

Deemed the Mona Lisa by the RWVA, this photo is part of a poster used to promote Project Appleseed.

PROJECT
Appleseed

Rifle Marksmanship and Early **American Heritage**

By Jennifer Anne Brozek

With the passing of another Fourth of July, our nation grows yet another year older. It is at this time that we are acutely aware of the sacrifices that our founding ancestors endured to establish the freedoms we now have. While this spirit of patriotism waxes and wanes at times in our great nation, the Revolutionary War Veterans Association (RWVA) rekindles the spirit of red, white, and blue across our land, reminding us what it means to be an American.

Project Appleseed is an operation of the RWVA, a nonprofit organization dedicated to two primary objectives: educating Americans about our nation's founding principles, and teaching rifle marksmanship. To achieve these two objectives, Project Appleseed organizes early heritage programs and marksmanship clinics lead by volunteer instructors across the country.

Project Appleseed's early American heritage program presents a compelling portrayal of the Battles of Lexington and Concord which captures the spirit of courage that spurred our ancestors to pursue independence against all odds, regardless of the costs. The heritage program passionately conveys the tough decisions, heroic deeds, and sacrifices made by early Americans. These are the stories behind the story; these are the stories that make American history come alive.

Complimenting the early American heritage program are the rifle marksmanship clinics. Project Appleseed's combination of history lesson and rifle training pointedly illustrates how the marksmanship skills of the colonists played a pivotal role in the course of our nation's history. By offering the clinics, Project Appleseed emphasizes the importance of marksmanship not only from a historical viewpoint, but also from a modern-day perspective, as a means of building positive character traits. Patience, focus, determination, attention to detail, and persistence are among the traits that the study of marksmanship can promote.

RWVA instructors have extensive marks-

manship training and teaching experience. Many RWVA Instructors are certified National Rifle Association and Citizen Marksmanship Program Instructors, plus they have met additional instructional and shooting requirements of the RWVA.

"Posterity!"

You will never know how much it cost the present Generation to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make good use of it. If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the pains to preserve it."

~ John Adams



On average, it takes three Appleseed events to earn the marksman's patch.



APRIL 19, 1775

When marksmanship met history, and the heritage began...

RWVA Instructor and Shoot Boss Miki Marciniak highlights the thrill that comes from developing marksmanship skills and the positive impact it can have on one's self-esteem. She explains, "Appleseed is a program that teaches people how to hit a 4 MOA (20 inch) target at 500 yards (the traditional rifleman's quarter mile) using field positions and iron sights. At first glance, this seems an intimidating task. When you hear that lovely 'ping' of lead hitting steel at 500 yards, your first reaction is a ginormous smile. Upon further reflection, your self-esteem grows. YOU did it."

Making note of the fact that women are quick learners, the Appleseed website explains that many women have earned the Rifleman Patch at the rifle marksmanship clinics. The Rifleman Patch is not easily earned, as it requires a score of 210 or above on an Army Qualification Test. There are also many female RWVA instructors who have proven themselves as

excellent teachers of early American heritage and American marksmanship traditions.

Marciniak estimates, "It takes the average shooter three Appleseeds to score rifleman. Some do it quicker; some take longer. Many set their goal on earning that rifleman patch and persist until they accomplish that objective."

Marciniak points out that a team-building mentality grows out of learning rifle marksmanship. She stresses, "Team work, riflemen work in teams." She continues, "We offer some fun shoots in which we put students into teams and they have to work together to accomplish their goal. We teach how riflemen work together as a shooter/spotter team. That shooter that pinged steel at 500 yards did it with the help of their spotter."

Project Appleseed events can be an exciting event for the entire family. In fact, some events have been held with three generations



[ABOVE] Cold, muddy and having a lot of fun, these ladies are putting their rifle marksmanship skills to the test at a recent Project Appleseed event.

of the same family learning marksmanship together. Encouraging participation among all individuals, Appleseed invites women and youth to register for their programs and clinics at a fraction of the cost of the regular registration fee.

Project Appleseed events are a two-day affair and are offered all over the country. More information on the project and the location of the events can be found at www.appleseed-info.org.



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