

Pat Ek of Lee, Maine, who has Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, a nerve disorder, fires her .22-caliber rifle from her wheelchair during last weekend's Project Appleseed event at the Enfield Outing Club. People with disabilities, active duty military, peace officers and Revolutionary War reenactors in period clothing can shoot for free at Appleseed events.



"Fire!" commands John Barnes, the "shoot boss," on the second day of the Appleseed program. Barnes is the chief safety officer at the Enfield Outing Club and runs Appleseed shoots at ranges all over New Hampshire. "Our agenda is to extend the gun culture," he said.

A TRADITION OF MARKSMANSHIP



Above: Appleseed instructor Roger Ek of Lee, Maine, walks down the line of shooters checking technique as they call their shots on the second day of the Appleseed shoot. Eight shooters from New Hampshire and Maine attended the weekend course, which teaches shooting skills combined with history lessons.

'Appleseed' Teaches Rifle Skills, History

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES M. PATTERSON
STORY BY SARAH BRUBECK

THE EIGHT SHOOTERS STRETCHED OUT ON THEIR STOMACHS at the Enfield Outing Club, the cold seeping through the blankets beneath them. They propped themselves up on their elbows, raised their rifles and aimed at the "redcoat" — a paper target sporting a head-and-shoulders shape about 50 yards away.

"Is the line ready?" yelled John Barnes, the "shoot boss." Silence.

"Ready to the right? Ready to the left? All ready on the fire line?"

Everyone remained still.

"Fire!" he bellowed.

Eight shots rang out in rapid succession. When the silence returned, the group got up and walked down range to see how they had done.

A little while later, Pete Eyre and Austin Reida, both of Keene, N.H., examined their targets.

"How'd you do?" Reida asked his friend.

"Well, I didn't get four shots out because I had a stovepipe," said Eyre, meaning an empty shell casing had jammed the weapon.

"Yeah, that stuff always slows you down," Reida said. "How was your accuracy?"

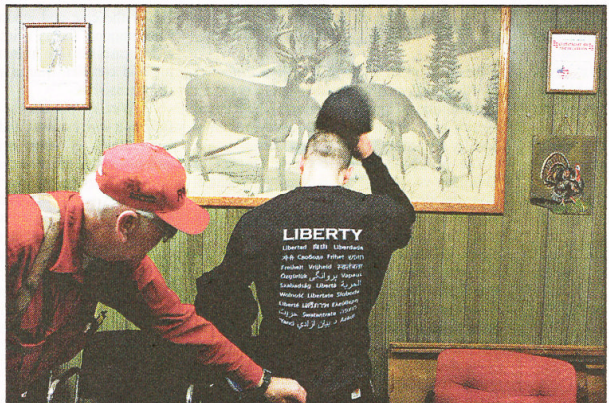
"Pretty good, I think," Eyre said.

Reida has been shooting since he was a boy, but last weekend was just his second "Project Appleseed," a two-day program sponsored by the Morehead, Ky.-based Revolutionary War Veterans Association — hence the "redcoat" targets. The nationwide nonprofit organization teaches "colonial history and the American tradition of rifle marksmanship in a safe,

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Louise Pressler, of Merrimack, N.H., takes aim not knowing if there's a round in the chamber of her weapon. The exercise is designed to train shooters not to flinch in anticipation of the shot.



Above: Ek takes a closer look at Pete Eyre's T-shirt, on which the word "liberty" is printed in 29 languages. Eyre, of Keene, N.H., was participating in his first Appleseed shoot. Left: Pressler reacts as Barnes tells her she has achieved "riflesman" status.