

4-H Gun Safety Offers Thrills

A new 4-H gun safety project offers Oregon youngsters experiences more exciting and challenging than those depicted in popular TV westerns.

This is the opinion shared by Cal Giesler, hunter safety supervisor with the State Game Commission, Andy Landforce, Oregon State College extension wildlife

specialist, and 4-H leaders and parents around the state who helped develop the new program.

The 4-H gun safety project objectives are to teach safe use of firearms, prevent hunting accidents, create an interest in wildlife conservation, develop shooting skills and interest in one of the safest and most enjoyable uses of leisure.

Oregon youths, between 9 and 19 years of age, have the worst

hunting accident record, according to Giesler. Last year, this age group was involved in twice as many hunting accidents as 20 to 29 year olds, and three times as many as the 30 to 39, and 40 to 49 age groups.

The 4-H gun safety project fosters "progressive" education, notes Cal Monroe, acting state 4-H extension leader. Youths advance at their own rate and ability to various stages of the project.

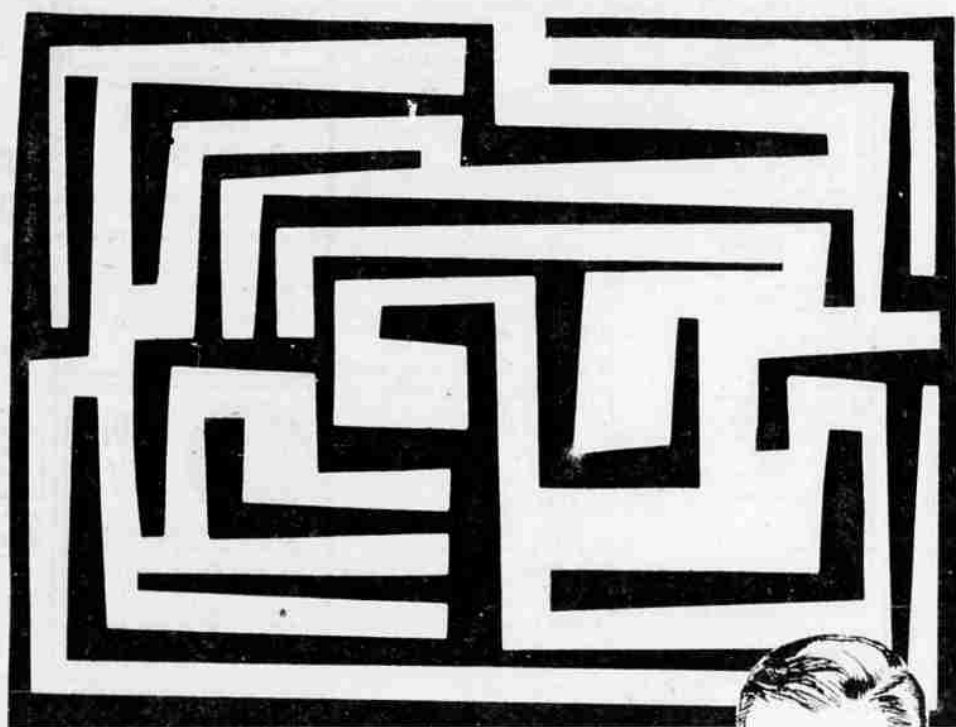
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ect. Beginners, 11 year olds, study and practice to become "4-H Safe Shooters." Their first requirement is to pass the Oregon hunter safety training course offered by the State Game Commission. During the two years this training has been offered, 6,300 youngsters have completed this course. Not one has been involved in a gun accident, Giesler reports.

Later project offerings are the 4-H marksman, sharpshooter, expert rifleman and the 4-H hunter. All instruction emphasizes good sportsmanship, respect for private, public and personal property, and wildlife conservation. Another objective is to improve farmer-sportsmen relations.

Enrollment in the project can be made through county extension offices.



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