasant Pen to house birds that need a place to be held over once delivered to the club and with the addition of Sunday Hunting. Not many people knew of the arrangement that was provided by Sal over the past years where he would hold our pheasants when needed and make an extra delivery if necessary. With Sal and Cathy retiring this past year we needed a place to hold the birds that were to be stocked.

Thanks to the club members who stepped up and built the pen and a big thanks to Sal for providing many of the "Parts" needed to complete the new home for our birds!

## Future Plans

Planning is going on to construct another building on our property to better house the various "things" that we have now and will need in the future. In many ways growing and needed space and improvements over the years necessitate the need for a place for things to be stored properly. The best location and size are the primary concerns at this time. Get involved, if you have ideas, expertise, a willingness to help step up! HRG is a Great Club because of its members. The Best Part of being in a CLUB is to be involved! If you haven't in the past, do yourself a favor and make the time, you'll learn what you have been missing! There are many rewards for being a part of the TEAM!!

## NEW WEBSITE

All of the Membership Renewal Paperwork that you will be receiving the first week of December will be the first official act of the new Website. It will be generated by the Website. Changes that you will all notice will become evident to all shortly following this launch. If there is something that you would really like to see incorporated with our site let us know what it is and if feasible we will consider your ideas. Call/Text (860) 378-5849

## Something New

You will find some ideas for new activities or restarts of former activities in this newsletter. If you have something that you would like to see the club do say something! Better yet if that something new is an activity that you will be willing to lead, step up. Over the years we have had some fantastic activities.

**Get involved!**



## Harwinton Rod and Gun Club Junior Hunt Day 2025

Larry Trolant Chairman

This year the Jr. Hunt team hosted Tom Donolan, leader of educational programs for the State of CT, as well as a reporter and photographer from CT Public Broadcasting. All three enjoyed the activity for about 6 hours. Tom discussed the educational platforms with various participants and volunteers. The reporter and photographer, after receiving permission from parents and volunteers, conducted interviews and took photographs. There will be a link to the article, as well as the pictures sent to us in the near future. Tom and Bob Harte got the reporter to shoot some clay pigeons, as she had never handled a gun previously.

The HRG Jr Hunt is a great event, enabling HGR volunteers to assist new and novice hunters, ages 12 to 15 to enhance their safe hunting practices, as well as enjoy the sport of upland bird hunting. Larry and I cannot say enough about the volunteers that make the event possible. They make our job easy, as the event runs like a well oiled machine.

Smiles abound, not only Jr. Hunters and their families, but also the volunteers, who make the event possible. All the Jr. Hunters and their families left with 2 birds and memories of a great day. The volunteers carry a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction of giving back to others, sharing the love of the sport and the outdoors.

Thanks to all the volunteers and the dogs for making the young people's most enjoyable experience with their, in most cases, first bird hunt. Great weather, good food and happy hunters.

Chris and Larry.

**Hear more about HRG Junior Hunt at the link below**

<https://www.ctpublic.org/news/2025-11-07/a-new-generation-of-ct-kids-are-learning-to-hunt-on-pheasant-lane>





# Trick or Treat 2025





## “Celebration of Life” Membership Award

Upon the passing of HRG Member Jeff Caron in the summer of 2022 it was decided that in Celebration of Jeff's Life a tagged fish would be stocked in our pond for Opening Day of the 2023 Fishing Season. Any Member whose ID number ends in “.0”, catching this tagged fish and presenting the “Tag” to the Executive Board would be awarded a “Free Membership” in HRG for the following year. If caught by a guest of a member, the member would be the “Winner”. It would be the winning member's option to use this “Free Year” of membership or give it to someone else. If given to a non-member, that person would have to meet the usual qualifications for membership of applicants to HRG. This person, if qualified, would then be admitted into membership without regard to the Waiting List or Membership Cap but would have to pay the initiation fee. If no one catches the tagged fish and turns in the “Tag” by the November 15 Pond Closing, the Free Membership will be drawn at the Annual Meeting. All current members in good standing at the time of the drawing with Membership ID's ending with “.0” will be eligible to win. They do not need to attend the meeting to win. All the “Qualifiers Above” will be applied.

Beginning in 2024, it was decided that this award would continue as a tribute to Celebrate the Lives of all past HRG Members who like Jeff Caron enjoyed Harwinton Rod and Gun to its fullest! To date the Tagged Fish has not been caught and if not by the November 15 Pond Closing will be awarded as a lucky draw as described above at The December Annual Membership Meeting for a HRG Membership the following year.

## **2026 - 2027 Mandatory Range Safety Orientation**

Every Even Year All members of Harwinton Rod & Gun Club must attend the Mandatory Range Safety Seminar prior to using ANY of the Firearm or Archery Ranges. During the seminar pertinent club rules, range rules, general firearm and archery safety will be reviewed and stressed. All members must attend one of the scheduled seminars and sign off on the attendance sheet in 2026 or they will NOT BE ALLOWED TO USE THE RANGES!

**Members who are currently allowed to use the ranges as they are reading this in November 2025 have until March 10, 2026 to take the 2026-2027 Orientation to be able to continue to use the ranges**

**There are Four Orientations scheduled for 2026 at the present time.**

They will be presented after the closing of the January 13, February 10, and March 10 Membership Meetings and Saturday January 17th.

**Remember that by Sunday January 18, 2026 YOU MUST ATTEND AND SIGN - OFF that you have attended this seminar in order to use our Ranges after January 17, 2026!**

**Our goal is to make everyone using HRG Ranges the “BEST POSSIBLE STEWARDS” of our Ranges and the activities practiced on them!**

**This past year saw the completion of the Rifle Range Pavilion Rebuilding. Over the past few years one of the benches had to be removed to make room for the Meeting Room that was constructed on the Rifle Range and then the next step was to add on to the Pavilion in order to restore the bench that had to be removed.**

**The finishing touch to this remodel was to install **Flashing Red Lights** to be activated any time people need to go down range. The lights **MUST BE TURNED ON AS A WARNING** that weapons are not to be handled while the lights are flashing for everyone's **SAFETY! BE SURE TO DO THIS****

## Dates to Add to your HRG Calendar

1. **First Week of December 2025 Membership Renewals in Mail.**
2. **Tuesday December 9, 2025 5:45 - 7:00 p.m. Member Buffet** served prior to the 7:15 p.m. start of the Annual Membership Meeting .
3. **Saturday December 20, 2025 noon Santa arrives HRG Kids' Christmas Party.**
4. **Wednesday January 1, 2026 Happy New Year! Let's make it a Memorable HRG Year!**
4. **First Week of New Year Indoor Archery Leagues begin**
5. **Thursday January 8, 2026 Join the HRG Fly Tying Group First Timers - Masters!**  
"Join us and enjoy Fantastic Food/Learn from our Best!/Great Night out!"

## UP COMING EVENTS

**HRG Sportsmen's Get Together** will be held on Saturday March 14th - Doors open at 5:30 p.m. for those wishing to display their deer mount, or a set of antlers, any animal, fish or bird mount bring it on by. Entry fee is \$5.00 there will be appetizers and some food, we have a member who can measure & score you're deer mount, let's not forget the Bucket Raffle

**HRG Ladies Day** more details will be available as we move forward with this, We're hoping to have Handgun, rifle, trap, and archery with only 50 participants. The tentative Date is set for May 9th - Help is needed RSO's on the range, kitchen help, set up and clean up

**ACTION PISTOL SHOOT:** The 2026 schedule has been put together and waiting approval from the BOD hopefully I will have this posted before January 1st

**RANGE RULES & PROCEDURE:** This will be taking place in the months to come, All members who use any of our Shooting Ranges the ranges: Archery, Handgun, Rifle, or Trap, you must attend and sign off in order to use the ranges or Hunt on HRG Properties.

**KIDS 22 Rim-fire Shoot :** Looking to hold this sometime in June  
All Ammo & Targets will be supplied, this is a fun event they'll be many different targets for the kids

## Ice Fishing Rods and Reels for Sale



All rods and reels are custom made and have replaceable spring bobbbers attached that can be changed to heavier or lighter depending on lure or jig weight. All reels are 13 Fish Free-falls. Rod and reel combos will be between \$75.00-\$100.00 and that's negotiable. I have lots of other ice fishing gear other reels, jigs, lures, sonars. Give me a call and we can see if I have something you might want. Mike Michaud 860 689-5450.

